Genre in British factual television:
The role and value of genre in industry commissioning and production discourse

James McLean

Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

University of East Anglia

School of Film and Television Studies

Submitted November 2021 ©

James McLean

Abstract

This thesis explores the field of British factual television production and commissioning to better understand the uses, values, and meanings of genre within the lived-in practices of its industry creative practitioners. Genre remains a relatively under-researched focus of studies into British factual television. Academic research into television production has established the importance of commercial formats for factual producers and commissioners yet the role of genre has been largely overlooked.

Genre and television are often associated with programming than production; catalysed and sustained by the discourses between critics, audiences, and industry (Mittell, 2004). This thesis reveals how genre functions separately—and differently—in the production of factual television. Genres are embedded in British television industry culture providing shared contexts to the multiple agents involved in producing content and managing the high level of media-market uncertainty.

This thesis argues industry-embedded genres are an ongoing structural and discursive component of factual television; a commonality used between industry practitioners to adapt to the pressures and risks of a complex, rhizomatic, and highly unpredictable television culture.

Through an integrated methodology applying semi-structured interviews conducted with British factual television producers and commissioning editors, ethnographic fieldwork from the film/television industry event Sheffield Doc/Fest, and an analysis of relevant industry texts, this thesis seeks to provide further insights into television creative production practices through their assigned uses, values, and meanings of genre.

James McLean

List of Contents

James McLean

James McLean

iv

James McLean

List of Tables

v

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisors, Professor Keith Johnston and Professor Su Holmes for their guidance. As my primary supervisor, Professor Johnston's knowledge, insightful notes, and unrelenting patience shaped my academic work and skillsets.

A thank you to all the anonymous interviewees who took part in this project. All participants were courteous, patient, and generous with their time. Their insights were invaluable, and above all, fascinating.

A personal thank you to family, colleagues, and friends who have supported me through the thesis.

Introduction: Genre and British television production

British television's production industry is a complex and commercialised culture born from the ongoing tensions between the industrial, technological and cultural movements of the twentieth century. The British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) original mission to educate, inform and entertain—and the later commercial adoption of advertising-funded entertainment of independent television (ITV)—was developed via a spectrum of programming options that were transmitted across the airwaves and, more recently, digital channels. Within these contexts, genre has been a critical part of the development and pitching of ideas, the creative management of commissioning commercial content, and the bid to tackle an increasingly competitive television market.

However, much of the research on genre and television has focused on textual categorisations and cultural consumption (Corner, 2015; Hills, 2004; 2007; Hilmes, 2011; Mittell, 2003; 2004; Paget, 2011). The role of genre within television *production* remains under-researched, and this is a gap this thesis intends to address. Back in 2001, Graeme Turner (2015) admitted there has been "little academic attention" focused on the programmer in genre studies, although *"it would be logical to assume* [my emphasis] that their practices—and thus TV schedules—are influenced by their understanding of genre" (p.8). Twenty years onward and genre's relationship with programmers remains relatively unexplored.

Media theorists have argued that genre should be studied through media specificity to account for its application to different cultural frameworks (Altman, 1999; Mittell, 2004; Neale, 1999; Feuer, 2005). Television scholars have concluded genres are subject to more cultural influences, historical contexts, and hybridisation than literature or film (Feuer, 2005; Neale, 2015). This thesis contributes to the study of genre within the production of television. Rather than a study of genre as a concept, the thesis addresses genre as a tool of television industry professionals. It is how that tool is used, valued, and understood within the specificity of television that reveals how television production cultures develop and generate content against the backdrop of a highly competitive, ever-changing, commercial market.

Drawing on original data from research into the British factual television industry (conducted between 2016 to 2017), the thesis provides insight into how genre is a vital part of television

production discourse and practice. Genre provides television production practitioners with *contexts* necessary for the effective flow of ideas and information necessary to meet the fast-moving, high-risk market conditions of British factual television.

The British factual television industry provides a rich study of genre's importance to television production cultures in creating content that is educational, popular, and cost-effective (Ursell, 2003). Factual shows cater to public service remits for educational content, whilst seeking to be accessible and popular (Kilborn, 2006; Ursell, 2003). Since the 1990s factual television has grown as a dynamic and ever-changing sector of industry production (Dovey, 2015). This has resulted in an increasingly complex range of unique genre categories, such as 'specialist factual' and 'factual entertainment', and strong motivation for producers to mix genres to create fresh styles of content. Within this fast-moving, highly competitive factual television market, genre provides a common lexicon to production, commissioning, and business contexts. In television production cultures, genres exist as frameworks for interpreting and organising experiences, expectations, and understandings (Bruun, 2010: p.727), generating both stable structures and dynamic constructs which change within space and time (Bruun, 2010: p.727). Television's demand for content and risky high production costs (Hesmondhalgh, 2019), requires tools that manage these industrial tensions. Factual content provides strong examples of how genre manages creative and commercial risks within television production.

To understand the industrial and institutional functions of television genres, the thesis argues for a greater and more extensive investigation of what genre means to the production of television. The research undertaken for the thesis contributes to the study of television by arguing genre performs a different function for producers of television than it does for critics and audiences. Conceptualising genre as a cultural function of textual categorisation is ill-fitting for the study of genre and television production culture. To understand genre and television production, we need to see genre as an intrinsic part of the social dynamics of television production, providing contexts to production discourse, structure to organisational management, and risk management to commercial business strategies.

This neglect in the study of genre within television production is in part due to the dismissal of genre by the industry itself. Television studies has identified a resistance from practitioners towards genre within British television production (Holmes, 2008a; 2008c). Practitioners can be

wary of their work being intellectualised by academics who are perceived as being too far removed from their world (Caldwell, 2008). Industry practitioners can have very little economic interest in having their products bound by categorisations (2008a: p.162). For television practitioners, it may be more common to speak of tone—such as entertainment—than genre (Holmes, 2008c).

However, professionals are encouraged to have an understanding of genre by writers with industry experience (Collie, 2007; Lees, 2010; Stradling, 2010) and the industry distinctions to genre between film and television (Blum, 1995). Genre is also identified as a function of risk management deployed by television broadcasters (Gitlin, 1979; Hesmondhalgh, 2018; Ryan, 1992) to make sense of their market and to organise their commissioning content. The research conducted for this study argues genre is an intrinsic part of how industry practitioners understand, speak, and practice their craft. While audiences use genre in the categorisation of content, television practitioners use genre as a tool in producing content. To understand genre within television it must be fully acknowledged as having multiple roles in the production of television content.

To this aim, this thesis adopts an integrated method as used in American media production studies (Caldwell, 2008) to study the British factual television industry. In the past thirty years, commercial imperatives have encouraged a heterogenic landscape and deeply embedded working cultures, meaning that empirical data gathering can be difficult and complex (Caldwell 2008; Caldwell, 2011; Mayer, Banks, & Caldwell, 2009; Ortner, 2009). As a result, this thesis adopts a combination of semi-structured industry interviews, industry participant observation, and an analysis of industry textual artefacts to reveal genre's uses, values, and meanings within the British factual television industry. Industry practitioner self-theorising provides an ontological perspective on genre's contribution to factual television production. Self-theorising offers insight into how practitioners, think, work, and present themselves as producers of television. However, interview self-reflexivity can be curated by the interviewee (Caldwell, 2008) from which participant observation can provide the researcher with real-time production culture experience to test interview data. For this thesis, participant observation was conducted at the industry event Sheffield Doc/Fest. In tandem with these two methods, the analysis of relevant textual artefacts can complement or support gathered data from interviews and observation. Textual artefacts can

be production and broadcasting company websites or paraphernalia from an industry event. When integrated, these methods work together to better reveal genre's uses, values, and meanings to British factual television.

Part 1: Genre: from studies of authorship to collaborative creative practice

To better understand genre's importance in discursivity and collaborative production, genre must be addressed as a function of creativity. This section establishes what relationships genre has to creative work. From the rigid codifications that enabled authors, genre would be a valuable support to creatives through the commodification of art, the formation of high-risk markets, and the rise of new technologies. These historic changes would eventually result in genre becoming a tool of discursive collaboration, and authorship dispersed amongst different sites of production (Hilmes, 2011).

Genre has often been used to define, shape, enforce, or challenge textual characteristics. Originating from the French language, genre refers to a 'type', 'kind' or 'style' (Neale, 2015; Butler 2012), and can provide a set of culturally understood categorisations. For both critics and scholars, genre's meaning is often linked to consumption and helps "identify the artistic product we want" (Crebber, 2015: p.1). Genre can provide style-markers for creative texts where "output in each of these fields can be grouped into categories, and that each category or class is marked by a particular set of conventions, features, and norms" (Neale, 2015: p.3). Genre scholars have debated what these conventions, features, and norms might be for each genre. Are there formal or aesthetic ingredients to a Western that is inherent to all Westerns? What delineates a science-fiction text from a horror? What the ingredients are in constructing a textual genre, and what constitutes a genre text, has a history of scholarly contention. Within genre's relationship to texts, Mark Jancovich (2008) has suggested most generic history is "organised around a distinction *between* formulaic repetition and innovative transformation, *or* between imitation and difference [my emphasis]" (p.17). Whilst scholars and critics have debated the boundaries of a genre, the ongoing relationship between the creation and consumption of media texts cannot be static. History demonstrates cultural tastes can alter, shifting what is considered formulaic from what is innovative. Genre provides markers for creative texts where output "can be grouped into categories, and that each category or class is marked by a particular set of conventions, features

and norms" (Neale, 2015: p.3). In this context, genre has found common meaning for critics across media types.

As a tool of culture, genres exist across media, and as Christine Cornea (2018) observes "In an increasingly competitive, multi-media, global era of information and entertainment, genre frequently offers a convenient nexus with which to negotiate and organise meaning across media platforms" (p.9). However, whilst generic codes can be shared between media (such as books, film, or video games) genres can represent the conventions of specific media platforms, their content, and how their content is created. British television is produced through an ongoing collaborative model by an industry of independent companies and publically-owned broadcasters mandated to the values of British public service requirements whilst seeking to meet, or even predict, the trends and tastes of British audiences in competitive markets (Petley, 2006). Genres thereby play a part in a nationally specific production market geared to the demands of cultural policy, industry practices, and consumer interest.

The collaborative model of television production is foreign to more traditional notions of genre and creativity. Genre has historically been associated with the study of authorship in literature (Fowler, 1982; Todorov & Berrong, 1976; Alacovska, 2017; Bawarshi, 2003). Historically, genre and the creative text had a strong relationship between author and critic. Aristotle's (1996 [330BC]) definitions of poetry articulated an ahistoric style guide for poets to generate "high quality" works (p.3). "One should not compose a tragedy out of a body of material which would serve an epic" (p.30). or the Romans, Aristotle's theories on genre were considered fundamental to the authoring of literature. The formal structure was critical to high-quality poetry and scholars provided poetic and metric rules for Greco-Roman authors (Gullién, 1970). Under a neoclassical banner, genre dictated the styles of texts. This deference to genre would protect the author from making critical errors in the creation of art. However, the Romantic Movement of the 19th century sought to oppose the critical hierarchy that, through a strict taxonomy of genre codification, positioned art as high culture. The Romantics rejected these cultural barriers and embraced low-value creative texts found in political pamphlets, ballads, and romances. These were not regulated by the then standards of generic codifications (Neale, 2000; Threadgold, 1989). By the twentieth century and the rise of cinema, genres were

no longer rules and codes attributed to high-value art, but an industrialised response to mass demand for content.

The industrial, cultural, and technological changes of the twentieth century saw genre shift from a cultural agent of authorship and criticism, to a function of creation, distribution, and cultural consumption. As the film industry grew through the twentieth century out of technological advancements, industrial growth, and increasing methods of communication, genres became a fast-and-ready toolkit for filmmakers to composite their work together and film studios were keen to exploit film genres for their cost-saving reuse of successful formulas (Schatz, 1981). Critics of these new media industries saw them as detrimental to the arts (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2004). Steve Neale (1980) argues "all forms of artistic production in capitalist social formations take place within conditions provided by economic relations and practices" (p.9). As a cultural construct for the delineation of styles, genre becomes an intersection between the creative, the commercial, and the consumer. In doing so, the understanding of genre moves from being solely text-centric to considering the cultures they interact with. This is an important change when seeking to understand the creative processes of collaborative mediums, however, this understanding was not immediately embraced by media theorists. The twentieth-century criticism continued to understand collaborative productions through the relationship between author and text.

It was structuralist Tzvetan Todorov (1975) who sought to connect the structures of texts with a historical context which would be significant to grounding genre with cultural settings. Todorov argued that genres could be culturally formed from an understanding of the classic literary genres. Ahistoric genres, defined as *theoretical*, could be mixed into culturally grounded contexts to create *historical* genres, from which television has been argued to heavily utilise (Feuer, 2005). Whilst Todorov still argued for an ahistorical canon of genre styles, he encouraged theorists to look outside of the text and to the contexts of the cultures that used genre.

The devotion to the author-text paradigm would be further disrupted by post-structuralism. Michel Foucault seminal essay *What is an Author?* (1979) explores the author within cultural discourse as the *author function*, reconceptualising the author as an ideological intertext. The author function would later be appropriated by genre theorists (Naremore, 2008). Post-

structuralism questioned the author's fixed relationship to the text, as well as acknowledging the relationship of their cultural readers (Barthes, 1967). The destabilisation of the author-text model is important to understand texts that are built through collaboration, interactivity that is at the heart of television production.

As a collaborative medium in itself, film theorists would be among some of the first to reconceptualise genre to new modes of production that would be appropriated into the study of television. However, as film criticism was finding new ways to understand genre as a codification for film, these debates often remained text rather than practice-centric. Alan Williams (1984) argued for a reassessment of genre-specific to the film medium. Edward Buscombe (1970) looked to define film genres through a classification of visual iconography. However such textually centered approaches failed to account for the ongoing shifts in genre codifications within film classifications and the importance of the film industry in these changes (Neale, 1980; 2000).

Focusing on the importance of industry to genre, Thomas Schatz (1981), argues film genres were the "result of material conditions of commercial filmmaking itself" (p.16). Schatz speaks of film genres as expressions of "the material conditions of commercial filmmaking itself, whereby popular stories are varied and repeated as long as they satisfy the audience demand and turn a profit for the studio" (p.16). Through film studies, genre's function as a commercial and industrial practice, to meet consumer expectations and minimise market risk, becomes a fundamental aspect of genre theory. Rick Altman (1999) identifies Hollywood genres as having 'blueprint', 'structure', 'label', and as a 'contract' - four categories, that can be easily applied to television, that position the creative, industry, critic, and audience in one complex interrelationship. Genre's relationship between these cultural groups is explored further by Steven Neale (2015) who notes:

> Most theorists of genre now argue that generic norms and conventions are recognised and shared not only by theorists themselves but also by *audiences*, *readers* and *viewers*, the classification of texts is not just the province of *academic specialists*, it is a fundamental aspect of the way texts of all kinds are understood" [my emphasis] (p.3)

7

While creatives/authors are not noted, they are implicit in the definition of readers of texts, clarified more succinctly in his earlier book *Genre* (1980) where Neale argued that "genres may be defined as patterns/forms/styles/structures which transcend individual films, and which supervise both their construction by the filmmaker and their readings by an audience" (p.7). Whilst Neale's position connects the discursive function of genre between the filmmaker and the audience, the "readers" of genre do little to distinguish the collaborative nature of film and television, and how their respective industries use and value genre.

This section has explored how the study of genre and creativity has been traditionally tied to the author, and how technological and industrial advancements have demanded genre studies to reconceptualise genre. These debates, situated largely in film studies, would be reconsidered in the newer contexts of television. Television is a unique concept that is continually difficult to define as it changes and grows (Fiske, 2011; Jenner 2018). It is a medium that has been adopted and adapted from other media platforms (Neale, 2015). The following section reviews how genre can relate to television as an industry to better understand the importance of studying its role within British factual production.

1.1 Intersections of television, genre, and British culture

As a high-cost, ongoing industry, television requires methods of categorisation to make sense of its complex interactions and genres can provide "frameworks for interpreting and organizing experiences, expectations and understandings" (Bruun, 2010: p.727; Shore 1996). Genres can benefit producers as much as consumers in understanding the ever-changing terrain of television.

Through its ongoing systemic permutations, critics have argued that it is television that is becoming increasingly difficult to conceptualise what television is (Ellis, 2000; Jenner, 2018). Marieke Jenner (2018) argues that even if we accept television was once a physical piece of furniture, it can longer be considered in such material conventions. "Television has never been a stable object easily defined, but discursively constructed via social practices, spaces, content, industry, or technological discourses" (p.7). Jane Feuer's (2005) genre analysis considers television's distinction from film through the disruptive practices of its audiences that drift between genres through the flow (Williams, 1974) of its schedule, as opposed to the discrete and defined performance of the cinema. Feuer's appraisal acknowledges television as a dense

medium of genres. The different kinds of shows on television have a direct impact on industry practices. Thomas Elsaesser (2017) notes that creatives in television, opposed to film, remaining largely anonymous and specific to the medium "[…] for factual programmes, news and political commentary, science programmes, children's television, game shows, little attention is usually paid to the kinds and qualities of this writing" (p.8). The *kinds* of writing speak to the importance of genre within television, where the *kind* of productions are critical to the way television is created and part of the skillsets required in the creative collaborative process of making television shows at a given time.

The kinds of shows required shift over time, responding to what John Ellis (2000) sees as different technological and cultural shifts. Ellis creates a linear continuity from the *era of scarcity* from the 1950s to the 1970s where British television had a low number of broadcasters and television channels, with limited schedules, to the era of availability from the late 1970s. The *era of availability* is a period where television grew further with the end of the British duopoly of the BBC and ITV, the video recorder, and the growth in globalisation led to what Ellis defines as "managed choice" (p.61). The end of the 1990s ushered in the *era of plenty*, where an abundance of choice was offered through the growth of digital technology. Ellis demonstrates the importance of output and distribution, and those modes of distribution have a significant impact on the shape of its industry, and for genre, the kind of television produced. Television genres have different costs, complexities, and demands that are tied to consumption. However, Catherine Johnson (2012) is cautious of the Ellis model for its flattening of television's historical terrain, and reliance on the public broadcasting model. Johnson considers television's transformation from its position as a broadcasting *medium*, and how it has moved through technological shifts, changing its meaning.

For John Fiske (2011) television's meaning as a medium can be conceptualised through its societal relationships. For Fiske, television is a "provoker" and "bearer" of a culture's "meanings and pleasures" (p.64). However, he notes "television, its viewers, and the ways it functions in society, are so multifarious that no tightly focused theoretical perspective can provide us with adequate insight" (p.64). For this thesis, television is explored as a business and the business of making television, as reflected through the eyes of its interviewed production practitioners. The business of television making has a global and local market, and for British factual television,

this market is predominantly local, very much the *bearer* and *provoker* of British cultural meanings and pleasures. Genre functions as a tool for creative producers and broadcast commissioning editors seeking to engage in cultural ephemera through the commercial market of television.

The societal features of television have been further theorised by Jane Feuer (2005) as an ongoing continuum. Television casts content every day, seven days a week schedule. Feuer argues genre is critical to television because "unlimited originality of programming would be a disaster because it could not assure the delivery of the weekly audience, as do the episodic series and continuing serial" (pp.108-109). Television can apply genre as both a content filter and a feature of content continuation (such as serialisations). In doing so, television broadcasters can use genre as a multi-functional tool to ensure content responds to audience interest. Within the creative and commercial dialectic, the pressures of the medium's relentless output have a significant influence on its production practices.

National communities, commercial interests, and cultural influences can exert power upon a television industry and it is not uncommon for these to be shaped by state involvement (Giddens & Sutton, 2009). Distinguishing national characteristics can define television with different political and cultural constraints shaping the medium (Geraghty & Lusted, 2010). British television remains largely in the hands of its national network, with regulatory bodies, industry structures, and local cultural interests shaping its broadcasting content. Television industries are watermarked by their national landscape and their histories are "intimately entwined in and specific to different locations for television" (Gomery, 2006: p.13).

Historically, British government policy has had a significant impact on shaping the landscape of British factual television with genre enabling the industry to make sense of these nationally bound tastes and interests. Ex-British factual producer Nicola Lees (2010) argues genres still carry nuance within television industrial contexts, differing as much nationally as internationally. "Even within the same country, different people understand the same word to mean different things, depending on their production background (and level of pretentiousness)" (p.86). From Lee's perspective, genres carry particular meaning to particular cultures and can be part of their agent's social construction. In this regard, genre's meaning is localised to its use as part of the shared voice of British factual television production and can have little value beyond its borders.

Jason Mittell (2004) argues that generic television labels exist through a common language. Television genres "must be culturally operative within several spheres of media practice, employed by critics, industries, and audiences" (p.10). Whilst aligning to these general principles, genres within British factual television production remain local to the industry itself, employed broadly by producers, commissioners, and broadcasters. To this end, the next section provides a brief overview of the British factual television industry and how genres exist within the framework of commercial production.

1.2 The British factual television production industry, industry-specific genres, and industry risk-management strategies

British broadcasting's infrastructure is largely maintained (or reshaped) by political and commercial forces that circulate, within, and between television broadcasters and distributors. These forces are then responded to, resisted, contested, or complied with, by the production companies, both independent or broadcaster in-house studios that devise and develop shows. This sustains a media industrial landscape that is highly heterogenic in two interrelational properties: industry structure and creative individualism.

Within its structural make-up; John T. Caldwell (2013) defines media industries as being "rhizomatic", which is a mix of larger institutions and smaller companies "loosely structured to flexibly adapt to new labor markets, new digital technologies, and consumer unruliness" (p.161). British factual television is a rhizomatic industry, with production companies of different shapes and sizes, operating from different locations across the country, responding to institutions both public and private – and not solely in Britain, but reaching out globally.

Secondly, that the industry's creative and commercial imperatives encourage competitive practices where individuals must continually market their brand (Caldwell, 2013). Brett Mills (2008) argues that academics have always assumed media industry workers are "all pretty much the same", in contrast to the study of media audiences that often seeks to "demonstrate individuals' abilities to consume and understand texts in a variety of ways" (p.150). As John Calwell (2011) notes, media industries comprise "numerous, sometimes conflicted and competing socio-professional communities held together by lose and mutating alliances by

'willed affinity'" (p.548). Industry professionals exist in an industry that is driven by individuality and competition.

Genre can provide a mutually understood set of concepts to all working within television's highly individualistic production communities. Michele Hilmes (2011) argues genres provide understandable categories of creativity that are "capable of holding up even when authorship falls apart" (p.87). Genre offers the industry templates of previously popular texts in the hope of replicating that success (Altman, 1999; Hesmondhalgh, 2018; Ryan, 1992). As Bill Ryan (1992) explains, that by understanding the templates of cultural production is to understand how "variations on themes […] have market potential with particular audience segments" (p.178). As commercial markets become more important, there is a greater need to comprehend successful modes of production to assure market success. For this to be successful, these production conventions must be mutually understood. Ryan further explains "Cultural workers engaged in a particular type of work inevitably draw upon the customary structures and contents which characterise it" (p.179). Genre thereby becomes a part of cultural discourse, and as British television saw its engagement with commercial enterprise increase, the production culture changed.

In the 1990s British government policy broke up the in-house production model to generate a more competitive free-market environment. This new competitive production ecology (Cottle, 2003) saw discourse involving genre as a key component of the broadcaster commissioning negotiations with independent producers. Genres that demonstrated low commercial risk (usually meaning low production costs) could have a higher value. Entertainment-rich shows, with cheap running costs and high audience numbers, would be high-value commissions, thereby shaping genres accordingly (Ursell, 2003). Entertaining factual shows were not solely economically beneficial but could align with the expectations of public broadcasting criteria (Kilborn, 2006) with such shows placed at peak times in their schedule (Hill, 2007). The rise of the hybrid "infotainment", commercialised factual programmes that are considered to emphasise entertainment over knowledge, (Hill, 2007; Dovey, 2015; Corner, 2015; Kilborn, 2006), would see the rise of the industry-specific genre of factual entertainment (Kilborn, 2006) or of which scholars may define as 'Ordinary Television' (Bonner, 2015).

The questions of costs and popularity of a genre can be most evident through the eyes of the broadcaster. In defining the commercial value of British factual genres, Nicola Lees (2010) argues that within a costing scale, factual entertainment is at the lower end and the high-end "(and expensive)" factual shows are but a luxury (p.42). Each channel has its budget which will reflect the types of shows it will commission (Fanthome, 2006). Before the move in the 1990s to a more neoliberal institutional model, producers were in-house and central to the creative management of production output. The shift in the industry's service model re-positioned the role and importance of the in-house commissioning editors (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). The commissioning editors emerged from the new industry landscape, reshaped by political pressures, requiring broadcasters to formally engage with the growth of independent producers.

David Hesmondhalgh (2018) expanded on Bill Ryan's (1992) study of commissioning editors as creative managers as "intermediaries between the creators and commercial imperatives of the company" (p.38). Commissioning editors can bridge the dialectical gap between creation and commerce from which genre plays a central role in their decision-making. Mark Banks (2007) argues this dialectic signifies the importance of creative freedoms in producing artistic works whilst operating within the confines of set economic conditions and commercial imperatives. Banks argues this is a necessary tension, and it is a tension that must be navigated by both producers and commissioners. To make decisions through this dialectic, commissioning editors are grouped by industry-understood genre labels. The dialectical opposition between commercial and creative seeks to synthesise a fresh product that can engage consumer interest in ways other more conventional styles may not yet retain enough familiarity to draw on current consumer interests. Through the commissioning department system, genre offers industry-driven contexts that producers, commissioners, and broadcasters understand to engage in the dialectical pressures of television creation.

The creative managers of the genre commissioning departments will be the first point of contact with producers, the decision-makers in whether the proposal gets picked up (with the double-approval of the channel controller (Lees, 2010)). Commissioners are responsible for sifting through a huge amount of programme ideas provided by independents (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Fanthome, 2006). Commissioners thereby act as genre gatekeepers for distributor organisations, able to scrutinise and decide which ideas will match the requirements of their

13

broadcaster. John Sedgwick (2006) points out that broadcasters are guided by market-clearing, "the means by which the industry adjusts supply to the distinct levels of audience demand for different programmes" (p.3). The values of genres are thereby influenced by current audience trends, and commissioners within that genre will be attuned to those trends. Genre commissioners will look to companies that can match their (and their broadcaster's) assessment of the market trends or requirements. Commissioning an idea that has the potential to meet (and hopefully exceed) expectations, is more important than how closely it aligns with a department's genre conventions. Production companies with a track record within the desired genre may have currency with a commissioner, as Nicola Lees (2010) argues "to ensure they don't make a bad commissioning choice, they buy it from a production company that has a proven track record in the kind of program they're pitching" (p.43). In this regard, industry-relevant genres can feed into the commercial identity of producers as well as commissioning agents.

A factual production company can be assessed through its genre specificities, as can the broadcasters and distributors. Lees (2010) argues knowing which industry sectors relate to particular types of shows can be vital knowledge for a practitioner. Lees notes that a good working relationship between a broadcaster and a production company will see the former often issuing future briefs. Otherwise, production companies will need to work up ideas to submit to channels as pitches based on the organisation's "target market and current programming" (p.44). David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011) articulate the relationship forged between commissioner and producer as being one that can "sometimes involve conflict, but in other cases, highly effective collaboration between commissioners and creative managers" (p.98). The relationship between producer and commissioner relies on social interaction, through discourse and practice. The British factual television industry does not rely on rigid and robust rules, nor is it slave to designated codifications. Whilst genres are commonly considered for their textual specificity, genres in British factual television provide contexts that shows can be built upon. For British factual television, genre-mixing speaks to the acknowledged risks of factual commissioning in uncertain markets, as argued by Roger Kilborn (2006) to be motivated by "harder nosed commercial considerations" (p.110), and how historic changes within British television saw hybridisation within factual genres moved them into prime time slots at the expense of other genres (Dovey, 2015). What makes British factual television genres particularly unique, and is explored in the following section, is that genre-mixing has become industrially

entrenched as the result of national cultural conditions, situating factual genre as specific to British television industrial production practices.

1.3 Factual genres and genre-hybridisation in British television

The cultural make-up of factual genres in British television reflects a legacy of political regulation, technological advancements, and commercial pressures. Steven Neale (2015) describes television as a melting pot of influences from different mediums arguing "Radio, film, written fiction, theatre, journalism, music, and other art and media forms have all played an important part in television and its history" (p.5), all of which bring a range of genre content. Annette Hill (2007) defines factual television as "a container for non-fiction content; it signifies social and personal values for non-fiction genres; and it is part of non-fiction production and reception practices" (p.3). These values can shift with changes to culture, and for television production, genres are transformed through moments of production instability and organisational change (Cottle, 2003: p.172). Contemporary British factual television is a competitive market that is driven by the need for commercial success and audience popularity. The growth of popular factual in the 1990s saw an increase in the hybridisation of factual genres, with hybrid popular factual genres gaining 30 percent shares at peak time (Hill, Weibull, and Nilsson, 2007), leading to hybridity can be considered one of contemporary factual's defining features (Hill, 2007). Factual television is considered "characterised by a very high degree of hybridisation between what would formerly have discrete programme types" (Dovey, 2015: p.159). The close relationship between factual and hybridisation is reflected heavily in both academic and industry discourse.

The meaning of hybridsation for television has been a point of scholarly discussion. Jason Toynbee (2008) notes how ongoing transformative reproductions within television genres (and media more broadly) have seen hybridisation as one of the many shapers of genre. "One of the most illuminating strands of media studies research in the last twenty years has been concerned with that problem; the hybridisation of genres, changing narrative conventions, emerging styles in popular music, and so on" (p.273). Toynbee speaks of the gradual shifts in productions becoming a fresh condition for reproductions, effectively altering the structural template. "In effect, transformation in the structure of a genre is achieved through many cycles of the TMSA [transformational model of social activity], each yielding an incremental shift in structural

relations" (p.273). Toynbee argues that within the relations of production, genre hybridisation is a natural part of the causal shifts between structure and action. However, Jane Feuer (2005) relates the mixing of genres within television to Raymond William's (1974) schedules and flow. "Television programs do not operate as discrete texts to the same extent as movies the property of 'flow' blends one programme unit into another and programs are regularly interrupted by ads and promos" (p.118). Su Holmes' (2008b; 2008c) argues for a less linear approach to analysing genre-mixing through her research into factual television and the quiz show. Holmes draws on both Olaf Hoerschelmann's (2006) and poststructuralist Jacques Derrida's (1980) seminal essay *The Law of Genre*. Derrida argued that genres can not be mixed because every text is already genre blended, whilst Hoeschelmann builds on Derrida's work to suggest genre texts do not belong but participate in genres. Holmes (2008c) concludes whilst an understanding of a genre (the quiz show) is necessary to identify those in the genre, its generic repertoire should also be understood as emerging *from* the programmes" (p.13, original emphasis).

The value of genre-mixing is disputed. Richard Kilborn (2006) speaks critically of the genre-mixing within factual genres and how commercial pressures moved audiences to look at what was popular and economic. Kilborn argues hybridising related "to what mix of components would be likely to prove popular with a prime-time audience" (p.110). Gil Ursell (2003) takes a similar stance on the strengthing bonds between entertainment and information where the combination favoured entertainment with a loss to "substance and authority" (p.32). Whether genre-mixing has intellectual value to the industry-use of factual genres, both Kilborn and Ursell demonstrate how unique national political policy shaped not just industry practices but contributes to the landscape from which industry-constructed genres have gained prominence.

Whilst Jeremy Tunstall (2003) points out that "Each genre has its own specific goal or goals; it has a characteristic style of production - location film, or live studio, or the outside broadcast" (p.3) genres are also a factor of broadcaster market identity. Genres can aid broadcasters in demonstrating the tone and type of current content, and to this end, are an ongoing process. Genre labels provide formal (yet not necessarily stable) conventions for the industry of creating television. Rick Altman (1999) has defined genre labelling as "the name of a category central to the decision and communication of distributors and exhibitors" (p.14). However, for British factual television production, genre labels can be considered as being a central category for

producers and distributors (commissioners and broadcasting bodies). Genres are at the forefront of a broadcaster's market strategies, and such decision-making can be communicated to genre commissioning. These directions can either become part of outward communications with production companies or perform as part of the commissioner's filter when sifting through genre solicitations. To provide use and value to producers, commissioners, and broadcasters in British factual television, genres must have shared intrinsic meaning.

Where "programme makers and audiences negotiate between what factual content ought to be and what it is on a day-to-day basis" (Hill, 2007: p.3), what British factual means to broadcasters is highly individualised (Hill, 2004). Commissioning departments are tailored to the broadcaster requirements. Some of the broadcaster commissioning departments use genre labels that have broad cultural recognition, such as documentary and current affairs. These two traditional factual genre groups resonate with producers of content and consumers alike. The documentary genre speaks to a broad range of television content with boundaries that have been described as "leaky and unstable" (Corner, 2015). John Corner (1999) has sought to locate four primary ingredients that constitute documentary filmmaking as observationalism, interview, narratives of inquiry, and the implicatory plane. Examples of British industry documentary shows that meet these criteria can range from the historical documentary film, *Hiroshima* (BBC, 2005), to the biographical genealogy documentary, in *Who Do You Think You Are?* (BBC, 2004-), to the correspondent-driven *Louis Theroux* series of BBC-2 documentaries, to the more entertainment-driven, and controversial (Creeber, 2015c), Big *Fat Gypsy Wedding* (Channel, 4 2010-2015). The documentary speaks to non-fiction, yet fiction is commonly deployed within the factual genres.

Derek Paget (2011) has charted the scale of hybridisation of factual and fiction, shifting from the documentary to the docusoap; drama narrative infused documentaries, often deploying fly-on-the-wall techniques of story-telling (*Vets in Practice*, (BBC, 1997-2002); *Britain's Busiest Airport: Heathrow* (ITV, 2015-)). Paget's scale is a useful yet simplistic example of how factual genres do not exist in a purely non-fictional space, but an infused space of fiction and non-fiction. Moving down Paget's scale, reality TV is a genre for which Annette Hill (2015) describes as a "catch-all category for a variety of different one-off programmes, series, and formats that follow real people and celebrities and their every day or out of the ordinary

experiences" (p.162). Reality television can refer to a broad spectrum of show styles and content (including the docusoap, from the likes of *Big Brother* (Channel 4; Channel 5, 2000-)) to *Hell's Kitchen* (ITV, 2005-2009), or *The Great British Bake-Off* (BBC; Channel 4, 2010-). Paget also notes the documusical on the scale (BAFTA winner *Feltham Sings* (Channel 4, 2002)), docudrama (*Brexit: The Uncivil War*, (Channel 4, 2018)), and the biopic (*Hawkings*, (BBC, 2004), before the scale becomes purely fictional with the mock-documentary and the drama genres. Reality television is often spoken about and commissioned as part of, popular factual or factual entertainment commissions. *The Great British-Bake Off* was initially commissioned by the BBC's documentary commissioning department (Appendix A1) but with a contestant-format commonly associated with factual entertainment. As genres are considered behest to cultural norms, industry genre classifications are equally subjective, unstable, and changing. Some genre labels are largely exclusive to industry practice and are not influenced by changing patterns in textual consumption. Factual entertainment, specialist factual, or popular factual are genres generated, maintained, and used by the television industry, defined according to show production format (Blum, 1995), and for producers, their genre definitions "often overlap" (Thirkell, 2010: p.243).

Factual can be conceptualised as a macro-industry genre with a classification of sub-genres that relate to industry use, keeping their value industry-centric (Wickham, 2007). Multiple scholars have written about reality television as a factual genre, but it is a genre label rarely used in industry discourse (situated as being popular entertainment or factual entertainment). Annette Hill (2007; 2015) situates reality television as a 'container' for a variety of hybrid genres that fit within the industry banner of factual entertainment, yet it is a container with little significance for an industry that deploys more production-focused conventions to categorise commissions. The different lexicons applied by scholars and industry no way undermines the significance of either but does notably highlight a distinction about how industry and scholars define and categorise texts.

Factual remains a nebulous category. "What constitutes factual TV is surprisingly ambiguous," postulates BFI lecturer Phil Wickham, (2007), "we might think news bulletins or documentaries but plenty of other types of text are strictly speaking factual as well. Game shows are 'fact', in that they are really happening (if perhaps not quite in the form we are

experiencing)." (p.125). With the use of 'Fact', Wickham draws on the industry lexicon situating his reflections as that of an insider as much as an outsider. He points out that what is considered 'fact' does not necessarily meet broader genre expectations, because this genre classification to some degree, defies the normative genre categories. Game shows, a long-held consumer category, would be considered by the British television industry as part of the factual macro-genre, commissioned by a department such as factual entertainment. This suggests there is an industry-shared genre lexicon that neither relies upon, nor seeks to represent, genre labels that circulate between texts, distributing agents, and consumers. Jonathan Bignell (2013) defines factual as a series of modes that include documentary, drama-documentary, docusoap, and reality TV, "programmes such as these aim to represent reality, to dramatise events which occurred in the past, or denote real people in a continuing serial" (p.207). This integration of reality is key to much of factual television's output. Jeremy Orlebar, Patricia Holland, and Bignell (2005) argue "Factual programmes play a key role in the public service commitment to disseminate information about contemporary events, and the range of attitudes and ways of life among the population" (p.170). Their conceptualisation notes all factual shows have a cultural component, however, this could equally be applied to drama in the same measure.

From an industry perspective, factual is ever-changing, thanks to the continual acts of genre-hybridisation. This means production practitioners must be aware of the genre terrain from multiple positions to take advantage of the market as "a knowledge of genre helps" (Collie, 2007: p.85). Hanne Bruun (2010) argues a broad understanding of genre is at the core of production practice, as producers must be aware of how genre is interpreted from a variety of positions, including the "imagined viewers", the broadcaster, and production companies (p.726).

Genre-mixing within British factual television has become a celebrated strategy by some television practitioners. Robert Thirkell (2010) reflects on his experience as a British television factual developer and the importance of genre to his work, arguing "… one of my cardinal rules for creative success: to create winners get different genres to collide […] Combining genres is a key to success in modern TV" (p.27). This strong relationship between creative pitching and the resulting genre-mixing is echoed within academic circles through television scholar John Fiske (2011) who notes that the commissioning of new shows is part of *genre evolution* where "each new show shifts genre boundaries and develops definitions" (p.112). Evolution denotes a

survival of the fittest mantra, and industry changes in genre conventions relate heavily to navigating the uncertain markets and ensuring market survival. Genre shows redefine and mix formats to remain interesting to their potential market.

Genre-mixing does not simply play into production practices, but into the understanding of what, how, and where genres may collide within industry designations. In some respects, for Bignell, Holland, and Orlebar (2005), factual is often used to refer to non-scripted programming but acknowledge that documentary programmes can "include elements of comedy and drama, and are certainly entertaining" (p.281). Presenting factual as non-scripted can be problematic. Factual is a broad catch-all classification, and Bignell, Holland, and Orlebar note that it is *often* used to signal non-scripted shows. In industry commissioning terms, factual provides an interpretation of programming conventions that are shared and understood by production practitioners. Both industry genres of factual and documentaries may contain scripted elements. Bignall and Orlebar go on to note reality TV has "no scriptwriters as such" (p.288), but scriptwriting can take place. As an example, *Bargain Hunt* (BBC, 2000-) is a BBC factual entertainment show, meta-tagged on the BBC website (BBC, 2021b) as being both factual and entertainment (yet falling under the purview of BBC daytime commissioning (BBC, 2021a)). *Bargain Hunt* would not be considered a documentary, despite having documentary-styled segments within its format. However, there is scripting in *Bargain Hunt* for voice-over narration, game commentary, and the show's set-up.

As it has been demonstrated, British factual television production genres are uniquely bound to their industry's creative practices and discourse, utilised through producers, commissioners, and broadcasters. Industry genres are distinct and relatively autonomous to the cultural shifts of textually related genres, however, whilst British factual television genres are localised to their industry, industry production practitioners have a broader understanding of genre within television consumption. As this study demonstrates, practitioners do reflect on audiences and genre. Producers are not simply aware of textual genres, but how genres operate within industry spaces. As Craig Collie (2007) argues, genre knowledge is useful but understanding how genres relate to a "notoriously risk-averse industry" is important (p.85). The following section explores how use, value, and meaning can be applied to genre practice in the British television industry production culture.

1.4 Uses, values, and meanings: defining the functions of genre within British factual television

This thesis considers uses, values, and meanings as key concepts in understanding genre's function for British television industry professionals and how their self-theorising may challenge or align with related theories proposed by media scholars. Whilst use, value, and meaning identify genre within different social contexts, they are also interdependent as part of industry working practices.

In contextualising ideas of uses, values, and meanings, genre's use within an industry is about its application, and from its application value and meaning are formed. The thesis acknowledges and demonstrates that genre's uses are not the same for all industry practitioners; the uses, values, and meanings of genre for a creative practitioner in a production company may naturally differ from its use, value, and meaning for a commissioner for a national broadcaster. Equally, as chapter two further argues, genre's use within a production company can differ between roles. What links much of genre's use in production is its contribution to discourse.

The concept of genre function can help better understand the relationship between genre and discourse. This concept is argued by James Naremore (2008) who adopted Michel Foucault's (1979) concept of author function for his analysis of film genre, where the author's value is argued to come from cultural associations between author and text. "The author's name serves to characterise a certain mode of being of discourse" (p.146). Naremore argues this author function could equally apply to genre as genre-function.

However, genre can be a production category by media producers (Bruun, 2010), and British television broadcasters will employ commissioning editors to manage specific genres (Fanthome, 2006), and are commonly departmentally assigned by genre (BBC, 2020; Channel 4, 2020). Whilst genre and discourse are important to the industry, their use by social agents is tied to their use as social structure. As such, genre is used as part of cultural practice as well as discourse. In applying genre-function to television, Jason Mittell (2004) argues that the generic function of genres do not form from the text, but from "cultural practices of generic discourses" (p.14) emphasising that where discourse can be the start of genre formation, their use will become embedded in their associated practices.

This thesis argues that genre cannot exist within a workspace separate from the practice and the practitioners. As linguist Terry Threadgold (1989) argues genre cannot be isolated from the social world and those "who 'use' it, analyse it, and then perhaps, teach others to use it" (p.103).

Threadgold's argument relates genre ideologies to literary fields, but functions to demonstrate the importance of seeking genre's role within the different facets of television industry production. As an example, genre can be used as a form of pre-requisite knowledge, or blueprint (Altman, 1999), that helps institutionalise what is unique into pre-existing commercial mass-market strategies (McKinlay & Smith, 2009). In this context, genre use can relate to the sharing and understanding of knowledge, be they considered of value to production or not.

Value derives from an understanding of an object's use. John Corner and Jane Roscoe (2016) suggest value is a complex term for research and is "situationally contingent" and "embedded" (p.157). In television, Roscoe argues value is not inherent to one subject, but defined across different locations, discourses, and practices (pp.157-164). The thesis considers genre's value within this context; that value derives from a reflexive understanding of genre's benefits formed and sustained through industry discourse and working practices. As an example, if genre's use generates commercial productivity by establishing clear lines of communication for genre commissioning, genre must have industry value to those involved in the buying and selling of television concepts.

Within value, there are heterogenic questions that must be recognised (see Threadgold, 1989) as different genres can have different values at different times. These values can be maintained (or altered) through a variety of means. Possible changing conditions could be the costs to produce a television text, the audience popularity for a genre, how genre texts fare in scheduling performance, or the importance of genre in meeting required public mandates. From industry self-theorising, genre can be considered as a contested, complex—yet functional—aspect of British factual television.

How genre is used, and what values it brings, informs genre's meaning to British television development practices. In this sense, meaning is about the relationship between the subject, the practitioner, and its object, genre. Meaning has proven a difficult concept for qualitative research to clearly define (Shore, 1996). Helena Dahlberg and Karin Dahlberg (2019) argue meaning is not a cognitive process, but an afterthought, and in this sense, it is a reflective process.

Cultural meaning construction, as argued by Bradd Shore (1996), is a "perpetual encounter of a meaning-seeking subject and a historically and culturally orchestrated world of artifacts" (p.319). Shore argues that meaning is constructed from individuals cognitively drawing on pre-existing cultural knowledge as a resource to make sense of something novel. As with Dahlberg and Dahlberg, memory and reflection are key, however, the emphasis is on the cognitive process of meaning-making upon an event rather than the lack of cognitive processes during the novel experience. Cultural meaning construction speaks to genre as an interpretative tool that is used to relate older accepted frameworks with new approaches.

Genre enactments, Stine Lomborg (2014) argues, are "interwoven in the fabric of meaning of everyday life and society at large" (p.3). Genres mean something to each of those who use them and must thereby designate value. If genre does provide frameworks for the interpretation and organising of experiences, expectations, and understandings (Bruun, 2010) within production, the meaning of genre to a media worker speaks directly to the meanings of the lived-in world of British factual television.

In context to this study, meaning is reflexive, interpretative, and ontologically grounded. In a pragmatic sense, the study explores the industry cultural practices that involve genre, and through the interpretations of its uses and values that are embedded in those practices, what meaning genres have for British factual television production. Meaning has no singular unifying answer to offer but provides a better understanding of the mechanisms, interactions, and processes that are at play in British television production, and how genre is a quintessential contributor to the industry's commercial ecology.

Thesis research questions

In conclusion, this study investigates the following research questions:

- What uses, values, and meanings does genre have for production company managers, genres commissioners, and television broadcasters as part of the development and production of British factual television?
- To what extent, and in what ways, does genre function to manage creative and commercial decision-making in industry organisational management, market reputations, and commercial identities (and with what implications)?

As a commercial industry noted for its deeply embedded culture and rituals (Caldwell, 2008), the research carries particular methodological considerations that need to acknowledge challenges of industry reflexivity and empirical access.

Part 2: Mode of inquiry and thesis methodology

To explore the uses, values, and meanings of genre to industry practitioners in British factual television, the thesis is challenged by dismissals of genre's importance by academics and industry practitioners alike. As this thesis demonstrates, genre exists in both discourse, creative practice, and through practice, organisational structure, yet it also acknowledges that for some practitioners, genre is not reflected upon as an important part of their lived-in industry experience. To best locate and reveal genre's functions as part of creative practice, this thesis advocates critical realism as a useful mode of social inquiry into researching genre as a function of production culture that serves not one, but multiple roles. Critical realism acknowledges that the mechanisms that construct social reality are not always visible. Critical realism underpins the thesis' integrated methodology that draws upon industry practitioners, participant observation, and textual analysis to penetrate the barriers surrounding embedded commercial television production.

Critical realism, its origins largely attributed to Roy Bhaskar (1975), argues that events and the experience of those events are independent of each other; that there is a separate reality that operates regardless of whether we experience or understand it. Critical realism recognises that perception is subjective and "an (objective) world exists independently of people's perceptions, language or imagination" (O'Mahoney & Vincent, 2014: p.1). These are referred to as the intransitive and transitive domains (Bhaskar, 1975). Intransitive speaks to the structures and mechanisms that exist independent of their study, and the transitive are the theories produced from the former (Sayer, 2000). For critical realism, the social world is a complex, unpredictable, and highly variable open system that makes precise determination difficult (O'Mahoney & Vincent, 2014; Archer, Bhaskar, Collier, et al, 2013; O'Mahoney, O'Mahoney, & Al-Amoudi, 2017). Critical realism acknowledges that social phenomena do not have the durability of the natural world. Where industries and businesses successfully sustain themselves, it is the result of their social systems reacting to the contextual conditions of their world. Their perpetuity is a

"product of making continual change in order to stay the same" (Sayer, 2000: p.13). Whether it is producers developing concepts that build fresh ideas into commercially viable conventions, or broadcasters looking for new ideas to refresh their distributable content, genre is a social mechanism that drives sustainability through change. To make sense of the mechanisms that drive social systems, critical realism looks to stratification and emergence.

The stratification of ontological domains is key to a critical realist way of thinking. The human experience of things is a subset of the actual realm, space where events transpire and are experienced, which itself is constructed by those objective world's causal mechanisms and entities. This depth ontology is particularly suitable for conceptualising genre as an entity of the real domain. Critical realism argues the world is constructed of entities - or structures – with the higher entity having emergent powers that distinguish that entity from its structural components of lower entities (Elder-Vass, 2008). These causal powers are possessed by all instances of a given entity (Elder-Vass, 2015). This is an appealing concept when considering the codifications that constitute genre formations – a cowboy hat being a visual icon that in part constructs cultural notions of the Western. A further key point to critical realism is that both individuals *and* social structures can be entities with emergent powers (Elder-Vass, 2008). Genre can be evidenced in the discourse and practices of individuals as well as within social structures, such as a genre commissioning department. Critical realism provides a perspective that acknowledges the multiple forms of genre and the role of its constituent parts.

Critical realism believes ethnographic research should not simply describe things and tell stories, but explain how structure factors into human agency. Reflexive accounts of social practitioners can be the starting point on a journey, rather than the end (Rees & Gatenby, 2014) and a methodology should be sensitive to what is being asked, and the complexity of the field in which it asks. Sayer (2000) notes methods should be driven by what the researcher wants to learn from their object of study with an awareness that the social object is the product of multiple components and forces as social systems are complex and messy (p.19). Genre exists within the practices of the individuals, but it is also a component of organisational management, institutional structure, and market identities.

To this end, the project has adopted an integrated method inspired by the industry reflexive research by John T. Caldwell (2008). In studying production cultures, Caldwell argues an

integrated methodology (or mixed methods research in critical realism spheres (Hurrell, 2014)) is "useful when interrogating production practices" for keeping different registers of research in "critical tension or dialogue with the others (Caldwell, 2011: p.550). Caldwell sees media-producing cultures as being complex para-industries (2014) that need to be investigated with an awareness of their complexity. Caldwell's integrated method uses a synthetic cross-checking analysis of ethnographic, textual, and economic/industrial registers. Through this method, Caldwell argues the researcher can be more mobile in navigating the constructed realities that exist within media production.

For Caldwell, theorizing is a continual part of the film and television industry as its workers are part of an ongoing process of sense-making through their reflexivity. However, much of this media industry theorizing is occluded by the complexities and resistance of its culture. Caldwell's (2011) process acknowledges that media industry "realities are always constructed – that it is about studying the industry's self-representation, self-critique, and self-reflection" (p.551). Inspired by anthropologist Clifford Geertz, Caldwell emphasises the hermeneutical value of studying cultures and that the researcher will not uncover any authentic reality within a cultural space. However, researchers can use such methods to reveal the reflexive practices that the post-Fordists media industry demands to sustain them (Caldwell, 2008; 2011).

Applying the integrated method to the thesis, and remaining sympathetic to a critical realist standpoint, the methodology combines a local participant observation study and a textual analysis of industry texts to the semi-structured interview approach. Genre exists within production culture with multiple functions, and one single register of data can limit the ability to uncover how genre works across an enclosed industry space. Using three united methods of industry engagement is valuable to television research as it provides different avenues to obtain data that can be cross-referenced for a deeper, more robust, understanding of genre and production culture. The semi-structured approach ensures that the interview topic remains a critical component of the interviewee's reflexivity (Smith & Elger, 2014). Participant observation is applied to an industry event that provides an empirical experience of a British industry event. The lived-in world can be observed and related to its construction as part of the reflexive accounts. Thirdly, industry texts (such as production company and broadcaster websites

and industry event catalogues and apps) are studied and triangulated against the interview accounts and empirical experiences.

Caldwell (2008) warns of limiting production research to a "clean menu of disconnected methods" (3) yet locating an authentic reality of production culture is argued to be naïve (5). Caldwell (2008; 2011) argues for a synthetic approach offers the research a range of sources to consider critically, and where appropriate, against each other. In doing so, genre's presence in industry practice can emerge where it was otherwise unseen. As an example of this cross-checking, a production company managing director could be dismissive of the value of genre in the British factual television industry, yet that interview disclosure—a reflexive construction of their lived-in world—can be measured by covert participant observation of commissioning editors in dialogue with production workers. How a production company represents its uses and values genre on its website can be compared to the theorising of its managers. The method does not dismiss any one source as unreliable, as it is built on a critical realist understanding that social reality is subjective and interpreted (O'Mahoney & Vincent, 2014). From a critical realist perspective, the integrated method uses multiple sources to best reveal and understand how genre, as an entity of the real domain, can be an emergent power in the social work of British factual television creative practitioners.

Paul McDonald (n.d) lists three methodological concerns with media research. That academic research fails to comprehend the complexities of the media industry and the working lives of its professionals; engagement provides a better understanding of that culture. Second, by keeping a distance from the media industry, to challenge industry perspectives, there is a danger the research is no longer willing to fully engage with its subjects. This could lead to research being marginalised or found to be irrelevant. Third, a distance from the subjects of media research risks a "lofty" and "somewhat arrogant" position that casts industry professionals as "objects to be investigated".

By adopting an integrated methodology of participant observation, industry textual analysis, and semi-structured interviews, the thesis can protect itself from straying into any of these three conditions. When contesting the position of interviewee disclosures, a semi-structured interview methodology can risk failing conditions one and three. It would be naïve to take industry interview disclosures as verbatim, but equally, without a second register to consider this data, a

singular interview methodology wanders close to condition three: that practitioners are investigated and refuted by the researcher in favour of a pre-ordained hypothesis. By combining methodologies, the researcher has another avenue into the subject's complex world to test their hypothesis and the collected data.

For a more in-depth review of the integrated methodology, the following sections consider each component. There are further reflections on the methodological choices in the thesis' conclusions.

2.1 Semi-structured interviews with above-the-line practitioners within a television production ecology

To engage in industry discourses on genre is to engage with industry practitioners whose utterances and practices contribute to genre formations. Industry interviews provide television industry research to penetrate the commercial enclosures and obtain lived-in experiences, accounts, and theories of what is otherwise obscured. Self-theorising provides direct data from industry professionals who use, shape, and are informed by genre through their working culture. Metaphorically, if genre is a hammer, a researcher speaking to different carpenters about how they use the hammer—its values, and its meaning to their work—would have insight into a hammer's potential contributions to the practice of carpentry. Different carpenters may assign different uses, values, and meanings to a hammer, and some carpenters may curate their accounts to the tool's function, but the data still speaks to the world of carpentry and how carpenters interpret their lived-in practices. To this end, the thesis research acknowledges the limitations of self-theorising in finding definitive answers about genre within a heterogenic working culture where creative autonomy (Hesmondhalgh, 2019) and flexibility in creative management (Ryan, 1992) are valued. However, through semi-structured interviews, the theorising of interviewees does provide access and data from those who are integral to genre's functions. Some interviewees see no value in genre at all, while others reflect positively on genre's use or theorise on its broader industry value in ways the research could not presume. Even when genre is dismissed, how it is dismissed, and why it is dismissed, can be valuable data in understanding what genre means to television industry practice.

Interviews were semi-structured. Anne Galletta (2013) defines semi-structured interviews as the incorporation of "open-ended and more theoretically driven questions, eliciting data grounded in the experience of the participant as well as data guided by existing constructs in the particular discipline within which one is conducting research" (p.46). Semi-structured interviews can incorporate and sustain the researcher's intellectual intervention in the discourse about working practice. It allows space for the interviewee to respond, and the interviewee to adapt questions accordingly, without losing focus on the researcher's key aims. Semi-structured interviews enable a dialogic space for reciprocity and reflexivity to the given topic (Galletta, 2013). The semi-structured interview widens that conduit by asking open-ended questions that may, or may not, lead to unexpected avenues, whilst remaining thematically relevant (Galletta, 2013). Reflexivity should be part of the interviewer's mindset as it is for the interviewee. The interviewer must be actively listening (Weger, Castle & Emmett, 2010), and responding accordingly. Semi-structured interviews position the interviewer and interviewee on a shared platform where both are active listeners mutually seeking to explore and understand the topic of discussion through dialogue. Paul McDonald (n.d) has criticised media research as "a tendency to hold industry at a distance as this kind of separate critical object". McDonald argues that by maintaining a gap between scholars and the field, media researchers may "Fail to fully comprehend the complexity of media industries and of the conditions, the working lives, of media professionals." This thesis draws upon the semi-structured interview methodology as a valuable tool to empower the interviewee through a reciprocal space of active listening. Semi-structured interviews provide a process that gives the interviewee space to reflect and theorise on their experiences and knowledge without feeling steered towards a given answer by rigid interviewer questions. It provides a space where the interviewee feels valued and comfortable to explore the questions on their terms. My focus was to instill in the interviewee a feeling that their experiences were being listened to, whilst as the interviewer, I ensured that the questions kept the dialogue thematically focused. This was important when discussing concepts that for some practitioners were alien to their social reality.

It is through a critical study of discourse and the use of language, we can better understand how language relates to the institutional, social, and political agencies that sustain and circulate through discourse (Gee, 2014). As a concept, discourse speaks to meaning, or as discourse analyst Laura Alba-Juez (2009) concludes, as "the study of language in use" (p.10). Brian

Paltridge (2012) speaks of discourse within a social constructionist perspective, where "what we speak contributes to the construction of certain views of the world, of people, and in turn, ourselves" (p.1).

Jason Mittell (2004) positions discourse as a key concept in the study of television genres. He argues discursive utterances "which may seem to reflect an already established genre, are themselves constitutive of that genre—they are the practices that define genres, delimit their meanings, and posit their cultural value" (p.16). Mittell, acknowledging Foucauldian theories of discourse amongst others, argues that cultural practices of definition, interpretation, and evaluation are how genres circulate as discourse. Genre discourses can determine the nature of the subject(s), they can act heuristically in locating meaning, and as part of generating conclusions.

As media scholars, Miranda Banks, Bridget Conor, and Vicki Mayer (2016) argue, "Grounded data throws into perspective our scholarly understanding of production communities in light of shifts in policy, economic imperatives, industrial organizations, national politics, globalization, and local or regional dynamics" (p.xi). The specificity of understanding genre's relationship with actual practice calls for a methodological approach that speaks to the work within micro-industrial sites. John T. Caldwell (2015) recommends an examination of workers and local sites of practice over the broader strokes as favoured by political economists. This is because wide industrial analysis loses sight of "the vagaries of human subjects and culture's thick complexities" (p.157).

Speaking on production culture methodologies, Caldwell (2008) offers two key observations: that industry cultures can be dismissive of intellectualised queries on their work, and that industry agent disclosure relies on self-interest, promotion, and spin. The role of this research is not seeking to locate an "authentic reality" as media realities are constantly reconstructed (p.5) and while the researcher must acknowledge the value of the reflections of the workers who are knowledgeable actors within the industry, it would be naïve to take what is said as verbatim. Caldwell (2008) speaks of this performative nature as "highly coded, managed, and inflected" (p.2) and "insider knowledge is always managed; because spin and narrative define and couch any industrial disclosure" (p.2) The needed performativity of industry identity is explored in-depth in chapter four, and evident within the conducted semi-structured interviews. Some

interviewees appeared to be demonstrating their cultural capital through their self-reflexivity (Appendix A4), while others were initially cautious of disclosing or opining to an industry outsider.

For Caldwell (2008; 2011), reflexivity can offer an effective method of penetrating heterogenic social spaces. Reflexivity can acknowledge subjectivity, contingency, and the connections made from lived experiences (Adams & Jones, 2011). *Self-reflexivity*, often considered autobiographical (Adams & Jones, 2011), has been described as "the rhetorical process of looking in on the self and how our performances of identity connect politically and personally to the world" (Johnson, 2019: p.229). In the context of this thesis, the practitioner's understanding of their relationship to their lived-in world of production is important. The meaning of genre cannot be conceived as a function of the television industry whilst ignoring its use, meaning, and value to the practitioners who sustain it.

A second closely associated component is *industry reflexivity*. As described by Caldwell (2008), industry reflexivity can be considered as "local cultural negotiation and expression" (p.2) of the lived experience of production spaces. The distinction was notable in the conducted interviews for this thesis. Industry reflexivity is still a form of self-reflection, but interviewees often spoke of industry ontology beyond their personal experiences. Such reflections were not accounts of lived-in experiences, but how the self reflects on their culture. Caldwell (2008) argues that film and television practitioners are continual theorists of their industry, defining such thinking as *critical industry practices*.

As part of this thesis, reflexive data on genre can express how genre is articulated as a language, the attitudes industry practitioners have towards genre, and its subjective meaning to an active participant in the culture of study. It is a powerful tool to penetrate an embedded culture to better understand how it functions through the theorising of those who contribute it (Geertz, 1994). Considering responses as self-reflexive and industry reflexive was useful when analysing the data as not just *what* was said, but *how* it was being said, and the possibility of *why* it was said.

Between May 2016 and June 2017, one hundred and fifteen British production companies (independent and in-house) were contacted, alongside a selection of factual commissioners for the main British television channels. Personalised contacts were sent to managing directors,

creative directors, development heads, and above-the-line variations on these roles. Above-the-line is defined as roles with managerial and creative responsibilities for projects (Morley & Silver, 1977). Above-the-line has come to encompass roles that handle business decisions as much as creative as the distinction has become less distinct (Caldwell, 2008). It is in the decision-making processes, especially in the intersection between commercial and creative issues, that genre plays a key role.

The decision to seek responses from a range of above-the-line practitioners from a range of sources was both ideological and pragmatic. Ideologically, the opportunity to speak to different managerial positions within production companies could provide different cultural perspectives on the value and use of genre, as different roles have different agencies. For instance, a managing director's focus on market conditions could carry more holistic reflexivity to the wider industry landscape than a development head's mandate to directly oversee the internal development of genre projects. From one hundred and fifteen British production companies, fourteen above-the-line practitioners consented to be interviewed for periods of between fifteen and thirty minutes (although some interviews continued beyond this proposed period). Of the fourteen, three commissioning editors, each representing a broadcaster, agreed to be interviewed. Conducted interviews generated a lot of data, with many interviews going beyond the allotted time. Fourteen was enough to analyse without a further round of industry engagement.

Speaking about the gap between media scholars and the media industry and the question of access, Paul McDonald (n.d) raises concerns about commercial confidentiality. He notes industry workers do not want to share knowledge that could be released and used by competitors. Sherry Ortner (2009) speculates film and television media industries question the worth in academic engagement and thereby conducted research. Both arguments potentially draw on the ideology of business management, where time has value, making an interview, with no tangible profit or benefit, much less engaging. Matthew Freeman (2016) observes "Many challenges, pitfalls, and obstacles remain for those researchers seeking to both study and work with the media industries in the name of research. And many of these obstacles come from the value—or perhaps the lack thereof—that academia is seen to be able to offer industry, and to a far lesser extent vice versa" (p.27). This attitude was evident in some of the early contacts with interviewees, wary as to why they, as interviewees, would be of interest, or to the point of the study. Navigating these hurdles

between media research and the media industry was at the forefront of the methodology and required the research to seek and negotiate the best terms to acquire the necessary interview.

Interviews were thereby offered at the convenience of the interviewee, and to be conducted in terms that would suit their schedule. This could include face-to-face meetings, skype call interviews, or telephone. E-mailed answers to interviewed questions were not offered, as interviews were to be semi-structured and thereby sought an immediacy with the interviewee. Furthermore, voice interviews provided more assurance that communications were authentic and not written or augmented by a third person, such as a personal assistant.

Face-to-face interviews are often given preference within qualitative methods (Irvine, Drew, & Sainsbury, 2013) for the potential for longer interviews and better quality of participation (Wengraf, 2001; Irvine, 2011). However, research carried out by Janghorban, Roudsari, and Taghipour, (2014), Deakin and Wakefield, (2014), and Sedgwick and Spiers, (2009) argue for the positive methodological and pragmatic benefits of Skype and telephone interviews. This thesis draws upon their work to mitigate issues of the distance between interviewer and interviewee. This is in line with Deakin and Wakfield (2014) and Sedgwich & Spiers (2009) that have enabled me to effectively engage with interviewees who have limits on their time and movement (Janghorban, Roudsari, & Taghipour, 2014).

In utilising telephonic interviews, my research has been able to gain access to subjects who would otherwise be unable or unwilling to talk face-to-face. Media industry workers can run long working hours, with the television sector middle management and managing directors within independent television sometimes on ten-hour days or seven-day weeks (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). In such a culture, mediating the complex and heavy workflow requires the researcher to offer flexibility. For interviewees who chose telephone or skype as an interviewee preference, the interview could be scheduled around their lifestyle (one interviewee arranged a telephone interview at his home on their day off). In terms of geography, while many of the production companies were London-based, several were further afield, situated in North England and Wales. Interviewees predominantly requested phone interviews, though several requested skype (two of which specifically requested video) and three requested face-to-face. The value of telephone and skype interviews has enabled a rigorous investigation into how production professionals reflect upon their work, experiences, and theories of their industry and positioned

me to make robust, justified observations on genre. Further reflections on the experience of conducting the interviews are discussed further in the thesis conclusions.

Interviewees were asked for around twenty minutes of their time, but this varied in length depending on the interviewee's schedule and agency, resulting in interviews ranging from twenty minutes to over an hour. The planned structured questions for each interview were:

- What does genre mean to your role (production/development/commissioning)?
- Is genre a shared language between producers, commissioners, and industry?
- What do you think genre's relationship is to formats?
- Do you think about the mixing of genre within a development project?
- What can you tell me about genre when working with—and pitching to—commissioning editors?
- Concerning Roger Thirkell urging producers to defy expectations of genre commissioners – do you agree?
- Do audiences care about genre?

The wording of the questions was not always posed identically and would occasionally be adjusted to reflect the tone and conversation of the interview.

All interviewees for the project were given anonymity. The interviewee's position within the industry is provided, but names are not disclosed. This was particularly important for the commissioning editors who were all very wary of being interviewed. The work pool for commissioners in British television is relatively small compared to the scale of producers, and commissioners were concerned that their interviews could have future ramifications for their job prospects. This again highlights the commercial and competitive nature of the media industry and how such structures inform and are informed by, the agency of its workers. As the interview data looks to thematic content and patterns present in the data, rather than the identity and history of the interviewee, the identity of the participant is not key to the thesis findings.

Interview data were subjected to thematic analysis which provides an analytical framework for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 79). The thematic analysis provides qualitative research with an analytical framework to locate themes within a corpus of data that has been derived from codified datasets. For an investigation

into working practices and their relationship to genre, the thematic analysis provides a method to extract specific themes across a corpus of data that together seek to reveal how theory and practice intersect. Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke present thematic analysis as a six-step approach: familiarising with data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes, and producing the report (p.87). Applied as a contextualist method, Braun and Clarke argue thematic analysis can examine "the ways individuals make meaning of their experience, and, in turn, the ways the broader social context impinges on those meanings, while retaining focus on the material and other limits of 'reality" (p.81).

Through this contextualist thematic analysis, interview data with television industry practitioners were sifted, searching for codes that could be unified into themes. The process of transcription, codification, resulted in six pertinent themes being generated. Identified codes of genre's relationship to power, ritualisation, method, negotiation, and communication developed themes of institutional power, interaction power, industry language, ritualised practice, genre in commissioning, genre in liminal spaces, and genre definitions. These themes have provided the essential framework for four of the thesis' chapters, with the final chapter operating a participant observation methodology that can test and expand upon the research through an industry social event.

Edited transcriptions have been correlated in the thesis appendices (Appendix A), along with the ethical clearance (Appendix B). To respect the desire for anonymity and present a unified approach across the interviews, any data that might reveal an identity has not been included. Any responses that named television shows or colleagues that might reveal their identity through association have been augmented to best remove such data. As the data analysis is of the content and industry reflections, rather than of the interviewee's mannerisms, and their utterances, interviews have had minor edits for clarity of voice (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006; Shore, 2020). Interviewees, often unused to intellectual questions on the meaning and value of their work, would stutter, stop mid-sentence, or re-frame their reflections mid-sentence. Minor edits were made to de-clutter these moments which could diffuse their intended meaning. These editing techniques do not solely protect anonymity but seek to best represent the interviewee's reflections on a page; where raw self-expression and verbalised thought processing can obfuscate the intended meaning.

The attached appendices provide expanded excerpts of the conducted interviews. These are intended to provide further context to the embedded quotations used in the thesis. Questions posed to interviewees that did not result in relevant data are not presented in the appendices.

Anonymity was extended only to those participants who engaged directly with the project. The decision was to acknowledge and respect the concerns of industry self-surveillance (Caldwell, 2014) and demonstrate the project's focus on discourse rather than individuals. Any practitioners named in this thesis come from published sources or attended public speaking events.

2.2 Participant observation methodology and post-actor-network theory analysis

For the final chapter, a short-term participant observation ethnographic approach (Bodgewiic, 1999; Jeffrey & Troman, 2004) was applied to explore the ritualised industry settings of a factual television social event. Participant observation is "[…] fieldwork an investigator does to gain insight into some subculture or organisation or activity of interest" (Berger, 1998: p.105), and is an ethnographic approach that enables researchers to spot emergent patterns of interaction to reveal social causal mechanisms (Rees & Gatenby, 2014). Mayer, Conor, and Banks (2016) argue "Observational, on-the-ground research allows scholars better access to determining the nuances of language, behaviour, ritual, and subjectivities" (p.xi).

The Sheffield Doc/Fest industry event was selected as a snowball suggestion from one of the early interviews. Sheffield Doc/Fest is an annual week-long film and television industry event that ran in 2017 from the 9th to the 14th of June. A covert participant observation approach was taken (Jaimangal-Jones, 2014: p.47), where the research observes discreetly without prejudicing the research or antagonising participants (Jeffrey & Troman, (2004). To this end, contact with the organisers was made before the field trip to ensure my presence as a researcher would not be deemed disruptive.

As a week-long event, the covert participant observation had a limited duration. This type of participant observation has been defined by Bob Jeffrey and Geoff Troman (2004) as a compressed time mode which "they define as a short period of intense ethnographic research in which researchers inhabit a research site almost permanently for anything from a few days to a

month" (p.538), where participation is "context-led that interview dominant" (p.540), where the researcher documents "the visible and less tangible structures and relations" (p.538). The approach was inevitably led by the short duration of the festival, however, the intentions beyond the method were to observe rather than interact, and seek to find contexts of genre within social interactivity, discourse, and industry infrastructure. This type of participant observation provides a snapshot of working industry culture that can complement and contextualise practitioner interview reflexivity. The aim was not solely to observe the interaction but to contextualise the interaction between practitioners that could build, contest, or support the interview-led data, and interrogate the experience against broader structures and practices relating to genre. These draw on some of the themes that manifested from the interviews, such as ritualised practices, institutional and interactive power, and genre in commissioning. Observing interactions between commissioners and producers, how they talk, act, and engage with each other provides a useful register to analysing the thoughts and reflections of commissioners and producers being interviewed.

As a short ethnographic study of complex festival space, a suitable analytical toolkit was required to make sense of the rich dataset. While it has been argued that Actor-network theory has limitations for its lack of depth (Elder-Vass, 2015; O'Mahoney, O'Mahoney, & Al-Amoudi, 2017), its unassuming approach has benefits to exploring the domains of the actual and empirical, revealing connections and actors in whatever form they occur. Dave Elder-Vass (2008; 2015) has advocated that both critical realism and Actor-network theory have synergetic strengths that can make them strong allies. For participant observation, Actor-network theory (ANT) offers an empirical approach to studying social groups where a social object is not defined by its structure or invisible mechanisms (O'Mahoney, O'Mahoney, & Al-Amoudi, 2017), but is an "effect of stable arrays of networks of relations" (Law, 2002: p.91). In the words of one of ANT's founding voices, Bruno Latour (2007), the Actor-network theory researcher is an ant following the trail of other ants, emphasising the flattened relation between the studier and the studied. "Actor-Network Theory provides a toolbox in "tracing the associations" between heterogeneous elements (Latour, 2007: p.5) within empirically-gathered data. This has some dissonance with creative realism which insists on accounting for invisible mechanisms, and also advocates the causal powers of social structures, not just social actors. Yet, in dissecting the

complex mess of social spaces and their array of actants, such as in a British industry television event, it provides a useful perspective.

Actor-network theory can benefit industrial event analysis by encouraging the researcher to consider the importance of non-human actors in the building of social networks. As an example of ANT's use as part of participant observation, ANT would underscore the importance of the industry guidebooks as a key actor in the movement and strategies of industry practitioners within the event. ANT itself provides a flattened actualist ontology, where the researcher studies their experience of the actual (O'Mahoney, O'Mahoney, & Al-Amoudi, 2017), which appears a suitable companion to participant observation. However, Actor-network theory does have limits to what it can say about the ethnographic experience being about the empirical experience of the actual. In terms of exploring the rich, dense, messy interactivity of an industry event, there is only so much that can be seen. Actor-network theory provides a toolbox for empirical study, it speaks little to the immaterial or invisible powers that could be operating within a social space.

Actor-network theory has been argued to compliment critical realist approaches (see O'Mahoney, O'Mahoney, & Al-Amoudi, 2017; Elder-Vass, 2008; 2015). Joe Mahoney (et al, 2017) argues a critical realism mindset can take us beyond the boundaries of Actor-network theory by expanding [its] "boundaries to include factors that are variously *absent, potential, invisible or recurrent"* [my emphasis] (p.793). Despite noted sympathies between the two social theories, genre itself is an immaterial mechanism and Actor-network theory calls for tracing empirical evidence. Actor-network theory has many iterations, and one post-Actor network theory remains focused on the empirical but acknowledges immaterial networks.

Jordan Dawson and Heike Jöns (2018) develop a triadic method to bridge the gap between material and immaterial agency through the human subject (the triadic method thereby speaks to material, immaterial, and the human as the conduit). It can extend beyond what is empirically evidenced to accommodate the less visible structures and social actions that unite genre and industry workers. As well as offering an approach that aligns with critical realist goals, this method provides a robust answer to revealing immaterial agencies that can relate to the use, value, and meaning of genre within material industrial settings.

The triadic Actor-network theory provided participant observation with an analytical approach that was empirically focused but mindful of how humans' immaterial agency had

transformative powers with the event's social network. It allows the silent observation of the event to be empirically bound with a deeper stratum of analysis that remains with what is experienced rather than what is presumed.

Chapter five speaks further on the use of covert participant observation and triadic Actor-network theory. As with semi-structured interviews, the experience in partaking in this participant-observation methodology is reflected upon in greater detail in the thesis conclusions.

2.3 Analysis of the role of genre within industry textual artefacts

As a third register, industry texts are considered both within the interviews and participant observation methodologies. Texts are a critical part of social organisations. As a way to better understand how this functions as part of research methods, institutional ethnography is a mode of social inquiry which argues that organisations flow through both texts and people. This flow occurs both in localised spaces and through their networked relation to other organisations translocally (Tummons, 2017). In doing so, institutional ethnography speaks to the importance of the organisation of social life at local spaces (for example, industry events) and in the broader networks of organisation, much of which flows through organisational texts. For an industry event, event guides and applications are part of that communication that relates information between the attendant and the event.

To better understand production industry texts, John Caldwell (2008) argues for three categories. Fully embedded texts or artefacts, such as demo tapes, can be difficult to access. Trade magazines or press kits are examples of what Caldwell defines as semi-embedded texts. These have visibility but are the embodiment of the political economics between media producers and their distribution agents set to "spur and stimulate ancillary discussion and eventual awareness in the public sphere" (p.345). There is also what Caldwell calls publically disclosed texts. These can be artefacts such as Making-of documentaries or promotional websites that construct a view of industry culture that is managed to convey the desired identity. Individually, textual or ethnomethodological approaches are hindered by the industry's complex social layering, when taken together, the data offers comparative data.

Publically disclosed texts (websites relating to industry businesses or industry discourse) and semi-publically disclosed texts (industry paraphernalia and attendance information) were sources

of textual analysis. Production company websites were analysed for their use of genre, and broadcaster websites for how commissioning departments were arranged. Both production company and broadcaster websites were analysed for the articulation of genre as part of their identity and reputation. Industry award websites were used to cross-reference with interviewees speaking of genre and its relationship to award ceremonies. Textual analysis was applied to both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data—such as event participant data from a festival mobile app or broadcaster commissioning data from their websites—could complement the qualitative data from interviews, website statements, and participant observation, providing a critical tension with each register.

For interviews, broadcaster and production company websites were analysed for their representation of genre and their structural make-up and commercial identity. For participant observation, semi-embedded texts were analysed: industry event catalogues were researched for use of genre, and how significant genre was to their event guides. As a publically disclosed text, the event website was analysed through its ongoing iterations to better understand how the event's identity had been shaped through its relationship to genre.

The integrated methodology brought different perspectives to the domains of the empirical and the actual. Through the analyse of human reflexivity, cross-checked with an observation of their social space, and the textual materials they produce to construct their roles and identity, the thesis was better poised to uncover genre's uses, values, and meanings as a causal power to both human agency and social structure within an industry production culture. In doing so, the thesis could better identify genre's intervention in the working practices of producers and commissioners, how it provides an intrinsic language for British factual television, and its role as a tool for the industry to manage its high levels of commercial risk.

Thesis structure

Chapter one introduces the concept of industry-embedded genres to conceptualise genres used in the production of British factual television. It argues that these genres are an embedded component of industry practice that is vital to the production of factual television and distinct from the textual categorisation of genre television texts.

Chapter two argues that industry-embedded genres have different uses, values, and meanings to different management roles in the development of television that support above-the-line engagement with creative and commercial practices, including the development of television formats. The chapter challenges the assumption that television formats have greater significance to genre in development and argue that genre and format do not oppose, but work together as part of production practices.

Chapter three argues that industry-embedded genres are vital to the creative organisational management of broadcasters, demonstrating the multiple ways genre functions in production. Industry-embedded genres can be linked to the management of broadcaster creative commissioning, the market reputation of broadcasters, and how broadcasters communicate their interests to producers.

Chapter four argues that industry-embedded genres are vital to the commercial negotiations of producers and broadcaster commissioners at pitch meetings, providing a shared lexicon that feeds into the social interaction of buyers and sellers of ideas. Industry embedded genres are a vital component of a practitioner's industry experience, market knowledge, and network relations that become key to a successful pitch.

Chapter five conducts an ethnographic analysis of industry workers networking and knowledge sharing within a genre-defined event. Through a participant observation of Sheffield Doc/Fest 2017, the chapter explores the function of genre within an industry space where practitioners network, learn, and impart knowledge, as well as in presenting, promoting, or pitching new work.

The thesis **epilogue** reflects on the methodological issues that arose from the study. It considers some of the lesser-asked questions about interview techniques and difficulties that arise in participant observation. The epilogue outlines some conclusions based on the study's findings into genre and factual production. It takes these conclusions to suggest some potential next steps in investigating industry genres further, before considering what this research offers to the future of British television studies and genre.

Chapter One: How does industry discourse position genre as an industrial language, separate from audience consumption?

This chapter explores how genre operates within British television factual production in what I argue is a vital tool of discourse. It demonstrates how British television production is shaped— and is shaped by—genre terminology, creating a lexicon of industry recognised signifiers. These genres form part of industry practice and discourse and within this context, they are embedded within industry culture. Whilst some of these genres are names familiar to those outside the industry—for instance, the documentary genre—what *genre* means to the British television industry differs significantly to audiences.

This chapter intends to contribute to established media genre theory by demonstrating how genre and media have unique properties beyond those of texts, audiences, and critics. Within British factual television industry production, genres are an organisational tool for people who are culturally active and sustained by those who use them. For industry professionals who have involvement in factual television production, genre is understood, valued, and utilised differently from those engaging with genre texts. For television production, genres hold greater uses, values, and meanings to the *contexts* of creating a text. By demonstrating genre as a context of production work within British factual television, the chapter argues genres take different shapes, and reflect different needs, depending on the historical, environmental, and discursive demands of its industry.

The chapter argues that for industry practitioners, genre provides a context for production practices. Craig Collie (2007) notes where film genres describe "'differences of content", television genres "are more practical and group programs by production mode. The content may be different as a result of different production machinery, but not necessarily" (p.60). A genre to an industry professional will not simply speak to the style and form of a text, but to a language of construction that involves technical requirements, specific skillsets, and different budgets. The budgets assigned to a specialist factual show will scale differently to that of a factual entertainment show (Lees, 2010). It is thus be argued here that industry genres speak to contexts that form a media text and are thereby only sustained by those involved in the production of

television content. This predominantly involves production companies, commissioning agents, and the broadcasters who decide what types of shows they want to distribute under their banner. To explore the meaning of industry genres, this chapter uses the industry-theorising of above-the-line production workers and genre commissioners to explore the conditions in which genre functions within a socio-industrial language.

Media genre theory commonly focuses on the relationship between genres and texts; how genres can be organisational tools (Creeber, 2015a), and how tools used by people are culturally activated and sustained (Mittell, 2004). Unlike scientific taxonomies, media genre theory has no inherent and unchanging characteristics to categorise, rather a method of understanding the shared (or different) relationships between media texts as applied and understood by cultural bodies, such as scholars, critics, industry, and audiences (Feuer, 2005; Mittell, 2004; Neale, 2015). Media scholars have thereby demonstrated how textual genres exist through mutual use and comprehension by these cultural groups.

To distinguish between textually associated genres and those used in British factual television production practices, genres that circulate or are associated within the form of media texts will be referred to as *textual genres*. Genres associated with industry uses, values, and meanings I define as *industry-embedded genres*. This terminology builds on John T. Caldwell's (2008) reference to entrenched cultural artefacts within production cultures as *semi* or *fully embedded practices and texts*. Industry-embedded genres are factual genres that are formed through a professional understanding of television production contexts and sustained by the British television industry. 'Embedded' is a useful term to underscore the importance of these genres to the television industry practice. Industry-embedded genres are not solely the perception of genres through the lens of television production, they are entrenched in the discourses, commercial strategies, organisational structures, and systems of practice that are part of the television industry. Industry-embedded genres can shape the market identities of broadcasters and the careers of associated celebrity talent. Industry-embedded genres factor into decisions relating to television scheduling and have important relationships to industry award ceremonies. They are recognised and used by industry trade journals and industry events.

As genre labels, some industry-embedded genres are localised to the industry, such as 'factual entertainment', whilst others may share labels with more commonly known textual genres.

However, whereas 'documentary' can be a genre label used by industry, critics, and audiences, the use of 'documentary' in the British television industry will also speak to the contexts of production that can relate to technical specifications, budgetary costs, skilled-labour requirements, and sites of production (for instance, studio-bound or on-location shoots).

Industry-embedded genres can be discursively maintained through their relationship to creative development and commercial engagement (such as pitch meetings held between production companies and broadcast commissioners). Their heart is within the practice of producing television shows. Industry-embedded genres can directly relate to broadcaster commissioning practices where broadcasters create, mix, or dissolve commissioning departments as part of their ongoing commercial strategies. Industry-embedded genres are important contextual properties of genre production in British factual television that find uses, values, and meanings through discourses emerging from production, commissioning, and broadcasting strategies and practices.

Genre's importance to British television is argued by Brett Mills (2008) who observes all of the main broadcasters have "programme commissioners and commissioning structures defined by genre" (p.51). Shows are commissioned generically which means that television productions, and their practices, must have generic values. This does not refute the argument that genres are sustained, augmented, lost, or reclaimed by inter-cultural forces as media genre scholars have argued (Mittell, 2004; Neale, 2000), but to underscore the importance of, and differences within, British television factual production. In this industry sector, genre speaks to the contexts of production. Genre is part of an embedded language of production and commissioning; a local knowledge base that is shared and understood within British factual television production cultures.

To demonstrate the importance and role of industry-embedded genres, the chapter functions in two parts. It begins with an overview of the literature relating to textual genres and how their uses, values, and meanings distinguish their function from those genres embedded in industry discourse and practice. With industry-embedded genres being highly discursive, the chapter considers the language of genre within its factual television contexts, and how considering the study of genre in other academic fields such as spoken genres and rhetorical genres, is important to understanding genre's relationship with industry discourse. There is extensive literature on

rhetoric and spoken genres that are rarely referenced within television genre research, however, rhetoric and spoken genre analysis are useful tools in understanding how genre must operate within factual television production discursively.

For the second part of this chapter, discourse analysis (Gee, 2014) of the empirical data gathered from conducted interviews with producers and creative commissioners are tested against the theories of industry-embedded genres argued in part one. The section explores how practitioner reflexivity and industry self-theorising speak to the concept of industry-embedded genres. In doing so, the chapter argues that industry-embedded genres are examples of genres that do not relate nor categorise texts but instead reflect the contexts that built them.

The chapter seeks to engage debates on media genre analysis where genres do not conform to established media theory. It explores the use, values, and meanings of industry-embedded genres and demonstrates how television genres have intrinsic use for television producers as components of industry discourse, practice, and structure.

Part 1: Reconceptualising genre from categories of textual consumption to the discourse and practices of concept development

Before exploring genres with industry-embedded contexts, this first section analyses how genres are traditionally understood by media scholars through their relationship to culture as genre texts and textual genres. Genre theorists have long focused on analysing the relationships between genre and media texts. Through the exploration of genre and the text, scholars have sought to better understand the cultures that circulate discursive content that sustains, discards, or redefines genres. Jason Mittell (2004) argues genres cannot be defined by the text alone. "The members of any category do not create, define, or constitute the category itself. Categories link several discreet elements together under a label for cultural convenience" (p.7). Mittell redefines Thomas Schatz's (1981) textual definitions of *film genre* and *genre film*, where film texts (a genre film) match the codifications of a genre (film genre) to explore genre television as a cultural category. Mittell (2004) argues that television genres are cultural shorthand for a set of assumptions and interpretations from which genre television is a "shifting corpus" of texts (p.18). Mittell asks what we can learn through decentring genre from textual analysis. He suggests we look at the sites that activate genres within cultures:

> … if genres are not textual properties, where exactly might we go to analyze them? To understand how genre categories become culturally salient, we can examine genres as discursive practices. (2004: p.12)

Mittell argues for genre and media scholars to step back from analysing genre as a property of texts that are categorised, and instead, consider how culture and discourse activate and sustain television genres. Mittell does not refute the importance of texts and genre, acknowledging that genre is primarily a textual category, instead, he advocates that the analysis of genre television must go beyond the programmes themselves (p.7). Mittell also acknowledges that television genres are not always textual, and can be industrial genre categories, citing "The Sci-Fi Channel" as an example (p.7). However, the example provided does acknowledge industry use of genres, the example is a categorisation of texts (a channel that is dedicated to the transmission of science fiction texts). Mittell does acknowledge genres can be used in television production and corporate needs (p.25), but how these genres are used, valued, or understood as opposed to textual categories, is unclear. As argued in this chapter, industry-embedded genres are used as building blocks to help categorise production practices rather than to categorise texts. In this respect, they are culturally bound and discursive, but their uses, values, and meanings do not align with the analysis of textual categories.

Contemporary genre theory does acknowledge the importance of culture and texts. However, this acknowledgment is often associated with macro-cultural engagements, rather than micro-cultures that can exist within those groups. Echoing the assertion of many genre scholars, film genre analyst Rick Altman (1999) has argued that genres are formed culturally—not scientifically—through textual definitions shaped by both media industries and the recognition of texts by their audiences (p.16). Altman speaks of the versatility of genres, and that they are ever-present from conception to consumption, again highlighting their industrial importance. "At the same time, genre is a structure and the conduit through which material flows from producers to directors and from the industry to distributors, exhibitions, audiences and their friends" (p.15). However, like Mittell, Altman is conceptualising genres as the categories that bind or define media texts. Altman notes: "if it [genre] is not defined by the industry and recognized by the mass audience, then it cannot be a genre" (p.16). Altman acknowledges textual genres pass

through industries, but argues genre form is not shaped within industry boundaries but can only be actualised by interactions with those larger cultures outside it.

Similarly, film genre analyst Thomas Schatz (1981) argues genre has a dialogic relationship between industrial production and film consumption that is ongoing and continually being revised. Schatz sees the interaction between producers of texts and audiences as a "reciprocal relationship between artist and audience" (p.6), where the audience contribution is, "active but indirect"; that the "filmmaker's inventive impulse is tempered by his or her practical recognition of certain conventions and audience expectation" (p.12). For Schatz, such dialogic dynamics will define, redefine, or dispel generic conventions through constant feedback of variation and repetition. Within that dialogic interaction, genres become ongoing temporal communicative tools. Again, genre's cultural identity is governed by two large cultural groups: industry and audiences.

Both Schatz and Altman's analysis relates to the properties observed in film genre, however, their acknowledgment that textual genres are defined, sustained, and replaced, by cultural interactions between producers, sellers, and consumers of media resonates with the lifecycle of television texts. However, television scholar Jason Mittell (2004) cites the importance of another cultural group alongside industries and audiences—the media critic—in genre shaping.

Critics can form an intersection between distribution and consumption, bridging an information gap between producers and consumers. In highlighting the critics, Mittell notes the power of discourse from those with cultural visibility. As a cultural group that engages with industry and audiences, television critics can influence the future choices of both groups.

Within television studies, genre is rarely considered outside its textual associations. However, industry professional, Craig Collie (2007) speaks of genres as "production by stereotype" that alert a commissioner to the "practical value" of a pitched project (p.60). In such regards, industry-embedded genres offer style conventions that define *potential* textual content through pre-existing mutually acknowledged conventions. It is, therefore, best to frame the categorisation of industry-embedded genres as contextual rather than textual.

A singular definition of context is difficult (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992) however the concept of *intrinsic contexts* (Clark & Corlson, 1981) best suits the application here. Intrinsic contexts are

a process of "object identification" (p.319) that situates "common ground" (p.324). Common ground speaks to conventions of mutual knowledge. An industry-embedded genre speaks to contexts in which texts are constructed. 'Specialist factual' is a genre that does not exist to define a category of produced media texts, it exists to draw together a context to create a type of production. A television text can have the conventions suited to specialist factual, but that would not necessarily mean specialist factual was a context used within its conception or development. What makes intrinsic contexts so applicable to industry-embedded genres is that their use provides meaning for the industry actors within the same cultural community, in this case, British factual television. Common ground can only exist if those who share contexts take their vocabulary from the larger community "to which they belong" (p.325).

For industry-embedded genres, a producer speaking to a commissioning editor about an idea for a 'fixed rig' show or a concept suitable for 'specialist factual', is using vocabulary that has a localised shared meaning for context. For industry-embedded genres, their use describes "ways in which people 'get things done' through their use of spoken and written discourse" (Paltridge, 2012: p.62). Industry-embedded genres have uses, values, and meanings that provide embedded contexts to industry production discourse and practice.

The notion of textuality does still exist within production discourse, but not as a media artefact. Textuality can refer to texts as formations of language. David Hesmondhalgh (2018) defines a text as anything that circulates knowledge, understanding, and experience. Therefore, a text can be a written or spoken object (p.64) and can form every type of utterance (Alba-Juez, 2009: p.6).

Decentring genre from the media text thereby does not decentre genre from its association with the idea of texts. Whereas media scholars do frequently refer to texts as the artefacts of consumption, texts can be considered as a communicative event (De Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981) that can exist in a variety of formations. In the light of texts being considered an object that communicates, be it through material bodies such as a television show, or an utterance like a poem or a spoken piece of prose, industry-embedded genres are textual components. As a carrier of dialogic meaning, they have textual relationships, or as a label for a commissioning department, they are part of a construct that can be considered to have textuality. Yet industry-embedded genres do not categorise texts but illuminate production contexts. In this light, they are

different from textual genres. Industry-embedded genres are formed dialogically. They are not shorthand relating to the categorisation of a corpus of texts, but a shorthand relating to the contexts of production. As with textual genres, industry-embedded genres are amorphous and contained, sustained and shaped, but within the confines of an industry-rooted dialogic discourse.

The importance of genre in discourse is raised by Steve Neale's (2015) research into media genres. Neale is mindful of what he calls the "multi-dimensional nature of genre"; that genre is a term with numerous contexts, including what is 'generic'; "those aspects of communication that entail expectation" (p.4). The nature of communication—a dialogic pathway between two actors—is a fundamental aspect of genre; it is a discourse that must carry preconceived notions. Understanding genres within the British factual television industry must look beyond media texts to texts of speech. As a form of communication, industry-embedded genres must have an *active* dialogic process. This concept is echoed in the analysis of speech genres by Mikhail Bakhtin (1986) in which he argues active dialogue produces and reproduces meaning; that "any understanding is imbued with response and necessarily elicits it in one form or another: the listener becomes the speaker" (p.68). Bakhtin's formation of speech genres inspired non-literary genre work in communication studies and pedagogy.

The relationship between speaker and listener, where the listener interprets the speaker, is explored by English literary critic Eric Hirsch. Hirsch (1967) described genres in spoken language as 'intrinsic genres', existing as a "necessity" that "is a structural necessity in communication and can only be grasped as such: nevertheless, the way that it functions can be made clear" (p.82). Hirsch considers the potentially paradoxical relationship between the speaker/interpreter and how the "interpreter must understand the speaker's meaning to understand the speaker's meaning" (p.81). To prevent this tautology, Hirsch argues genre and meaning in speech must be separated. He argues that intrinsic genres provide an instance of mutual comprehension between speaker and interpreter to allow meaning to be found by the latter. This argument situates genre as a key linguistic component of all communication; that generic language forms the basis of shared communication for which meaning within the utterance can be understood. Anis Bawarshi (2000) states spoken genres "are the rhetorical environments within which we recognize, enact, and consequently reproduce various situations, practices, relations, and identities" (p.336). Bawarshi's reference to practices, relations, and

identities can thereby be related to *contexts* of practices, relations, and identities. This can align Hirsch's intrinsic genres with Clark and Carlson's intrinsic contexts; identifying genres in speech and embedded commonalities that provide conceptualised information about another object, be it a type of event or type of practice. This identification does not relate to a specific object or text, but a type. Industry-embedded genres are thereby contexts of discourse that enable a type of production practice. These industry genres are configured by the cultural landscape and, as categories, will shift and change to reflect the needs of that culture. They are not stable categories and their boundaries are fluid.

If genres are not stable, decentered from structure and form, and culturally mobile, what defining features do they have? Jason Mittell (2004) posits "If genres are categories that do not emerge from intrinsic textual features, then isn't any system of categorization potentially a category?" (p.10). Linguistic scholar Sigmund Ongstad (2002) has wider concerns as to what genre can mean if it is the same across different studies and whether that makes it an unusable concept, concluding that the mind needs broad concepts to help articulate a "fast growing jungle of cultural signs" (p.300). Ongstad argues the non-specificity and fluidity of genre's relationship with its users is what gives genre value as we need genres to communicate. For Mittell (2004), the cultural significance of genre makes genre a study of culture itself. Genres "exist only through the creation, circulation, and consumption of texts within cultural contexts" (p.11). Genres decentered from the texts are not decentered in a vacuum as they still relate to the text (decentered, not divorced) and the cultures that sustain them.

Yet Mittell does demonstrate where he sees the difference between category and textual genres. "A categorical term like '8:30 program' or 'NBC show' so clearly foregrounds its industrial origins over its textual attributes, it would not circle culturally as a genre" (2004: p.10). Mittell argues here that the prominence of industry-specific contexts over textual attributes reduces a label's chance to be a genre. He further argues:

> While perhaps other generic labels might be more accurate — 'nonscripted programming,' 'gamedocs,' and 'docusoaps' have been used by some — the broad circulation of reality TV as a category is what makes it a genre, not an internal textual unity across programming. (p.197)

Mittell dismisses industry language as genres, yet gamedocs and docusoaps would fit the attributes I have argued as industry-embedded genres. Mittell's definition of genre demands a wide cultural engagement and thereby sets firm conditions that genres must meet. Yet industry-embedded genres do share the same fundamental conditions that Mittell demands. Industry-embedded genres will circulate cultural groups within the British television industry, and like textual genres, they are an active shorthand for specific cultural constructs. As an example, 'Specialist factual' is an industry-embedded genre for production companies, commissioners, and broadcasters who are engaged in creating a type of television show. The genre communicates a set of production conditions that enable professionals to work together towards a common goal. Those conditions can change, which can alter the collected understanding of the genre or even how it is recognised. As with textual genres, it is the cultural circulation of industry-embedded genres that is important. Unlike textual genres, that circulation is largely limited to industry professionals and their embedded practices.

Industry-embedded genres thereby respond to the production of texts rather than their consumption, however, this does not stop them from being genres. Anis Bawarshi (2000) argues "Genres function on an ideological level, constituting discursive reality, they operate as conceptual schemes that also constitute how we negotiate our way through discursive reality as producers and consumers of texts" (p.349). Importantly, Bawarshi notes that beyond giving agents concepts and contexts to understand texts, they speak to actions in creating texts. "Genres do not simply help us define and organize kinds of texts; they also help us define and organize kinds of social actions, social actions that these texts rhetorically make possible" (2000: p.335). Decentered from the text, industry-embedded genre categories are social constructs; contextualised knowledge, discourse, and practice, and are part of the ongoing shaping that occurs through social agency and structure; what Anthony Giddens theorised as structuration.

Anis Bawarshi (2000) points to the benefits of structuration theory when considering genre and social activity. Genres "shape our social realities and us as we give shape to them" (p.353). Structuration theory is largely indebted to Anthony Giddens (1984) who sought to highlight the duality of social change through the transmutation of structures by social agents. "Agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality" (p.25). Giddens argued that the interaction of social agents resulted in structures of rules and

resources that are replicated as social systems. Similarly, genres shape our understandings of concepts and practices that are shaped by our understanding. As part of the ongoing social practice of television practitioners, genres become part of the structure of television production. Genres are replicated as part of a social system that helps create texts, but can also be changed by that process.

Arguments have been made that structuration theory is too focused on human agency (Dawson & Jöns, 2018); that human agency cannot be the sole actor within any social group. Actor-network theory argues that agency can be exerted by non-human actors (Latour, 2007). Non-human actors can be critical to industrial language and thereby to the construction of industry-embedded genres. Rigged shows speak to the non-human actor of the television camera. A cameraman would be considered an actor in a recording studio; without their agency, the camera cannot be positioned effectively. Without the camera operating, the cameraman cannot record, and thereby the camera has an active role in the process. The camera itself becomes a regular actor within the system of studio recording. In considering the recording studio as a social structure, it is easy to overlook the importance of the camera's role to that of the cameraman. However while non-human and human actors can have agency on a genre, as a component of discourse, genre is directly shaped by social activity. Bawarshi (2000) concludes that genres are more than categories, but "mediate and maintain meanings", concepts that "maintain rhetorical ecosystems" where agents can "enact and reproduce specific situations, actions, relations, and identities" (p.352). For industry-embedded genres, this social activity is evident in the discursive actions of production, how genre forms part of the relations between producers and genre commissioners, and the identity of production companies and broadcasters who define their commercial output through genre (for instance, the Syfy channel).

Industry-embedded genres can play a key part in commercial decision-making with television. Genres are a language that seeks to provide structure to a commercial sector that is innately uncertain. David Hesmondhalgh (2018) speaks to genre's industrial value in being one of the several methods used by media production industries to "cope with the high levels of risk in the sector" and to "minimise the danger of misses" (p.37). Bill Ryan (1992) speaks of formatting (to be distinguished from commercial formats; a commodified show-recipe that can be sold onwards, as is discussed in chapter two) as a "form of creative control based on corporate

52

attempts to confront the uncertainties of the cultural market place in a context of expanded production" (p.160). Ryan argues that creative production does not begin with an author but by market research into audience demands. "Since formatting is orientated towards echoing the past, companies must ensure that originals they reproduce display a new and unique array of style markers … stylistic variations on known themes" (pp.162-163). Acknowledging Ryan's formats, David Hesmondhalgh (2018) notes genre's industrial value as being one of the several methods used by media production industries to "cope with the high levels of risk in the sector" and to "minimise the danger of misses" (p.37).

Ryan (1992) speaks of how the need to manage risk in creative industries has made genre a key component, and in doing so, bound creativity to management to organise and direct creative policy:

> Guesswork, intuition, or arbitrary inspiration is minimised. Form has been transformed info format. Art is made subject to administration. Conventions drawn from the past are imposed in the present as a rule which dictates endless repetitions of itself and the conditions of its making. (p.162).

Ryan argues commissioning departments, as examples of creative management operate more from a position of risk management than creative freedom. This standpoint is echoed by producer Craig Collie (2007) who glibly notes that "it [genre] is the product of the innate conservatism of television: safety first, low risk and don't frighten the horses" (p.60). It is an institutional position that is not wholly shared by those producers. Producer Roger Thirkell (2010) writes that broadcasters will commonly look to the recipes of genre and past successes within a genre to build some market certainty. Industry-embedded genres are not about commerce directly, but the engagement of commercial risks. The language provides known contexts that can be applied, or respond to, known prior production successes and reflects upon market conditions (for instance, the output of a competitor might shift consumer interests). Creative management through broadcasters and their genre commissioning departments can shape future genre strategies and thereby affect the industry language through top-down measures.

The case study of *The Great British Bake Off* provides a pertinent example as to how replicating genres were applied to recreate past successes to keep audiences. It also demonstrates how genre cannot provide such safety. The move of *The Great British Bake Off* to Channel 4 had the BBC commission a replacement show, *The Big Family Cooking Showdown.* The show was described in the press as a "cosy, two-presenter, two-judges cookery competition among amateurs in a family-friendly weeknight slot" that was "in no way a substitute for or rival to the BBC's previous cosy, two-presenter, two-judges cookery competition among amateurs that was broadcast in a family-friendly weekend night slot" (Mangan, 2017). *The Big Family Cooking Showdown* was considered a failure by critics, described as "reheated" by The Telegraph (Hogan, 2017), and "bland" and "samey" by *The Guardian* (Heritage, 2017).

As Chief Operating Officer 'David' reflected on the show's transition:

> […] the BBC is trying to find different ways of copying the success in different areas - but it is the same show but in a different outfit. (Appendix A15)

David speaks of the need to duplicate the successful format, seeking to reinvigorate the genre text's unique blueprint. David summarises the BBC's desire to replicate the show's success was not about solely replicating its generic blueprint, but to give it an identity away from its predecessor. However, both still operated within the same genre with similar content. After the BBC premiered *The Big Family Cooking Show*, Channel 4 sought to premiere *The Great British Bake Off* on the same day in the same time slot (Eames, 2017). The BBC publicly described it as a "cynical move" (Eames, 2017) moving their show to a Thursday. Critical and audience reception for *The Big Family Cooking Showdown* did not match Channel 4's newly-acquired *The Great British Bake Off*, and *The Big Family Cooking Showdown* ended after two series.

The face-off between the two shows demonstrates how genre intertwines within market conditions and how corporate decisions in genre commissioning, scheduling, and risk management can result in success or failure upon broadcast. These situations can steer a broadcaster away from particular genres, or to build an identity upon their successes. This in turn can lead to changes in the make-up of commissioning departments, and what genres production companies might focus on - all of which can shape the uses and values of industry-embedded genres.

This section has demonstrated industry-embedded genres as an under-researched function of British factual television. Whereas media theorists analyse genre through the categorisation and meaning of media texts, genre has a vital and embedded function in British television that aids in the production of television. For television production, genre offers a different set of uses, values, and meanings that relate to contexts of production.

The section has argued that these contexts are intrinsic to production discourse but also contribute to other industrial functions. Genre is a critical function of British factual television that has commonly been overlooked, and has uses and values in production discourse, but also within market risk management, broadcast schedules, and commercial identities. Genres are commonly prescribed as tools of intellectual analysis, however, industry-embedded genres are critical to business operations and the ability to manage dynamic and competitive markets. This section has drawn upon literature existing within media theory—alongside relevant work in management theory, sociology, and rhetoric studies—to illustrate how industry-embedded genres contribute to both social agency and the formation of social structures to enable systems of practices that produce successful television products.

The following section tests these theories of industry-embedded genres through reflexivity and industry theorising of industry practitioners within British factual television. In doing so, the section demonstrates how industry-embedded genres function in a lived-in culture and what uses and values practitioners place on genre.

Part 2: What importance do creative practitioners in production and genre commissioning place on the role of industry-embedded genres within British Factual Television discourse?

This section investigates industry-embedded genres through the reflections of British television production practitioners. In doing so, it tests the theories as to the meaning, use, and value of industry-embedded genres. Through an exploration of practitioners' views on industry discourse, working practices, and institutional structure and scheduling, the section continues to argue that industry-embedded genres are vital to the ongoing working practices of creative practitioners in British factual television. They must thereby be understood as a categorisation of television production discourse and practice than of media texts. Industry genres are embedded languages

that provide uses, values, and meanings to the commissioning strategies, production development, and market engagement of British factual television production and commissioning cultures.

Commissioning is the production nexus point of the British factual television industry where concepts can be sold to genre commissioners. Production companies will seek to sell their concepts to genre commissioners, hoping to demonstrate that their idea will match the interests of the commissioner's broadcaster. For British factual television, the market is filled with independent production companies operating competitively for commissioning. The past thirty years have seen the market become more competitive for broadcasters, with an increase in channels and modes of content delivery. In the uncertain television market, genres are part of the commercial risk strategies that have become increasingly important to remain competitive. The need to capture audience numbers has resulted in a change to the range of genres related to factual television in Britain with entertainment becoming a key element.

The following section provides a short review of the commissioning history in British television, how it has become so reliant on entertainment in factual content, and how that has shaped industry-embedded genres. In doing so, it demonstrates why the commissioning industry is reliant on industry-embedded genres to provide producers with a procedural language to navigate the increasingly complex structures of television production.

2.1 Commissioning in British factual television

Early British television had internal departments handling produced content, however, this strategy was first applied to radio. As a public service, the BBC's first Director-General, John Reith, called for radio to educate, inform, and entertain, of which entertainment was considered "emphatically the junior partner" (Barfe, 2008: p.38). In the first edition of the Radio Times (Anon: 1923) one column emphasised Reith's role in this new service would, along with the British Broadcasting Company itself, ensure "that broadcasting will not become a commercialised form of entertainment consisting of cheap music and cheaper thrills" (p.18). This would continue into the era of television. According to Andrew Crisell (2002), the remit existed to reach multiple audiences and also to inform and enrich them. Reith advocated a policy for mixed programming on the radio where "Every day each network offered a variety of

programmes – drama, sport, light and classical music, news, religion, talks, interviews and discussions, light entertainment." (p.29). To cater to this remit, the BBC radio departments were set up to cater to the range of content. For the Arts, vaudeville and variety were the initial focus with the Revue and Vaudeville department set-up in 1930 and the Variety department set-up in 1933. The BBC television service started in 1936 (Crisell, 2002; Medhurst, 2017), where television's limited programming was the responsibility of the radio departments (Crisell, 2002) and the content reflected prevailing cultural tastes. Classical music would be subject to the music department, whereas popular forms of music would be considered light entertainment and the purview of the Variety department (Crisell, 2002).

Early television saw the medium's popularity shape department management to reflect wider content and changing tastes. Following the Second World War, radio was appearing old-fashioned compared to television (Dibbs, 2019) and BBC television was given its departments. Variety no longer spoke directly to cultural trends and the department was renamed Light Entertainment in 1948. The department would produce much of its content, and aside from music and variety would begin to develop serious television such as drama and talk shows, then later, News and Current Affairs (Dibbs, 2019; Sandon, 2010).

Of Reith's *educate, inform, and entertain*, entertaining was the most subjective to taste. Initially, entertainment was the in-road, or "ground bait" (Kumar, 1986: p.47) for the broadcaster to educate and inform, with fears entertainment alone would devalue the service, and delivering what was simply popular should never be a part of television's remit (Holmes, 2008b). This concern has not entirely vanished, and with further deregulation to British television broadcasting in the 1990s, what was popular became a driving force behind commissioning with an increase in entertainment and infotainment genres. This has led Gil Ursell (2003) to pose the question "are broadcast audiences nowadays more entertained but less informed and educated?" (p.32) and Roger Kilborn (2006) to argue factual commissioning editors have "encouraged programme-makers to develop strands of programming which accentuate the entertainment component" to meet the challenge of new media (p.109). If entertainment was once the gateway to inform and educate audiences, its value has been readdressed and is an essential part of factual entertainment.

57

Production Company Head of Development 'Isaac' (Appendix A2) speaks of ITV's policymaking decisions that filter down into the broadcaster's content management. In this case, industrial cultural positioning places 'entertainment' as a key factor in defining department structures.

> ITV runs the annual thing called the Producers Forum where the commissioners stand on stage and tell the producers what they are looking for, and this year Kevin Ryder, who is the new ITV head-honcho, sort of pointed out that everyone now has entertainment in their title, so factual entertainment, comedy entertainment… entertainment. (Appendix A2)

Isaac emphasises the importance of entertainment to the institutions, and how that identity is vital to their factual programming output.

The shift in the 1990s towards entertainment in factual television has been argued as being a strategy for maximising audiences within a highly competitive neoliberal market, and concerns noted to how, once again, the tone of entertainment can be detrimental to the factual genres. As Roger Kilborn (2006) argues, "Given the strong entertainment orientation of most categories of television programming (including, dare one say, news and current affairs), it also seems likely that the boundaries of the 'factual' will continue to be traversed as new ways of engaging the viewer's attention are sought" (p.120). Kilborn argues that television's "compelling need to hold the viewers' attention" has led to "cross genre manoeuvres" (p.109), highlighting genre's value to risk management and how genres have become an industry-embedded requirement.

In 2003, the BBC did an in-house shuffle of its commissioning departments, and Light Entertainment became re-labelled as Format Entertainment (BBC, 2002). Institutional restructuring can be a strategy in redefining a channel. It can be about changing the tone of a channel by generating new internal structures and adopting fresh creative manager deployment. These changes are internal to a broadcaster and demonstrate how industry-embedded genres are not uniform but reflect the strategies and structural make-up of a broadcaster at a given time.

Table 1 illustrates the range of commissioning categories that are used by individual British television broadcasters. The table compares British broadcaster commissioning webpages to demonstrate how commissioning departments are structured and where they differ from one

another. These structures are tailored to fit the individual company's infrastructure, tone of content, and commissioning guidelines. For each broadcaster, Table 1 lists their commissioning genres once in 2018, and once in 2020 (except for Sky, where their commissioning page was created after 2018). The table notes any changes between those dates to each broadcaster commissioning structure, highlighting how the industry-embedded genres used by commissioning departments can change in the space of two years.

It should be noted that these genre labels are not always published as "genres" (except for Sky's commissioning requirements, where the categories are indeed listed as categories for "genre heads" and the BBC who list their commissioners by "genre priorities"). The table does not necessarily indicate individual departmental structures (BBC's categories are grouped by specific departments, and Channel 5 does not function as departmental teams, but as a singular commissioning team).

As illustrated in Table 1, each broadcaster uses a system of categories to structure their commissioning practices. In doing so a mix of genre-defined departments and departmental roles are assigned. These departments operate as a bridge between concept creators and the broadcaster. The selection of industry-embedded genres not only varies from broadcaster to broadcaster but can change over a short period. As commissioning departments are restructured and re-organised, so are the industry-embedded genre labels.

BBC (BBC, 2018; BBC, 2020)	ITV (ITV, 2018; ITV, 2020)	Channel 4 (Channel 4, 2018; Channel 4, 2020)	Channel 5 (Channel 5, 2018; Channel 5, 2020)	Sky (Sky, 2020)
Acquisitions	Comedy	Arts	Factual	Drama
Arts (renamed BBC Arts and moved to "other commissioning areas" sub-category by 2020)	Current Affairs	Comedy	Factual Entertainment	Comedy
BBC Three (moved to "other commissioning	Daytime	Creative Diversity	Non-Portfolio commission positions looking at popular	Entertainment

areas" sub-category by 2020)			factual/observational doc/entertaining factual	
Children's (changed to CBeebies and moved to "other commissioning areas" sub-category by 2020)	Digital Channels	Daytime		Sky Kids
Comedy	Drama	Documentaries		Sky Arts
Current Affairs (removed by 2020)	Comedy Entertainment (changed to Entertainment by 2020)	Drama		Sky One: Factual Entertainment ; Big Scale Entertainment
Daytime	Factual	E4 Comedy Entertainment, Factual Entertainment ("Including reality that is closer to factual), Formats & Features (Including Reality that sits closer to Entertainment), E4 & Digital		
Documentaries (removed by 2020)	Online	Education (removed by 2020)		
Drama	Sport	Entertainment, TV Events & Sport		
Early Peak (removed by 2020)		Factual Entertainment		
Entertainment		Features (changed to "Features and Formats" by 2020)		
History (removed by 2020)		Film4		
Learning (removed by 2020)		Formats & Music (removed by 2020)		
Music (renamed BBC Music and moved to "other commissioning		Nations & Regions		

areas" sub-category by 2020)			
Music on iPlayer (removed by 2020)		News & Current Affairs	
Natural History		Off-Peak	
Popular factual and Factual entertainment		Specialist Factual	
Religion and ethics			
Science (removed by 2020)			
Specialist Factual (removed by 2020)			
Storyville (removed by 2020)			

Table 1: Designations of major British broadcasting commissioning departments between 2018 and 2020 as labeled on broadcasters online public commissioning pages

Some of the industry-embedded genre labels have broad cultural genre resonance (comedy; cultural affairs), others are industry-specific (factual Entertainment; specialist Factual). Whether these labels have broader significance to consumer and critic cultures (such as comedy or current affairs) they exist primarily for producers and commissioning.

As argued, industry-embedded genres can acknowledge classical genre labels. However, their use is not discursively dependent on cultural groups outside of the industry, and instead reflects their contexts to production practices. As 'Andrew' Director of Entertainment for an independent production company, suggests:

> I think genres just help the overall process from a channel perspective - from a sense of order and a sense of budget, I would think. (Appendix A1)

As an industry professional, Andrew identifies the production categories as genres and that genres are embedded in the practice of producing television, providing context to commercial management and costs for broadcasters.

The embedded use of genres is further explored by Commissioning Editor 'Mike' and how they provide intrinsic contexts. He explains how language provides a dialogical commonplace:

> I suppose when you have a meeting with someone, you are assuming almost that
> they've got experience in television production, so they kind of know what sort
> of series … what is the programme they are pitching to you? So, I would guess
> they'd use words like "it's an ob-doc series" [observational documentary], or
> "it's a formatted piece" or "it's immersive because it's presenter-led". So, that
> sort of terminology would be kind of commonplace between producers and
> commissioners. (Appendix A5)

Mike reflects on genre as a language that mediates the combined practices of commissioning editors and producers. Observational documentary is commonly referred to as 'ob-doc' by industry practitioners as part of their embedded language. Presenter-led refers to the importance of the leading voice, face, and script of a show style and is common to production company commercial discourse (AVC immedia, n.d; Bakehouse Productions, 2018; FORTAYmedia, 2021). Mike suggests genre provides essential contexts in commercial negotiations to communicate ideas and concepts effectively. The commissioning editor further notes that there is an expectation of industry experience that gives industry-embedded genres an intrinsic value to their dialogic practice. Taken from this position, genre carries an industry-embedded function, and participants in production discourse will be expected to understand its meaning. Genre's intrinsic contexts can relate to commonly practiced production styles that have become acknowledged through a linguistic shorthand. Their use becomes an anticipated part of industry discourse and a carrier of meaning between different but related social actors working within, or circulating, television production.

Mike also notes other terminologies might *not* be considered genres yet operate generically as part of industry language. The function formatting performs is a strong component of British factual television discourse and has a complex relationship with genre. Formatting speaks to unique rather than generic qualities in show creation (Moran & Aveyard, 2014). Formatting is part of industry-embedded language, but as a commodifiable rather than generic concept, it does not represent a genre in its own right. Industry-embedded genres are one component of a shared lexicon that expedites meaning between experienced practitioners. This speaks to the insider/outsider tension explained in detail by Caldwell (2008) and the complexities of a complex, fragmented, and multi-strata industry. Equally, Sherry Ortner's (2009) ethnographic

experiences point to the complex codification of industry speak, and how the knowledge of its lexicon in part defines you as part of its world or outside of it. Ortner points to the trade magazines and their industry indigenous rhetoric and expression that "strongly reinforce the inside/outside divide, as insiders (they assure me) 'get it' and outsides don't" (p.177). This all points to industry-embedded genres as part of a local language that is intrinsic to the communication of concepts and ideas. It equally suggests that without an understanding of industry-embedded language, communication suffers, and a practitioner's social standing can be in doubt.

As industry-embedded conventions, factual genres must have the potential to be shaped by industrial relations, yet academic literature has tended to emphasise the role of external forces, such as political power and consumer interests, in shaping genre conventions. Gill Ursell (2003) points to the 1990s growth in television content providers forcing broadcasters to resort to output that was shaped by the need to educate rather than inform or educate (p.32), whilst Roger Kilborn (2006) argues that such "popularising imperatives of an ever more commercialised broadcasting environment" have commissioning editors encouraging producers to "accentuate the entertainment component" (109). Graeme Turner (2015) has also framed the historical nature of television genres as part of its ongoing cultural circulation. "As popular culture forms, film and television genres are much more historically, culturally, and temporally contingent. Products, for the most part, of the commercial media, many television genres are also subject to market pressures that influence the shape of the texts" (p.8). As with Ursell and Kilborn, Turner also points to the power of the markets on television shows, and through the shows, genres are affected as a result. In all these cases academics argue that changes in factual genres have historically come from broadcasters seeking to manage market risks and engage their audiences. Industry interviewees however speak of how their practices and industry structures are factors in giving factual genres meaning.

Isaac, Head of Entertainment Development for one broadcaster's internal production studios, suggests that industry-embedded genres are useful for producers to define what conventions will frame their work and through their work, their careers:

> It is a language that has grown up for us to be able to talk about ideas and
> navigate them, and frame their expertise naturally. Their careers become pigeon-

> holed in one or two genres and that permeates to the commissioning teams and
> then to the channels. Genres have grown more interesting as TV has become a
> bit more mature. (Appendix A2)

Isaac argues that genre language enables creators to define their skill-sets as part of their career trajectory. Isaac further suggests that the ideas created through this process move bottom-up through the industry chain and influence industry language. For this developing head, industry-embedded genres provide producers with set production conventions that they can become proficient in. This enables the producer to match a style of work that will become part of their market identity. Isaac thereby argues the producer's creativity and style within a genre "permeates" bottom-up through the production chain, shaping genre industry discourse. Graeme Turner (2015) has argued that television audience feedback continually shapes industry output, and has a "cumulative effect of repeated tweaking of the format and contents amount to a change in genre" (p.9). Whereas Turner points to the shifting shape of genres through their consumption, equally genres can be shaped by the agency of creators. In line with structuration, Isaac suggests a producer's career is shaped by genre structures and genre structures can be shaped by their career.

The agency of creators to shape genres is explored further by Isaac, and how ongoing changes within genre and factual television specifically provide creators with the opportunity to oppose and redefine British factual genre content:

> The line between factual and entertainment is more blurred than it used to be.
> The role between drama and factual is as blurred. It's a joy to have these genres
> is to break them down and create new ones. (Appendix A2)

Isaac expresses genre as conventions that need to be understood and potentially deconstructed, and how through this opportunity factual has become more fluid. The mutability of genre is expressed by 'Brian', a Managing Director of an independent production company. Brian also considers factual as a space for genre-breaking, though Brian forges a reputation defying generic conventions. "It's definitely what we're known for and it is a slightly 'fuck you' thing" (Appendix A4). For Brian, genres are conventions to be opposed in the process of creating fresh content, potentially reshaping the understandings of a genre.

'Luke', Head of Development for an independent production company, argues that genre provides foundational support for producers so they can navigate the industry and locate the most suitable commissioner to pitch to:

> I understand why they put genre in place and say, "This is an entertainment show" or "I am an entertainment commissioner" but in terms of programming, I don't think you have to be genre-specific to come up with ideas because ideas are adaptable. So, I think it gives people a fundamental grounding in where to go with your ideas and who to pitch the ideas to. Particular genres work at certain times in the scheduling, but I think when it comes to ideas you should be open to every single genre and be able to play with genre and the formats. (Appendix A3)

From this perspective, genre is very much decentered from textual associations and provides shorthand contexts to take ideas to the most suitable department. For Luke, genre is not at the forefront of creativity but provides a conduit in which an idea can be adapted to commercial requirements. Genre is thereby a construct of the industry system of production. However, genre is still reflected upon as an embedded part of industry practices and intrinsic knowledge for professionals in production, commissioning, and broadcasters.

Not all practitioners interviewed saw genre as a key embedded practice of the industry. 'David', a Chief Operating Officer at one independent production company and offers a slightly different perspective again. David acknowledges genre's industry relevance, but questions whether genre carries value or use for a production company in terms of development:

> I think it's an interesting area looking at genre and production companies. I wonder if anybody would say that genre is something that informs development because I hate to say it, I'm not sure it is. Because I think we, the production companies, are at their heart, businesses. (Appendix A15)

David's response does not position genre as a construct that production companies engage with creativity, if at all. David self-theorises genre as antithetical to the practice of business, and the industry as a whole theorises this as being the same for more production companies. David's

emphasis on the business of production was not uncommon in the conducted interviews. If industry-embedded genres are intrinsic to production practices, they can be essential but not inherently visible, or too banal to be considered meaningful. David theorises genres have little meaning to his company's work, and yet for Brian, genres are a big part of defining his identity within the industry. As with genre theorists, television practitioners will not have a unified perspective on genre, and the meaning of industry-embedded genres can differ between practitioners – as can its uses and values.

2.2 The uses and value of industry-embedded genres to practitioners

This section analyses how industry-embedded genres are used in industry practice, and through their use, what value they can have. In doing so, it further demonstrates how industry-embedded genres offer discursive tools for British factual television's heterogenic production culture.

Whereas British factual textual genres are the product of cultural discourses relating to their distribution and consumption, industry-embedded genres are built heavily through industry discourses of production. The uses and values of industry-embedded genres are intrinsically linked to the industrial terrain that sustains them. E.D. Hirsch (1967) argues in his analysis of genre theory, "The fundamental criterion for genre properties is ultimately the same as for verbal meaning in general—the criterion of sharability" (p.94). There can be disagreement between practitioners on how they interpret genre's functions (or importance) to discourse, but the evidence from interviewees does suggest that industry-embedded genre's uses and values are sustained through industry discourse. As has been demonstrated, the meaning of industry-embedded genres is situated around contexts of production, and its uses and values are equally embedded. This would be evident in how interviewees reflected and theorised on their practices and industry culture. Managing Director 'Harrison' spoke of the BBC series *Exodus*, and the internal conflict within the broadcaster over whether it was a current affair or documentary programme, and different genres would require different practical considerations, yet ultimately "No one watching cares" (Appendix A12). Harrison contextualised *Exodus* within industry contexts, demonstrating its uses (the debates over which genre would best benefit a show), and its values ("it [*Exodus*] is going to win BAFTAS and all sorts of things" (Appendix A12)).

Harrison's account placed a factual genre text within the contexts of industry production and commissioning. Harrison, as with others interviewed, would discuss genre and describe its uses and values effortlessly, demonstrating how genre can be embedded within a practitioner's industry theorising and lived-in experiences.

The difference between textual genres known to audiences, and industry-embedded genres as part of television production was illustrated by independent factual television production company Managing Director 'Chrissie'. Chrissie was asked about industry-embedded genres, such as dramadoc, were useful to their practices:

> [industry-embedded genre] is helpful for us to define it like that. So it has an impact on everything from budget to schedule to the way we tell a story. But it's about a way of telling a story rather than a genre". (Appendix A6)

Chrissie did identify industry-embedded genres, language that helped to define industry practice in the same way she defined genres. This distinction explains why creative practitioners can be dismissive of genre's value to their work if they do not see the genres that codify their practices as genres. However, Chrissie never disputed the dramadoc as an industry genre. This demonstrates the importance of industry-embedded genres as contextual entities. Different industry-embedded genres can have different filming styles, types of content, levels of budget, crew compliments, technical requirements, or production lengths, and for some practitioners, despite being known as genres in their industry production and commissioning practices, are not genres.

As with textual genres, industry-embedded genres are constantly, altering their uses and values as well as their meanings. Managing Director Chrissie (Appendix A6) said that budget can factor into the value of industry-embedded genres as types of production can carry different costs. Isaac, as a development head, speaks of television scheduling and its tight relationship to genre:

> I think the schedule dictates and tells the audience what to expect on what day and at what time, and that tends to be genre, those two things are interconnected. (Appendix A2)

Isaac connects genre use to schedule expectations; that particular time-slots will be filled with programs that relate to particular genres. Producers are thereby aware of the significance of schedule and genre that can point them towards specific types of shows and specific genre commissioners. Isaac further connects the budget to both genre and scheduling:

> I always think that quiz - the daytime quiz - is sort of purpose-built to the schedule's needs. The schedule needs something long-running and relatively inexpensive, but they also want a bit of glamour. (Appendix A2)

Genres can provide practitioners with implicit instructions that relate to the art, mechanics, and commercial requirements of television production. These implicit instructions are contextual, providing information that only makes sense if the practitioners have access to a deeper industry knowledge that the genre intrinsically speaks to. Isaac demonstrates his deeper industry knowledge by being able to deconstruct production meaning from generic code, the daytime quiz.

Genre is used as an industrial semiotic tool that provides producers and commissioners a method of articulating contextualised meaning. As Managing Director Brian explained:

> Rather than say "I'm making an ob-doc", I'd say, "I'm making a rigged show on a skip company". (Appendix A4).

Managing Director Brian substitutes the use of the observation documentary genre label (truncated to ob-doc) for that of a multi-rigged camera. Multi-rig, or fixed rig, refers to a production methodology used in the observation documentary genre where up to 100 fixed cameras may be deployed within a specific location, such as a hospital or school, to observe social activity (Bell, 2015). The semiotic use of 'rigged show' is significant as whilst an industry marker, it is a term that is contextual to the language of production than it is to broadcasting.

Brian's argument demonstrates the tension within the signification of industry language. Ob-doc is a generic label that Brian resists for its lack of practice specificity; seeking a form of signification that speaks to production technique and the show's subject.

It could be argued that the use of "rigged show" is a style of production rather than a genre. However, if genres are activated and stabilized by cultural discourse, the genre label is legitimised by those who use it and define it as a genre. As Brian explains:

> If we just take the rigged shows as an example, a viewer, an average viewer, Mrs Johnson, sitting in Sunderland who is 65 - she doesn't know whether *A&E* is filmed on a rig, or a handheld camera, or a go-pro: she doesn't give a shit. What she wants is great content or great storytelling, yet we are obsessed with "Is it a mini-rig? Is it a rig? Is it POV shooting?" *All that kind of stuff, and within the industry, they'd define that as a genre in itself.* [my emphasis] (Appendix A4)

Brian argues that what is considered a genre outside the industry, and what is considered by practitioners inside the industry can differ. It demonstrates that from a practitioner of production, industry-embedded genres are distinct from textual genre discourse. Furthermore, Brian argues audiences, as a cultural group, have no use nor value for industry-embedded genres. Industry-embedded genres relate to production practices, so what they mean, how they are used, gives them little value or significance to audiences. The lack of relevance of industry-embedded genres to other cultural groups is what keeps them localised. However, textual genres do relate to audiences, as their form and cultural significances comprise of the "great storytelling" that engages audiences.

Speaking of the different types of production label styles, POV, mini-rig, or rig, Brian concludes they *"sort of becomes a genre* without people realising it" [my emphasis] (Appendix A4). The Managing Director theorises all these production classifications are part of the language of industrial production, and that when used in common discourse, these descriptions become a *generic* part of the industry language. More importantly, the interviewee suggests the signification becomes a genre unknowingly, not intentionally; updating the industry lexicon with little conscious awareness from industry practitioners. As with media texts where the audiences, industry, and critics sustain genres through implicit mutual use, industry-embedded genres can only find a form with those who mutually share, understand, and agree upon, generic language.

Regularity and relevance shape genre in language so it can stabilise as a shared typification. Carolyn Miller (1984) argues that in rhetoric studies "[a] new type is formed from typifications already on hand when they are not adequate to determine a new situation. If a new typification proves continually useful for mastering states of affairs, it enters the stock of knowledge and its application becomes routine" (p.157). Industry-embedded genre conventions relate to the production of television, but can also relate to industry systems that have an impact on production decision making. As Craig Collie (2007) concludes, "An understanding of genre will assist in appreciating how the idea might be realised as television, and a knowledge of the production process will inform whether that idea is indeed producible" (p.166). For production companies, these production processes are not always material requirements, such as technical or crew, but agreed budgets, schedule slots, and expectations of the broadcaster. Industry-embedded genres are significant to broadcasters and their commissioners; however, their uses and values can differ.

The following sub-section considers genre's use in industry language from the perspective of the institutional agents that commission concepts.

2.3 Impacts of British broadcasters on the uses and values of industry-embedded genres

British broadcaster's most visible use of industry-embedded genres are through their commissioning departments, however, genres can also help shape their identity through selected show output, and contribute to their ongoing commercial strategies. Broadcasters are responsive to cultural trends, market changes, political influence, and economic forces as well as facing the challenges of uncertain markets. As with production companies, broadcasters can use genres to help foster risk management strategies and communicate the styles of shows required to meet those goals of relevant industry groups, such as producers and commissioners. This section highlights the importance of genre to broadcasters and is explored in greater detail in chapter three.

Where producers have argued the language of type speaks to production practice—for example, rigged cam shows—for broadcasters, genres are required to make sense of their content; they commission, what and when they air that commissioned content. For industry-

embedded genres to be active they must have uses and values for all parties that engage with their language. This does not mean their uses and values have to be the same, but their meanings need to be shared for genres to be stable. This can mean that industry-embedded genres can reflect the different agencies within the production of television.

Entertainment has been evidenced in this chapter as a tone that is important to current factual television as entertainment can be a draw for larger audiences (Ursell, 2003). Entertainment is thereby a key term in production, and, by association, so is popularity. Both popular factual and factual entertainment are industry-embedded genres; shorthands that express common interests of broadcasters that stabilise into the industry lexicon. Commissioning editor 'Kerry' reflected on genre in this aspect:

> I think it's a shorthand for programme-makers and commissioners and what's expected in a programme, and I think it slightly depends on where that programme is coming into the schedules. (Appendix A8)

Kerry speaks of industry-embedded genres as a context that enables producers and broadcaster commissioners to understand each other. She further suggests that schedules will have an impact on how genre is used within those discussions. However, as part of a genre commissioning department, Kerry does not see genre as a conceptual priority. In terms of discourse, Kerry argues tone has more value than genre:

> We don't talk about genres within our team. We talk a lot about tone, and so if you have one subject like, inequality in the UK, tonally there are many different iterations of how you deal with that subject. So, you could do it as a history programme about it, a current affairs programme about it, you could do a hard-hitting observational documentary about it, or you could do something tonally counter-intuitive, fun, easy to watch, or you could do a *Benefit Cheats*, that sort of format about it. I think that's how those classifications happen. (Appendix A8)

The commissioning editor feels that *tone* has more value to their practice of commissioning than genre, despite belonging to a genre commissioning department. Tonal language has contributed

71

to industry-embedded genres; for example, entertainment, popular, specialist, all speaking to a tone or expectation to what the genre will deliver. Tone can guide commissioning decisions and direct the commissioners to a selected "iteration" of an idea, which itself can define the chosen genre (as in Kerry's example, observational documentary, or current affairs) Yet at the same time, Kerry utilises contemporary genre labels, such as observational documentary, history, and [current] affairs. Within the commissioning editor's discourse, genre does not play a significant, nor conscious, role yet throughout the interview genre was spoken about intrinsically:

> I think each genre has a set of rules about it, and I think observational docs... have a set of rules. You don't have a narration; you don't have a presenter... [you] interview people as they go along within the scene... there are rules attached. Specialist factual there are rules attached... history... formats obviously, you've got all their rules... and I guess the way to innovate the rules is to break them. (Appendix A8)

While this does not change the commissioning editor's assertion that genre is not a common part of their discourse, within their team and with creative workers, they can articulate their understanding of industry-embedded genres. Kerry is resistant to prescribing value to genre within her practice, yet she understands the genre conventions; how they speak to the labels used by broadcasters within the context of commissioning.

As genre department labels, industry-embedded genre conventions cannot be strictly maintained, as those conventions are interpretable. Head of Development 'Gareth' observes:

> Documentaries will also commission something like the *Real Marigold Hotel* […] that's an idea that could come from factual entertainment or even science perhaps. So, the line between the genres is very, very blurred. (Appendix A10)

The shifts within the language used to define British factual genre departments are not fixed but are themselves shorthand in achieving the broadcaster's goal of commercially successful television. Producers like Gareth acknowledge that genre commissioning has, as with all genres, fluid boundaries.

Speaking further to this fluidity in industry-embedded genres, production company Managing Director Harrison concludes that real-term production does not always "conform to those institutional structures, and huge and important areas can fall between those different departments, and that's something that television has struggled with for quite a long time" (Appendix A12). The genre language of both the producer and commissioner is a shared knowledge; a fluid and contemporaneous understanding of what constitutes a genre at a given moment. "Rigged shows" was articulated in interviews by both creative producers and creative commissioners. Production company Director and founder 'Kezia' (Appendix A9) used *The Great British Bake Off* as an example of the dissonance between accepted conventions of a genre text and its genre commissioning. If you look at *Bake Off* it is an interesting one: how on earth could anyone call *Bake Off* a documentary because it was famously commissioned by the Documentary department?" (Appendix A9). In this regard, the value of the industry-embedded genre in commissioning is not always visible, or a priority over other factors which can steer a project and those who oversee its commissioning.

As with textual genres, industry-embedded genres are informed by cultural forces that exist within the British factual television industry. Broadcasters are strong guiding forces for the language of industry genres, providing producers with information that relates to broadcaster requirements and expectations. Broadcasters are conscious that their departmental organising of genres is not rigid. Responding to the uncertain conditions of their markets, broadcasters look to industry-embedded genres to communicate broad rather than narrow contexts to producers. These contexts are open to interpretation by producers and commissioners. Different institutions will adopt variations of factual sub-genres that reflect their identity and structural make-up. As such, industry-embedded genres are not stable nor coherent across British television broadcasters but localised to represent the strategies and structure of respective institutions.

Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated the role and function of industry-used genres in British factual television. It has been argued that these genres are overlooked by television scholars, and their role has had little exploration compared to genre as textual categories. These industry genres are not a component of the discourse circulating television texts, but of television production.

Steve Neale argued that genres need to be considered as a multi-dimensional phenomenon (1999) so that genre formation and ongoing mutations are acknowledged to reflect a complex cultural arrangement of factors. As with textual genres, industry-embedded genres are multi-dimensional, responding to a wide set of factual television production relations. These genres are interpretative and contextual to their culture. Unlike the textual genres, industry-embedded genres react to and are informed by, the complex heterogenic nature of the industry and its ongoing changes.

The language that contributes to the industry-embedded genres within British factual television does not stem from textual conventions as common with genre media texts but instead comes from intrinsic production contexts. Industry-embedded genres thereby are often a part of the dialogic process of industry practice, providing shared understanding, commonly between producers and distributors of British factual television. These intrinsic contexts provide a common ground of knowledge for the heterogenic industry culture. These genres are embedded in production discourse but are important to broadcasters, and recognised by other industry sectors, such as trade journals and industry events (as explored in chapter five). Their existence is based on their uses and values which do not extend beyond industry requirements.

As departmental labels, industry-embedded genres have limitations, and both commissioners and producers note how this makes their use interpretable. Commissioning agents speak of the use of tone, a facet of some of the industry-embedded genres (such as specialist factual or factual entertainment) to understand relationships between content types. The commissioning departments themselves use industry-embedded language in their institutional discourse, and it is a highly flexible language that reflects the current relationships between content and structures that commission. However, commissioners note the interpretative nature of industry-embedded genres means projects do not always align with the department's interpretation of genre, and in such cases, it is the tonality of shows that can be the guiding voice of genre commissioning.

Interviewees highlighted the complex nature of the language within industry discourse and its applications to institutional structure. This demonstrates how industry-embedded genres provide producers with a language that can help steer their portfolio and learn specific production skillsets. Other producers spoke of the building blocks industry-embedded genres provided. Industry-embedded genres aid producers by contextualising pragmatic industry requirements

such as budgeting specifications, relationships to broadcasting schedules, and as a guide to the type of content to pitch to commissioners.

Producers differed in the use, value, and meaning within their industrial practices, yet there was an understanding that genres in industry cultures had commercial and production contexts. Again, the contextuality of industry-embedded genres was evident in the discourse. Different practitioners had a different interpretation of how genre could be used in the building of ideas and locating their commercial value, and their value to their practices was questioned. Yet throughout, there was an understanding that genre existed within their practices. Industry-embedded genres do not interact with media texts, and practitioners spoke of genres in how they interacted with their work or other groups in their culture.

The language of industry genres speaks to the heterogeneity of the industry, and this heterogeneity is further evidenced through the multiple perspectives and industry self-theorising of its practitioners. Genre is evidenced to be present within industry language and structure and is formed, sustained, and reconstructed by industry practices. It provides shared understanding through grounded intrinsic contexts but, like textual genres, it carried no unified meaning amongst its practitioners, nor a unified theorised value.

The following chapter thereby examines the culture of British factual television producers and how the industry-embedded genres are used, valued within the practices themselves, arguing for a better understanding of the heterogenic nature of the British factual television production industry and the importance of genre as a supporting mechanism in the devising of concepts and selling of their ideas to commissioning institutions.

Chapter Two: Industry-embedded genres: their uses, values, and meanings for above-the-line practitioners in the development of factual television production

This chapter focuses on the significance of industry-embedded genres within British factual television production. It argues that genres support practices inherent to different managerial roles, enabling above-the-line practitioners to better understand, manage, and negotiate their commercial industry and risky markets.

Production companies engage with the commercially sensitive, industrially deep-embedded forces of British television. Embedded forces and mechanisms are unavailable and unseen to consumers and media critics, whilst contributing to the lived-in reality of the television professional (Caldwell, 2008). Industry-understood genres contribute to embedded discourses, meaning-making, and knowledge sharing. A micro-study of television industry production companies improves our understanding of genre as an industrial process of categorisation, and how it speaks to the discourses and significations beyond the company walls. As Ian Condry (2013) argues, "smaller social worlds and networks provide the key to the emergence of new systems of value" (p.31). By looking at micro-sites of industry-embedded genres, a more cohesive understanding of how and where genre circulates culturally is constructed.

However, whilst industry-embedded genres are a shared concept, they are engaged with managing different role-based objectives. Su Holmes (2008c) argues, "Critics, academics, fans or media producers do not all have the same investment in the concept of genre" (p.17). All production company managers work towards the creation of successful projects, yet each role will have different creative and commercial objectives that draw upon genre to support.

The chapter argues that production company managerial roles carry different responsibilities, expectations, and goals for which genre offers benefits—and sometimes obstacles—to the development of concepts pitched to broadcaster commissioning. As Brett Mills (2009) argues "If genres are cultural contexts within which texts make sense, then those who produce programmes must similarly use genre to make sense of what they do" (p.50). The role of a production company head of development will have different key objectives and outcomes to their

managing director, yet both will engage with genre. By investigating genre through the different production company roles, genre is evidenced as a social mechanism used to make sense of the everyday creative and commercial decision-making. Ian Condry (2013) notes "media production is a site where agency, structure, and power intersect in contested negotiations over meaning and representation" (p.28). It is through these ongoing contested negotiations that genre is demonstrated to have significant uses, values, and meanings.

Yet, the question of genre's uses, values, and meanings to television production companies cannot be analysed effectively without acknowledging the discourse surrounding the concept of commercial formats. Both academics and professionals alike have rejected the importance of genre in production in favour of the format; commodifiable blueprints of a television show that can be licensed and sold to be reproduced elsewhere (Chalaby, 2016). Academic analysis on British factual television has commonly situated genres as opposing—or less relevant than—the concept of the television format.

Originally the game show genre was the main export of television formats. The growth in independent production companies in the late 1990s saw the format market become a global high-profit phenomenon (Chalaby, 2016). The formula for a show could be sold and adapted to meet the cultural requisites of a different country. As concepts that can be licensed and sold, formats have a tangible impact on television production culture. As Glen Creeber (2015b) has noted, "It may now be difficult to ascertain the exact importance of genre within television because of the recent rise and significance of the TV format" (p.11). As Creeber argues, television formats are an important development model for many factual production companies, giving concepts commercial and global reach (Creeber, 2015b; Moran & Malbon, 2006). This point will not be contested, but built upon, demonstrating how formats are an important part of the genre discourse. Against this backdrop, the chapter seeks to complement and build on existing debates as to the roles of genre and format have in British factual television production. This builds a more concise picture of how genre functions for different above-the-line managers within the context of commercial production.

Through the conducted interviews with above-the-line production practitioners, the chapter will analyse genre's industry-embedded uses and values. David Hesmondhalgh (2018) has argued that genre "might not be universally understood and also might not even be *explicitly*

used, but the key thing here is that a type of cultural product is suggested and associated with particular uses and pleasures" (p.37). Whilst Hesmondhalgh speaks of the broader cultural uses and values of *textual* genres, some interviewees theorise in this chapter that industry-embedded genres are implicit in their work. However, an analysis of the interviews did suggest genre *was* universally understood, with interviewees being able to reflect and theorise on how they use genre as an embedded industry function. The chapter argues that genres can be implicit in their use and still have important values to industry practice.

The chapter demonstrates the complexity of genre within industry production, and that while its embedded functions are a part of socio-professional communication, industry structures, and working practices, for some production practitioners, genres can restrict creative freedoms. In this respect, the chapter seeks to highlight the complexities of genre within the production company's self-marketing and content creation.

The chapter first looks to define the key above-the-line practitioner roles: managing directors, creative directors, and heads of development. The second section investigates the relationship between different above-the-line roles with industry-embedded genres through data collected from the conducted interviews, demonstrating how genre is an integral factor within company commercial risk management and market identity. The final section investigates the relationship genre has to television formats as part of commercial development and argues that they should not be analysed in opposition to each other, but as industry-embedded conventions that work together in limiting commercial risk and maximising company potential.

Part 1: Defining above-the-line decision-makers and managers of British Factual Television production companies

The following interviews are sourced from three above-the-line practitioner production company positions in British factual television: managing director, head of development, and creative director. The role of production company managing director aligns with the hypothesis of the creative manager, conceptualised by Bill Ryan (1992) and defined by Mark Banks (2007) as operatives who "ensure that creativity is disciplined to the instrumental purposes of the film - making money remains the overarching objective that structures how creativity is defined, developed and employed" (p.73). The role of creative management is evident in the interviews

with managing directors as they reflected on steering their creative business through the uncertain and competitive straits of the everchanging television market.

Production company heads of development oversee projects being developed by either an individual or genre-coordinated team. For a head of development, the focus is more internal than external, coordinating and managing creative ideas. Development Head 'Connor' speaks of his role in team management:

> We've got between six to ten people working in development, and it's essentially my job to come up with the new ideas to steer production. It's very, very varied as to what I'm doing at any one time or on any one day. Essentially, it's developing ideas, and developing those up, and getting rid of those which aren't of any use. (Appendix A11)

Such teams can comprise producers, assistant/associate producers, or researchers employed by the independent production company or a broadcaster's internal production studio. The head of development decides which of the projects will be developed further (Lees, 2010; BBC, 2015). The development process can operate throughout a range of different social setups, however, as Development Head Isaac reflected, the basic concept of development remains the same:

> You can start with a genuinely blank piece of paper and spend a few days trying to come up with a thing, but I think you are naturally drawn to where the opportunities are […] and sometimes it is good to start with a piece of talent or a genre or an area and build from that […] you want to go where there's a gap in the market, but sometimes you find there is a gap in the market for a reason - so there isn't an exact science to it and you just try as many different ways as possible. (Appendix A2)

Isaac theorises that development heads must have a strong understanding of the market and an idea must be developed to fit its current demands and tastes. He argues that talent plays a key role in the foundations of genre development.

When speaking to development heads, despite the focus being on the development of ideas, it is notable that an awareness of the market is very prevalent within the discourse:

> I always say to my team, it's panning for gold. You can be standing in that
> stream for months and months and find nothing, despite your best efforts, and
> then one day it will just appear. It can be very frustrating, but then if it was easy
> everyone would be doing it. (Appendix A2)

Isaac explains the development practice is a frustrating hunt for a sellable idea, demonstrating that the creative method is very much intertwined with economic pressures to find a market gap.

The production company head of development usually reports to the creative director, a role that straddles both creative and business strategies. The creative director reports to the managing director or CEO (Jones, 2015), who then takes that information and decides as to which ideas are pitched to buyers (Lees, 2010).

Whilst the chapter identifies three types of production company above-the-line management, it acknowledges that these roles are not stringently defined but are porous in their remits. Nicola Lees (2010) observes "In some companies the head of development conducts meetings with the channels, in other companies, the managing director pitches the ideas. The executive or series producer pencilled in to make the program may or may not be involved in the development and pitching process" (p.21). Lees defines the head of development as a multi-faceted role that is involved in development talks with external parties as well as managing their team. A BBC Studios (2016) head of development job description advocates "As part of this review the role of head of development has been identified as a business-critical position, with a position on the board and a significant role to play across commercial, programming and creative direction", placing the mandate of the head of development beyond the role of team management, but in this particular studio's structure, as a decision-maker that speaks to output, markets, and creativity.

Equally, the role of the creative director can vary depending on the company. Creative Director Dan Jones (2015) reflects online "I take ultimate responsibility for both the creative and the business strategy of my teams (in some companies this role is shared with a managing director), with an overall focus on maintaining the quality of what we produce". As Lees (2010) concludes, "Development is, in other words, all about the politics" (p.21). Production and development within British factual television are very much individualised to company need or preference.

With such a high level of heterogeneity within the reflections of the interviewees, which can be the result of different company ethics or the individualism of the practitioner, this chapter does not seek to locate definitive answers to how genre is perceived by creative practitioners. However, by making visible some of the reflections and theories articulated by those who engage in the industrial mechanisms of genre, the following section can demonstrate what uses, values, and meanings, industry-embedded genres can have for different types of working professionals.

Part 2: How does genre factor into lived-in practices of above-the-line roles in British television factual production?

This section explores how development is reflected upon and theorised by development heads, creative directors, and managing directors and how genre functions with their job roles.

Development is a key aspect of the production process and has strong ties to industry-embedded genres. Genre can shape ideas, how those ideas can be built into a pitch for a television show, and where to pitch those ideas. As Nicole Lees (2010) notes, development is distinct from being merely about creativity, and "requires a set of skills that are distinct from those of production" (p.21). Lees positions development as requiring a "unique mind-set" as "selling rather than making" can be a frustrating process for practitioners (p.21). Critically, Lees points to development requiring in-depth industry knowledge that extends beyond in-house policy and practice but to the market, its audiences, and industry commissioning executives. How their industry articulates these powers must be understood by development managers and their team. The language of the industry—genres included—calls for an understanding of current and past trends, as well as developing future ones. For creative management, the discourses around genre, their company, and the television industry are commonly situated around risk. Hanne Bruun (2010) argues for a more positive take on producer's strategies, suggesting that genre for audiences and producers alike provides a "horizon of expectation" (p.724). Ava Alacovska (2017) argues for a similar model; that genre is not a "backward-looking category", but in fact, are "forward-looking categories" that guide works of future authors (p.181). However, this stance was not reflected by all practitioners interviewed. Speaking of genre in development, production company Managing Director David downplayed its value and use. "A job of someone in development is to win work by delivering content or ideas to the network that

they want to buy." (Appendix A15). Despite selling to commissioning departments with genre prescribed conventions, as theorised by the managing director, selling commercial ideas and content was not genre-centric. David would go further to argue "It's funny because we don't approach development in terms of genre - we're applying to mandates that channels release" (Appendix A15). David frames his development practices as responses to broadcaster and distributor content requests. David does not deny genre is present, but he frames concept development as a practice neither challenged nor shaped by genre, but by the demands of their industry market. If genre is a forward-looking category or a tool of expectation for producers, it is not a perspective readily embraced in their discourse.

Television production industries are the producer of symbolic goods, where the immaterial meaning of the product brings commercial success or failure (Hesmondhalgh, 2018). Producers in the television industry, as with media industries in general, struggle with its model of high production costs to low distribution (Hesmondhalgh, 2018). As a media industry whose ingredients for product success conform to the mythic axiom of 'nobody knows' (Caves, 2000), producers must seek to ensure development ideas are financially viable for production. Genres can help mitigate these risks by providing established successful patterns to mimic and capitalise upon, acting as a bridge of cultural understanding between producers and audiences. In Graeme Burton's (2010) exploration of genre he argues "Expectation becomes a creative advantage when the producers know that there are some things they do not need to explain" and yet, with audiences seeking fresh material from producers, any blueprint can be a formula that is "both a cage within which the producers must operate and a framework within which the producer can build different versions" (p.30). Burton does position genre as an ambivalent category that can be interpreted as a backward or forward-facing convention of development. Genre can provide producers with a horizon of expectation but can equally provide contextual antecedents.

Harrison, Managing Director of an independent production company illustrates the cage of genre in production through an industry anecdote with a fellow producer. He notes how the commercial market and its pressures can shape the companies overall generic output; that to maintain commercial viability, production development can become standardised, situating the company into a particular type of genre:

> Now, I have a friend who was at *Broadcast* magazine […] he's now long since
> gone from that and makes movies now, and his profile stated how he stayed true
> to the documentary and never diversified or went into formats or entertainment.
> I bumped into him and said I enjoyed the profile and I loved how you said you
> stuck with documentaries. He said, "I spent my life trying to diversify into
> formats and all the rest of it!" So, he regarded that as a sort of failure […] in the
> end, you go to the people who want to commission from you, and if they like
> your work they'll have you back. (Appendix A12)

The interviewee notes how commercial pressures can motivate a creative practitioner into specific genres or modes of work, and sometimes workers wish to work in other avenues but are unable to make the move and retain their market value. Mark Banks (2007) argues that "Cultural Industry firms are amongst the most enthusiastic disciples of what we might term 'creative governmentalization', a process that promotes artistic and creative freedom while at the same time regulating identity and ensuring conformity to rational corporative objectives" (p.92). This tension between creativity and commerce (see Hesmondhalgh, 2018; Ryan, 1992) can see the creative manager (and creative worker) generate and self-regulate barriers based on assessments of their industry value. This can prevent diversification to different styles of production, delimiting creatives to specific genres. As argued by David L. Collinson (2003), "for many workers, a fundamental source of insecurity is the material and economic realities of selling one's labour in return for a wage" (532), and this is no different for television production cultures where marketisation remains a key attribute in their own industrial and creative value. Thereby the choice of genre, and its application within production development, is affected by the producer's genre legacy, a legacy that constitutes part of his professional value. Managing Director David speaks to this statement:

> You see the thing is about production companies is you do get known for
> making a particular type of programming […] People buy what they know, don't
> they? (Appendix A15)

David's conclusion again speaks to risk management, that broadcast commissioners will return to those who they know accomplish what is asked. In doing so, a production company becomes identified with a genre.

Managing Director Harrison argues that this can have potential ramifications for either the health of a genre or the producers associated with that genre:

> Having a niche in business terms is a bad idea, as any business consultant will tell you. […] I'd have been quite worried if Channel 4 had been bought and privatised; bought by an owner who didn't have an interest in current affairs and didn't see it [genre] as part of their job. […] The same happens to lots of Indies - lots get pigeon-holed, and it can be a problem if broadcasters take against a particular genre. (Appendix A12)

The managing director highlights how working within recognised styles of production can shape a production company's reputation. However, the popularity of genres with broadcasters is not static. A broadcaster withdrawing from commissioning a genre can impact a production company that has built an identity on that style. In this regard, genre can become embedded in the company's identity. If it becomes part of the company's market identity it can inhibit managing directors from being able to explore other generic interests for fear of diffusing the production company's reputation. Changes within the industry can affect the commercial capital of particular genres, displacing those who have accumulated their identity and reputation through genre works. As Bill Ryan (1992) notes, creative managers look to the original content as being built with "stylistic variations on known themes", to steer projects towards "predictable, marketable outcomes" (p.163).

In seeking the desired market outcomes, Harrison looks to keep the freshness in his company's output through the content of a show rather than challenge the genre style or form:

> There are new fresh ways of doing things. […] We will fundamentally use the documentary approach, but we're going to get to a place you don't think we're going to get to. We've just done a documentary in Iraq, and we got to go to

> places where western journalism cannot get to […] we were going to try and
> build characters, narrative, and actuality. (Appendix A12)

Harrison's approach to not to seek to mix genres, or to change genres, but to create fresh content whilst retaining the genre's syntax. Harrison recognises that his production company benefits from being understood for a style of work and looks to change the content rather than the style to keep his development ideas fresh.

Harrison also notes that the production requirements to change a subject can be significant. Different subjects can lead to different production techniques that themselves can create fresh content within a genre:

> I think there are some genres in television where we are always trying to come
> up with ideas that defy expectations. […] One is just to come up with new ways
> of tackling a subject […] *24 Hours in A&E* which is done by rigging a hospital
> ward with hundreds of cameras - which was a new technique that was very
> successful […] that gives a very intimate documentary feel because there are
> cameras everywhere. (Appendix A12)

24 Hours in A&E (Channel 4, 2011) is an observational 'fly-on-the-wall' documentary that utilises a high level of fixed cameras and microphones to monitor a public institution, pooling hundreds of hours of actuality to edit into a show (Ellis, n.d). In terms of documentary style, it utilises voice-over narration with interspersed interviews that relate to the on-screen subjects. For Harrison, *24 Hours in A&E* attempts to make visible the actuality of a societal institution—a hospital—while seeking to unearth the very personal stories of the people that shape, and are shaped by, that reality. Such a show adopts a production process that can penetrate through mass surveillance to generate intimacy. A successful production technique can be used in future content and contextualised to different subject matters. In such a scenario, multiple professionals describe the technique through a common shorthand that may generate a new industry-embedded genre.

Production techniques must be costed and for the managing directors of television production companies, the management of costs plays a key part in their commercial strategy and their use of genres. As independent production company Managing Director Brian explains:

> The other thing is if you are really in the shit with money, or you've got six weeks to go as a company, you want to take any show you can. Or if you have an investor who wants a return on their investment, you need a show that's going to make their investment sort of worthwhile. This means you are desperately trying to please the channel to get everything you want which is why all the shows are the same. By the way, to get into television you have to be rich, which is why everyone is middle class and wears fucking Barbour coats. It's depressing! (Appendix A4)

Brian demonstrates the difficulties within the market, and how economic determinism complicates production politics. He also argues that the economics of production favours those from a dominant social and economic class:

> I interview all the work experience people, as I think that is where our company will grow. If I can get them growing up understanding our DNA and sensibilities, I will be able to bring them on. So, thirty percent of our staff is from ethnic minorities and quite a lot come from not your usual background which means our output is slightly different. (Appendix A4)

Brian positions his company in defiance of industry norms in which genre codes are maintained for commercial stability. He argues that the cultural background of early-career workers can energise their output and sustain his company's identity and market position. Brian also reflects on hiring employees through the work experience pool providing they agree with the ideology of his company, indicating that whilst the company's output is regularly in opposition to genre norms, its internal components must align with the company's ethos. Brian speaks from the managing director's top-down role in the production company; where choices made in hiring are intended to shape and define their reputation, identity, and output. For this production company, genre is deeply encoded into its development ethic, and its managing director curates a

reputation for seeking creative workers that defy class and economic expectations of factual television practices and output.

Brian's reflections on genre were heavily bound by its relationship to the television market, company financial decisions, and how their defiance of genre could be used to shape a reputation. Genre's relationship to business and industrial conditions is an important contribution to their uses and values. 'Richard', a production company managing director, explains how genre related to the production company's business decisions:

> I guess for us the big question in terms of genre might differ from people in the academic community. […] Before we can make something, we must originate an idea and get it funded. To do that you've got to think quite hard about who that idea is for. In other words, who do you go to get the funding you need to make it? You have to think quite hard about what sort of product you're making and who might be interested in that. (Appendix A13)

For the managing director, the financial demands in making an idea economically viable are a vital consideration for the practitioner. In distinguishing between academics and industry practitioners' understanding of genre, Richard argues that development uses genre as a reference for how ideas are put into practice and how the financing can be resourced. This requires an understanding of who is commissioning specific genres. Richard explains the process:

> So, if I come up with an idea for a current affairs documentary. I want to identify the people who want that sort of material. If I pitch it to someone who specialises in comedy or drama then I'm not getting to be that successful, so at that level, we're always thinking where our ideas or products, if you like, sit in a marketplace. So that's what you're thinking about all the time. (Appendix A13)

As the managing director concludes, the creative idea is always considered in tandem with the current market forces, and genre acts as a pathway for development. Funding for a possible development is external and can be agreed upon with a broadcaster, who themselves are genre departmentalised. This systemisation may thereby shape the idea, or an idea may be shaped to fit a known avenue of revenue, such as a current affairs documentary may be taken on a specific

departmental pathway. David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011) note "Genre, then, constantly change in the practice of creative workers. Nevertheless, they provide some kind of institutionalisation and routinisation in a highly uncertain interpretive production world" (p.14). Richard's comments illustrate the difficulty of the development within the market, and how institutions and routinisation through broadcasters and established relationships bring structure to a chaotic, messy, and unpredictable production culture.

For managing directors, as creative managers of production companies, genre can aid in situating concepts within a current market, again, aiding the routinisation of practice, and the hunt for resources and experienced partners. Richard explains:

> We specialise in programmes that sit in specialist factual, which for us, is a genre of programming that covers things like history programmes, art documentaries - that sort of thing. There are particular people who we know commission that sort of material, for example, if we were to take them to the BBC, the way they commission programmes there will be individuals in that organisation who specialise in identifying and sourcing and developing those sorts of projects. That's how we think of genre. What is our idea? How does it fit into the current marketplace? Which bit of the jigsaw does it belong to? And then from that, we can work out to who to approach, where to go to find the money. (Appendix A13)

For Richard, once an idea is decided upon, genre becomes a pathway to make that idea a reality. Genres are not seen as textual objects but relate to a network of resources best suited to develop a concept. David Hesmondhalgh (2018) has argued one of genre's values to the development process is the boundaries it can generate. "Genre can actually be a productive constraint allowing for creativity and imagination within a certain of boundaries and enhanced understanding between audiences and producers…" (p.98). For Richard, genre provides boundaries to devise the best approach to producing an idea, but also costs, resources, and market strategies.

In the cases of Richard, Harrison, and Brian, each managing director speaks of their practices and genre in industry terms, situating genre as part of market risk-facing strategies and a function of their commercial identity. Yet within this role, managing director practices demonstrate

different ideologies and approaches to genre; Richard approaches genre as a resource for his company to bring an idea to fruition; Brian identifies his company in opposition to the television industry and its genre expectations; Harrison builds his company's reputation on a genre. For all their differences, each managing director spoke of genre concerning their identity, business strategies, and production practices. Genre was a way to navigate their company through difficult markets, manage costs, and be visible to clients. Where genre became a more complicated concept was in how they considered genre in relationship to fresh ideas.

Similar heterogenic reflections can be made for creative directors, often situated between the development of creative material and the creative management of production company outputs. Creative Director 'Jim' signals a distinction between practice and intellectualising genre. The interviewee uses the plural pronoun:

> "*we're* not consciously thinking about them" [my emphasis] (Appendix A7)

Jim is indicating the opinion is shared collectively; it is potentially an example of the creative director role that generally does not directly steer the company but has capital in development and company management.

Yet another production company's Creative Director, Kezia, speaks of genre with a different perspective:

> *…* *I* suppose *I* probably don't think about genre as much as you do, *I* just get on and do it [my emphasis]. (Appendix A9)

This interviewee, who was keen to talk about the application of genre and genre-blending within their practice had to admit that as a working component, genre's presence was acknowledged, but not necessarily articulated. It is expressed as an unthought function of the creative director's practice. Kezia expresses genre as a personal consideration rather than as part of collective action. Whatever the nuances that separate the personal position of these creative directors, it is again a subtle reminder that heterogeneous attitudes are not simply articulated through the different production company roles and their respective power hierarchies.

The use of genre by these creative directors bore similar reflections on genre's present if backgrounded role, however, the reasoning differed. Jim noted:

> […] genres are amorphous, and they change all the time, and you are constantly mashing up genres. But do we think about specific genres? Up to a point, yes, we do. (Appendix A7)

Jim argues that economic deterministic factors and structural powers are more of a focus. Tying his company's practices back to genre, Jim reflects:

> But where we develop, we start - and many production companies will do this - we'll start from the needs of the particular broadcaster, and then you must work backward in terms of the genre. (Appendix A7)

Jim places their relationship to genre at the end of their work-chain and the interpretation of broadcaster content requirements are the blueprint for development and not genre. Genre, however, becomes the shaper of those initial concepts. It can provide a framework of industrial context to the individualised needs of broadcasters and their commissioning agents. The importance of the needs of the broadcaster, and how that shapes work for producers, is noted by Managing Director Richard:

> You are guided by the way they work - these broadcasters work in different ways. (Appendix A13)

The heterogeneity of broadcasters, how they operate, and what they need, is a core factor in developing content. Both industry-embedded genres and their interpretations by commissioning bodies must also be recognised by producers. Managing director Harrison argues that genres are conventions that are understood and interpreted by institutional commissioning departments

> The audience doesn't sit down and say, "Oh that's a science programme, or that's a history programme!" they just sit down and see it as a television programme, and when you get that—the practicalities of pitching ideas to particular

> departments—means you need to think about how the departments see the core
> mission. (Appendix A12)

Harrison dismissed the relevance of industry-embedded genres for audiences and theorisies genre as a function of industry production. Harrison explains how they give a core mission for broadcasters that will then be interpreted by the commissioners.

In several cases, producers argued commissioners did not consider genre at all and were driven by their institutional content requirements. Head of Development Luke reflected:

> They want ideas in this area, so let's think of ideas in that area but not
> necessarily genre-specific because you can take an entertainment show and strip
> the entertainment value out of it and make it into a factual show. (Appendix A3)

Luke argues that it is the producer who must be pliable with their ideas so that they can be remodelled to the requirements of the commissioner. Luke speaks of commissioners wanting ideas in an 'area', but not constrained by genre conventions. Instead, the areas that commissioners look to are defined by their department boundaries. As Director of Entertainment, Andrew summarises:

> It comes down to the fact our job is chasing whatever the commissioner has
> been told is the type of show that their boss wants to see on the channel.
> (Appendix A1)

Andrew places the drive behind commissioning as a top-down decision, that is relayed to commissioning departments. Producers can argue that despite commissioners working within industry-embedded genre frameworks, they are interpreting content conventions that are not their own, and not genre specified. Luke suggests the separation from a genre department's core mission and its top-down institutional management can cause dissonance for commissioners:

> So, I think genre-blurring has positive aspects, you know, it is making people
> look outside the box more, or thinking outside their known ground but then at
> the same time, there is an issue with genre-blurring because with

> commissioning, sometimes commissioners get confused about what they want
> and what they can commission and don't commission. (Appendix A3)

Luke articulates this genre-blurring as a positive action in content creation but can have political complications for the commissioners; that the genre-blurring can confuse commissioners, who are managing what ideas they should commission. Kezia, suggests as a producer, industry-embedded genres, those structures that can define institutional content management, can hinder a pitch, but not always:

> On the one hand, genre can be used to deflect commissions. If you take
> something to a department, and they're not sure about it, they'll say "It's not for
> us, that's docs or that's fact-ent." If they like it, they'll find a way to make it from
> their department regardless of genre. (Appendix A9)

Kezia illustrates how genre departments can stand by their conventions, or ignore them when it suits their agenda. This elasticity of genre, the institutional politics that surround it, and how genre is interpreted by broadcasters and commissioners, are explored with greater detail in chapter three. For producers, it demonstrates how practitioners are aware that the path to an accepted pitch cannot always rely on genre to find the right buyer. The commissioners, despite their departments being defined by industry-embedded genres, are reflecting on their broadcaster's requirements and market interests that go beyond their department's set conventions.

Kezia, having argued that genre is not a conscious part of their work as producers, and more a part of the institutional structural make-up, goes on to explain what is consciously important to her company:

> How much could we keep genre consciously in mind? I think formats are a
> clearer cut one. Are we consciously developing formatted shows as opposed to
> non-formatted shows, and the answer is "yes", I would say? (Appendix A9)

In this comment the creative director acknowledges a preference to be considering their work's broader structures around format than genre. For Kezia, formats create a bolder distinction of

conceptual boundaries for development. Glen Creeber's (2015b) point resonates with this perspective. He argues "Formats have now proved so popular that genre often seems an almost secondary form of categorisation by comparison" (p.11). Creeber suggests that formats have industry popularity that has made genre seem less important. As a defined blueprint for a production, formats can be identified, managed, and packaged with legal characteristics. If industry-embedded genres are intrinsically contextual, formats are intrinsically textual by their nature. From this perspective, Creeber's argument that genre could be considered secondary in production discourse does not seem unreasonable. He further argues that the broadness of genre is in part why it is not heavily featured in industry discourse. He argues practitioners are "speaking more frequently" of formats with their inclination towards specificities (p.11). Creeber explains a format can "describe a particular show in a very exact manner" (p.11). This intrinsic textual relationship speaks to the commercial and economic demands of the television industry.

In light of this, the next section analyses the discourses offered concerning formats and genre and their meaning to above-the-line practitioners. By applying an analysis of the discourses between two production languages of television genres and formats, industry-embedded genre's importance to industry practice is better understood through its relationship with other industrial models of categorisation.

Part 3: Production company cultures and the close relationship between format and genre as industry-embedded language

Industry-embedded genres operate as an industry language, and commercial formats exist in a similar embedded capacity. Commercial formats are television blueprints that are licensed and sold. Glen Creeber (2015b) explains that a format's conventions relate to a specific production or a production bible, and such a bible can be commodified and emulated by other television companies. These range from structural and technical specifications, such as camerawork and lighting, to production demands and editing details, such as music, title sequences, and graphics (Biltereyst & Soberon, 2016). The benefit of commercial formats is that they are sold locally and globally. Factual genres have seen the format as a profitable commercial strategy, instantly drawing a relationship between the format and the genre. Glen Creeber (2015b) argues "The new TV age has also resulted in an abundance of certain types of genre that seem to lend themselves

easily to format adaptation. The format is the recipe that can 'cook' a successful television show with local ingredients. Reality TV is perhaps the most ubiquitous example of this, a show like *Big Brother* (Endemol, 1999–) "being one of the most successful global formats of all time" (Creeber, 2015b: p.12). The quiz show is another example of a successful format that has had global appeal (Holmes, 2008c), where the bible for *Who Wants to Be A Millionaire?* (Celedor, 1998-) has seen multiple local variations made across the world. The commercial format is thereby licensed and sold globally as well as locally; a set of conventions that are shaped and reshaped at the cultural level (Moran & Aveyard, 2014), providing commercial interest and a cost-effective template that works against market risk.

Concerning genre, Daniël Biltereyst and Lennart Soberon (2016) argue that formats are not separate but heavily intertwined with genre. They further argue that formats are industry-devised categories in contrast to genre connections to narrative, form, and style, However, industry-embedded genres are also industry-devised by the discourse and production contexts of factual television making. In this regard, whilst their uses and values are distinct, they are both embedded parts of production culture as part of the same socio-cultural language, working mutually to the same goals towards production creation and the limitation of commercial risk.

As concepts tied to industry development, production and distribution, formats are not considered an industry constant, and like genre, their value is tied to audience tastes and consumption. As Kezia argues:

> For a number of years, 'format' was a dirty word; nobody wanted a thing [text] that had a format about it - because they [broadcasters] thought audiences had grown tired of formats. (Appendix A9)

Kezia speaks of how, as with genres, broadcasters saw formats as a style of programming that had lost their engagement with consumers. In this sense, while formats speak of individually styled contents, they are represented here generically as a form of industrial categorisation that is embraced or rejected. It is an indication that as part of industry classifications, formats are related to the industry-embedded genre family. Kezia goes on to theorise further about genres and formats:

> This is maybe where we talk about the question of whether audiences are aware
> or aren't aware of genres - I think an audience wouldn't say "Oh I wouldn't like
> that show, because it's a format!", they just go "I don't like that show because it
> feels I'm being overtly manipulated..." (Appendix A9)

Kezia makes a cultural distinction between industry and consumer language. Kezia would argue audiences would not identify a format as a cultural concept but would interpret their dissatisfaction with a text through their own experience. Kezia believes audiences are unaware of formats and that formats are a part of the industry-embedded language. This does not suggest genres and formats are the same; genres and formats within industry language perform different structural and socio-industrial functions, but in terms of industry-embedded discourse, they both speak to production, economic, and commercial practices where their uses are culturally determined.

In terms of commercial practices, Kezia concludes formats offer risk management by generating a low-cost product that has global potential beyond an initial sale:

> There has been now a resurgence of a format and that makes a lot of sense
> commercially for us, where we not only benefit from the tape sales of our show
> but from the onward benefits of those shows being made around the world.
> (Appendix A9)

As with genres, formats provide production companies with a framework to minimise risk. Genres aid both in creating products that have recognised conventions and the process of development, production, and distribution are facilitated through an industry-understood language. Formats are sold on with the knowledge that their conventions have had local success, also an industry-understood language. Industry-understood language relates to production, editing, or conceptual frameworks and are be followed, mimicked, or reshaped by the buyer. As Biltereyst and Soberon (2016) argue, generic codes are part of a format bible, indicating a latent partnership of the two concepts. As part of an industry-embedded language that seeks to minimise commercial risks and provide intrinsically understood frameworks for television production, genres and formats share similarities and a kinship. It is a bond that is frequently ignored in their analysis in favour of where they diverge.

95

Such kinships can be observed in Harrison's reflections on formats and his own company's documentary approaches:

> An entertainment producer will have a different view of things, and they'll be looking very hard for formats, and so on and so forth - and they will be looking very hard for formats, and so forth - and they will be looking for new ways of doing things. […] The documentary didn't always exist but works very well, and we find it a tool that's very powerful for exploring all sorts of areas, so we surprise them by not changing the technique, but by getting to people and places that people think we can't get to.   (Appendix A12)

In these reflections, Harrison speaks of producers delivering content, with an entertainment producer heavily involved in formats. In terms of content and delivery, whether a producer specialises in producing formats for an entertainment commissioner, or documentaries for a genre commissioner, format and genre provide language that speaks to the construction of textual material. In a commercial market, both producers devise, develop, and desire to produce content that has specifically assigned conventions, the conventions that distributors will be currently looking for. This positions both genres and formats as culturally constructed forms of television production conventions; both are used in the commercial buying and selling of symbolic goods. These conventions must be mutually understood by those involved in the commercial sale of concepts, be they formats or genres. In both cases, these conventions help define the market for producers as well as their own commercial identity. This clarity of identity and product aids production companies in decision-making and strategising in a commercial market.

What is noticeable throughout the interviews is the opaque application of the production terminology; how in the practitioner's reflections genre and format are distinct in some cases, yet cross-applied in others. In many of the interviews, there was a reluctance to define genre as an intellectual contribution that suggests genre is not considered part of conscious practice. With formats, the responses are the opposite, as Development Head Luke theorised:

> When I talk about formats I'm talking about a 'repeatable programme' but for commercial formats, they're talking about 'something that allows you to take ownership of the IP' even though they can't do that - copyright and stuff […]

96

> they can say it is theirs. I'd say that term is used quite liberally to describe a
> programme you can sell elsewhere and has returnability; that's how developers
> see formats. They see it as something that has returnability and saleability.
> (Appendix A3)

The articulation of format is a programme that is not simply repeatable but can be commercialised as an intellectual property (even if not easily enforced, as explored in Moran and Malbon, 2006). Genres cannot be intellectual property due to their broad changing conventions (Moran and Malbon, 2006), but generic conventions are part of a format and are therefore key to a format's commercial identity. The similarities of these genric conventions in a format, if a format's success is repeated over time, can form new generic labels. The successful application of fixed rigged production cameras on reality format *Big Brother* (Endemol, 1999–), saw fixed rig technology adapted for future formats in the observation documentary category, with shows like *One Born Every Minute* (Endemol, 2010) revitalising the reality genre (Littleboy, 2013; Dams, 2017) and securing fixed rig as an industry-embedded genre. Formats and genres do not oppose but share an embedded industry relationship, providing different functions for producers that exist in close association with each other.

In evidencing the theoretical and practical interactivity of genre and format within commercial use, the two concepts may share relationships, yet the importance of genre to commerce is rarely spoken about - unlike formats where the value is very much vaunted as critical to their success:

> The motivation for [my company] is formats. We want something that will sell
> across the world and is going to be a big hit format. (Connor, Appendix A11)

Connor speaks of formats as a positive entity, an object that can be sold at a high global value. Genre, however, is reflected as either a habitual function of production and commissioning, or a concept of audience consumption – for which audiences "are not aware" (Kezia, Appendix, A9), and while they might "think about genre one hundred percent", they may not be aware of it (Brian, Appendix A4). Genre as an aspect of development is commonly dismissed as an art of practice or a layered contradiction. For instance, Brian was very keen to speak of genre and genre-mixing, stating, "I got completely passionate about that sort of playing with genre and

form" (Appendix A4). Despite this enthusiasm, he remained reluctant to express genre as an intellectualised practice. Speaking of genre as something that feeds into how "we", the industry, make shows, Brian argued:

> I don't think of Altman and Steve Neale in-depth, and I have to say I don't
> intellectually pursue this [genre], but I do think a lot about what the audience is
> expecting, and I do think genre expectations is a massive part of what *we* do - so
> I think that feeds into how we make shows. [my emphasis] (Appendix A4)

Producers commonly articulate genre as part of the production process, but do not always deem it as an essential part of their work. Brian speaks of mixing genre and the enjoyment of genre as a tool of production, such as an artist may consider a paintbrush. If genre is a paintbrush, formats are talked about as part of the painting itself. The commercial format is an object of desire to be attained and is thereby a constituent of their final design. Like genre, formats create boundaries and understanding but are part of the resulting creation, rather than as a tool of its production. Formats thereby have visible uses, values, and meanings to producers. As industry-embedded concepts, genres and formats provide a vessel for ideas but with different objectives. An industry-embedded genre provides a transitional vessel to aid in the production of an idea. It provides a framework that enables producers to find experienced people and appropriate resources to have the idea made and distributed. Formats provide an idea with a unique vessel and a commercial market identity. The value and meaning of the format are not in the process as much as in the commercial DNA of the final product. A format's value is more visceral to producers as its success has tangible ramifications as a commodified blueprint that can be sold onwards. Genre's value is more subtle and is sometimes reflected as an implicit understanding:

> You start with the same bits of research, and all the same anecdotes and stories
> and characters in your head, and you start thinking about how you might frame it
> differently, essentially to different clients. Genre is completely intuitive and not
> intellectual at all. (Appendix A9)

Kezia speaks of genre operating as implicit knowledge; an intrinsic and intuitive tool to shape an idea. This idea is then taken by her company and shaped into a format that can be sold onwards.

This process is explored in detail, contextualising it to industry structure and genre commissioning:

> But I always think it's worth coming back to genre because there are certain familiar ways of telling stories we know audiences like so we may have this great idea but what might that feel like as a fact ent show? What might that feel like as a pure documentary? What might that feel like a constructed reality piece? You can take all of those things and they have the same bit of access and the same bit of idea: you can tweak them. (Appendix A9)

Kezia's use of genre suggests industry-embedded knowledge of how genres are defined, labelled, and negotiated through broadcasters. Kezia uses language that demonstrates learned knowledge rather than an intuitive understanding with industry labels 'constructed reality piece', 'fact ent', and 'pure documentary'. In this context, Kezia's use of genre derives from knowledge and experience of the industry that can become second nature in its practice, it is industry-embedded knowledge she uses to produce television. Genre's relevance is reflected upon as instinctive, or not intellectually used, as a common tool taking a concept and making it commodifiable as television. Format shares a similar characteristic as it also takes an idea and commodifies it as a product for television. The biggest difference is the commercial format is intrinsic to the product, while genre is intrinsic to its production.

Conclusions

This chapter has argued that industry-embedded genre's uses and values to British television production companies differ from how genre is usually conceptualised as a means of textual classification. In doing so, the chapter furthered the argument for a closer analysis of genre subjective relationship to British television through their creation and business production practices. By looking at genre through the lens of above-the-line production positions, the meanings, values, and uses of genre can be evidenced in their theorising and working practices.

At all levels of above-the-line management, production company personnel were heavily aware of the difficult and unpredictable market forces, and with television having a high-cost

production model, managers look to industry-embedded genre conventions to give their work definition and their company a market reputation.

The chapter sought to explore some of the dimensions to the managerial roles within production companies in British factual television and how they use and value industry-embedded genres. It has been argued different managerial roles reflect on genre depending on their job requirements, yet at the same time demonstrated that managers were heterogenic in their attitude and ideology. Market and economic pressures were indicated as key drivers within management decision-making, whether it be a managing director's decisions on the type of content, or the development team's need to devise new material. In both cases, current economic, commercial, and commissioning conditions are industry factors that practitioners were keenly aware of and had local knowledge about.

Format and genres can be concluded to be both industry-embedded and tools to construct television content. Formats exist with a close association to genre as they are both built from generic codifications and conventions. Formats will be associated with specific genres, and whilst a format's value is in its unique characteristics, imitators of successful formats can result in format conventions becoming a regular part of production discourse thereby shaping, redefining, or creating industry-embedded genres. However, interviews revealed producers speaking far more positively about formats than genre which suggested genres were seen more as common tools of the trade, and used without thought, whilst formats were proactively sought as an outcome of development. Comments on genre being intuitive compared to intellectually engaging did reveal how producers would speak about genre through industry-embedded language, suggesting what is considered intuitive by professionals is knowledge learned from experience. Genres represent a tool that is so commonly used, practitioners do not think about that use, and so genre's role becomes less visible in the activity surrounding formats.

How industry-embedded genres are reflected upon by production practitioners does not demonstrate genre's industry value through their theorising, but their discourse does demonstrate its use, even if interviewees reflect on it with limited interest. With the unpredictable, competitive market and high costs associated with production, genre is part of an industry-embedded set of conventions, along with formats, that are essential to limiting risk and generating a company's reputation and identity. As a tool of production that exists through

common usage in industry discourse from producers, commissioners, and broadcasters, industry-embedded genres may not inspire producers reflecting on their lived-in experience of development, but it is demonstrated to have identifiable uses, values, and meanings, that steer and shape their company position within the television market.

Chapter Three: Broadcasters, genre, and shaping the terrain of commissioning within factual British television

As outlined and argued in the previous chapters, industry-embedded genres have different uses, values, and meanings to different roles within the British television industry. This chapter argues that industry-embedded genres are not just vital to production companies, but also have multiple roles in the organisational management, commissioning content, and market reputation of British broadcasters. Despite their relative autonomy, creative managers within broadcaster genre commissioning departments must respond to the genre-related decisions and market strategies of their broadcaster. These strategies flow further down the industry chain to the production companies, whose business and development decisions reflect the needs of their market. Through a study of British television broadcasters, the thesis further argues that genre provides a shared lexicon of contexts and conventions that enables effective communication across a heterogenic commercial terrain.

The chapter outlines how broadcasters utilise genre through three different lenses I have categorised as institutional elasticity, institutional shorthand, and institutional identity. These categories are not exclusive to each other, and as the chapter demonstrates, function in tandem to support a broadcaster's systems of practice, structural operations, and commercial strategies.

In the context of British factual television, 'institutions' can be a somewhat nebulous label used to identify the heterogenic nature of media-focused organisations, however, this chapter focuses on the institutional qualities of broadcasters. Graeme Burton (2010) uses institutions about media organisations that both produce and distribute media material which is common for British television broadcasters. However, for the definition of broadcasters used here, it is organisations that both *commission* and distribute media material. This amendment acknowledges different models of British broadcasting that can have integrated broadcaster production, such as ITV (ITVplc, n.d) with a focus on creating and owning content or, broadcaster publisher model such as Channel 4, where all aired content is commissioned externally (Channel 4, n.d). In either case, whether the content is produced by the broadcaster or

for the broadcaster, genre commissioning processes are a key property of British broadcasting institutions.

Burton (2010) further argues that media institutions are not simply about the production of texts, but the production of meanings, that they "are more than textual production" (p.50). Burton suggests that media institutions should also be considered in questions arising from their power, influence, social relationships, and their significance to the public space. As much as genre can be identified in the practice of commissioning, genre is embedded in other aspects of a British broadcasting institution. Industry-embedded genres are effective for industry communication, risk management strategies, and can be a contributor to a broadcaster's identity both as a commissioner and distributor of symbolic goods. The chapter investigates how institutions depend on genre's structure and fluidity to provide sustainable risk management, market mobility, and provide conventions that give defined access to production companies. Furthermore, industry-embedded genres are argued to factor into a broadcaster's institutional identity as well as celebrate their market position and reputation.

The following section provides a brief review of the literature that addresses broadcasters as organisations and the internal and external conditions they face. Industry-embedded genres are a necessary part of broadcaster organisational management that must effectively engage with the creative and commercial conditions of commissioning as well the cultural powers beyond the industry sector, such as television audiences, national politics, and the television market itself.

The second section tests its theories on broadcasters using genre as concepts of elasticity, shorthand, and identity against the lived-in reality of those whose practices circulate—or are a direct consequence of—television broadcasters. It argues that industry-embedded genres are critical for the flexibility and structure required for broadcasters at both executive and commissioning levels.

Part 1: Broadcasters: uncertain markets, politics, and the importance of industry-embedded genres

Broadcasters are examples of "symbol-intensive organisations" (Lawrence & Phillips, 2002: p.431) and the second stage in the British production industry model. They operate primarily at

what Simon Cottle (2003) defines as the meso-level of cultural production as part of the "impinging organisational cultures, corporate strategy and editorial policies informing production practices and the reproduction of conventionalised (and changing) cultural forms", however, they influence the micro-level of production culture and are influenced by the macro-contexts of "surrounding regulatory, technological and competitive environments conditioning the operations and output of media organisations at global to local levels" (p.20).

As operatives in a neoliberal market, broadcasters build their own identities to compete with rival broadcasters. Bernard Miège (1987) observed that the cultural industries are heterogenic, with sub-industries operating under different frameworks. Drawing on French sociologist Patrice Flichy's (1991) work on cultural production, Miège makes a distinction with television as being a cultural industry of flow culture, that operates day to day, where the previous day's commodities become obsolete the next day. Within the television industry, Miège (1987) makes this emphasis on genres, and how genres help regulate the flow-culture and its market. He observed television operates a continual flow culture like an "unbroken conveyor belt", and notes television must maintain a range of products that are categorised into genres to address the need for "strictly defined audiences" (p.276). The ongoing movement of television markets requires broadcasters to be constantly scrutinising the market, their competitors, and their output. Broadcasters are continually challenged to inject fresh content into a market whose appetites are continually changing and uncertain.

Television broadcasters must manage the vast spectrum of content demand and flow whereupon genre is utilised as an attempt to construct market formulas relevant to their audiences. These formulas are continually modified, their ingredients changed, to draw and retain their audience market. For television institutions, their need for output must be selective to match audience tastes, and as Pierre Bourdieu (2010) argued, tastes are not singular but are rooted in the individual's social makeup. Kim Schrøder (2017) expands on tastes in the context of television, arguing audience tastes are complicated by further distinctions, such as race, sexuality, and gender, that can transcend class or social background. Television broadcasters must thereby commission concepts they can transform into products that will match current audience interests, a problem that runs from executive decision making, down to commissioning

practices. However, as Bill Ryan (1992) argues, audience tastes are sometimes shaped by values beyond the control of cultural corporations (p.12).

Symbolic texts can thereby be as problematic for broadcasters as they can be for producers. Richard Caves (2003; Caves & Guo, 2005) summarises television industries are driven by the concept of 'experience goods'; that the value of the product is not ascertained until experienced by the consumer. 'Nobody knows' (Caves 2003; Caves & Guo, 2005) emphasises the difficulties that broadcasters have in forecasting audience tastes. This is compounded by the high costs in media production (Flew, 2012) such as those in the television industry. Such costs are fixed in symbolic goods (Caves & Guo, 2005) that necessitate the demand for high profits within media distribution to compensate. Broadcasters structurally apply genre as television classifications to identify their commissioning departments' specialities (Lees, 2010). The genre commissioners will make decisions on the commercial viability of any creative pitches to the broadcaster.

The tension between creativity and commerce is an ongoing dialectic, considered antithetical by Theodor Adorno and colleagues at the Frankfurt school. Adorno (1975) argued the "cultural industry" was mechanised, dividing out those who control and profit, to those who are subjected to its factory processes. Creative autonomy "is tendentially eliminated by the culture industry, with or without the conscious will of those in control. The latter include both those who carry out directives as those who hold the power" (p.14). Mark Banks (2007) notes, the Frankfurt school made little investigation as to the nature of these organisations and the nature of the work (p.25), whilst Barbara Townley and Nic Beech (2010) refute such a standpoint is "blinkering" to the potential similarities between management, business, and creative activity (p.9). Adorno's observations result in a limited view of industry practices, where autonomy is erased by those who control and dictate what is to be produced. According to Mark Banks (2007), the creativity and commerce dialectic is not a destructive tension but an industry-maintained condition that cannot be dissolved (p.7). It is a dialectic that demonstrates the television industry's perpetual state of risk, where neither creativity nor commercial desires can be separated, adding to "the uncertainty and difficulty of the environment where cultural businesses work" (Hesmondhalgh, 2018: p.33). Banks continues "The role of the manager is to ensure that creativity is disciplined to the instrumental purposes of the firm — making money becomes the overarching objective that structures how creativity is defined, developed and employed" (2007: p.73). Banks describes

the managerial role as a money generator, however, with media industries commodities being symbolic rather than material, an understanding of creativity and its relationship to commerce is critical in commissioning creative products. The handling of this relationship has been described as creative management by Bill Ryan (1992) who advocates creative management in media cultures as being about "collaborative relations" characterised by "discussion, negotiation, and compromise" (p.111) that demonstrates that top-down creative instructions within media institutions are interpretive rather than mandated. Management theorists Howard Davis and Richard Scase (2000) describe it as being about coordination and control. This is where executives and business managers coordinate the aims and agendas of an institution or company, while producers and directors control the workflow. An understanding of creative management is crucial to understanding how genre can be a structural and systemic aspect of managerial communication.

Organisational management of television broadcasters has a key relationship to genre and management theorists Thomas Lawrence and Nelson Phillips (2002) argue that media producers operate a different type of management to other industries. This is because media assets are symbolic rather than manufactured from material properties. Media management is about "creating and maintaining an organization that can produce and sell meaning" (p.431). Maintaining an organisation's commercial or public value is critical in unpredictable markets. Genres are thereby essential strategic components of television broadcasters, able to re-orientate and steer companies through the indeterminate waters of their media markets.

Davis and Scase (2000) highlight the diversity within the television industry; that a range of commercial and political factors make the industry heterogenic. "There is no such thing as a typical television company" (p.39). However, Davis and Scase also note that while the industry is a mix of different types of broadcasters, from the national corporate identity of the BBC to the multi-company setup that exists under the ITV umbrella, regulated public standards are maintained (Johnson, 2012; Johnson & Turnock, 2007; Ursell, 2003). Charters are set up to outline the public expectations regarding British television. The BBC specifically states they have, "innovative content covering many different genres". This is one of the BBC's five purposes as part of their Royal Charter Agreement (BBC, 2019). The publicly-funded broadcaster Channel 4 sees its programme diversity as being "the primary function" to its public

service remit (Channel 4, 2018), indicating that a range of different types of programming is part of their public mandate. Genres play a key role in managing their programme diversity. Political and public expectations thereby influence the type of shows that public broadcasters are expected to provide. As such, it has a knock-on effect as to the types of shows that a broadcaster commissions. Industry-embedded genres provide broadcasters a tool to make sense of their commercial interests enabling them to respond to changes within the current political landscape, navigate changing economic conditions, and react to shifts in consumer demands. These pressures will influence an institution's genre decision-making within top-down policies, industry interactions, and commissioning agendas. It can change a broadcaster's engagement with types of production and shape the industry genre terrain.

Political forces are historically evident throughout British television and have changed how production companies operate within broadcasting structures. There have been continual interventions through government policy within public broadcasting and its charter (see Flew, 2012: p.162 for a detailed breakdown of policy goals and policy instruments within government media regulation). Davis and Scase (2000) argue this intervention creates a dialectic opposition between *cultural bureaucracies* with *commercial bureaucracies*. They point to these types of institutions as directly opposing each other, yet these oppositions, in real terms, are rarely constant, as external and internal pressures can reshape an organisation's ideology. The BBC, as an example of a cultural bureaucracy, has seen historical growth within the commercial sectors. In this regard, the BBC has been becoming noticeably reliant on what Davis and Scase define as smaller *network organisations*, rather than its traditional in-house production practices (p.59) commonly associated with the BBC's cultural bureaucratic model. From the 1990 Broadcasting Act, the BBC and other broadcasters had to address the question of market competition within show commissioning, requiring a quarter of its output to come from independent sources (Gov.uk, 2021). This shifts the BBC along the scale from cultural bureaucracy towards a commercial bureaucracy, and in doing so, changes their market relationship with commissioning sources.

The political and cultural shaping of an institution is not solely dictated by public or governmental involvement, but how these external pressures are translated through its management structures, and then into commissioning policies. Genre commissioning can be

affected by top-down policy requirements - as outlined by a BBC commissioning editor who argued the commissioning of *Show Us Your Talent* in 2006 fit the organisation's "variety of programming" remit (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011: p.169). Regarding cultural pressures, Gill Ursell (2003) notes how Yorkshire Television in the early 1990s shifted its content from documentary to entertainment to match a growing interest in more audience accessible genres (p.32). Ursell suggests this could be a cultural response to the widening television market, resulting in audience fragmentation, forcing broadcasters to look for more popular material. Changes in the tone of content alter the conventions of some factual genres leading towards new genres categories such as 'popular entertainment'.

Economics plays a part in genre construction as genres can be associated with different levels of production costs. A nature documentary series will have higher associated costs than a quiz show format. As noted by Daniel Biltereyst and Lennart Soberon (2016), the rise of reality crime drama was due to economic benefits from producing such genre shows, compared to the successful, and costlier, drama genres.

Genres can be thereby components of political, regulatory, and commercial pressures and demonstrate genres do not carry equal value at any one time. All of these issues can factor into a broadcaster's commissioning decisions through corporate macro-strategies. As television broadcasters are largely heterogenic, and institutions themselves are perpetually re-adapting themselves to their markets, these pressures can manifest differently depending on the organisation. How these pressures affect commissioning practices equally depends on the shape of the broadcaster and the decision-making processes at a given time.

The next section takes a three-point method of analysis to expand on how broadcasters use genre, both structurally and as a flexible construct, within their operations, and how that filters down to commissioning.

Part 2: Institutional elasticity, institutional shorthand, and institutional identity: Genre functions within the broadcasters of British factual television

This section of the chapter applies discourse analysis to interviews with above-the-line production company workers and broadcaster commissioning agents that have roles in and around British factual television development. As John Caldwell (2008) notes, industry reflexive interviews offer an imperfect insider perspective into a closed-off industry. In their observations of top-down broadcaster processes and practices, the interviews offer insight into how such institutional agencies affect their work through the contexts of genre discourse. It would be near impossible to logistically map how broadcasters operate, particularly in the heterogenic television industry. However, through observations of the equally heterogenic production company workers, and broadcaster commissioning agents, there are clear indications of how genres are used by broadcasters, and how that shapes genre-based working practices.

The data from the interview was coded for observations relating to broadcaster institutional practices. From reviewing the data, I devised three categories. These categories link institutional practices to genre use and were constructed through the reflexive material as:

- Industry-embedded genre as broadcaster institutional elasticity
- Industry-embedded genre as broadcaster institutional shorthand
- Industry-embedded genre in broadcaster institutional identity

These categories broadly reflect the structure-conduct-performance model used in Institutional organisation theory (Flew, 2012) to analyse behaviour *between* institutions within a market sector. 'Elasticity', 'shorthand', and 'identity' equally consider questions of structure, conduct, and performance, yet modified to better explore the *internalised* relationships of broadcasters.

Broadcaster institutional elasticity defines the uses and understandings of industry-embedded genres as flexible rather than rigid concepts. In making programmes, commissioning departments can stretch their genre remit by borrowing ingredients from other industry-embedded genres. Practitioners (Appendix A10) would speak of mixing ingredients of factual

entertainment with a history commissioned show, but the show would still be commissioned by the History commissioning team.

Broadcaster institutional shorthand is the use of industry-embedded genres to communicate suggested content styles. These can come from executive decision-makers to broadcaster commissioning teams and sometimes as broadcaster expressions of interest to producers. Shorthand also speaks to genre commissioning department naming, such as 'factual entertainment', or 'history'. In all these instances, genre provides a shorthand to communicate the desire for types of content.

Defined as *broadcaster institutional identity*, genre can become an intricate part of a broadcaster's market identity. For example, ITV is seen by producers as an entertainment channel (Appendix A2) and the styles of shows it commissions will reflect on the channel's public face. The reputation of a broadcaster's genre content can be nominated through industry awards thereby contributing to its identity (BAFTA, 2021).

These categories combine and inform each other and can reveal how broadcasting institutions actively deploy genre as a component of their working apparatus. As a result, it can demonstrate how broadcasters influence the genre content of both commissioning departments and production companies.

2.1 Industry-embedded genre as broadcaster institutional elasticity

Genre as institutional elasticity refers to commissioning practices within and between genre departments where the signified remit of these departments, for instance, Documentary, Current Affairs, or History, is conceded to a more pragmatic commissioning approach. Genre commissioning departments need to continually adapt to changing market tastes and expectations and may themselves need to commission content that does not precisely align with their commissioning remit. Through elasticity, genre commissioning can use broader resources to enable them to tap into current cultural trends or reflect new approaches to television that might be emerging from other broadcasters.

Elasticity was a term coined by an interviewed head of development regarding this process of shaping genre content. Where there can be a *synthetic* aspect to this departmental co-operation,

with the mixing of genre styles, such 'synthetic' lacks nuance in the context of genre. While institutional elasticity can create a synthesis of genres within the produced content, on a practical level, the act is not necessarily about merging genres or even borrowing styles. Elasticity is about stretching the department's remit to adopt styles or methods of production. As textual genres are constantly changing (Jancovich, 2008; Mittell, 2004; Neale, 2000), injected, or stretched, by cultural forces, so are industry-embedded genres. As with textual genres, examples that break norms do not necessarily change the genre's terrain, but for that moment, the shape of that genre may stretch the normative boundaries. Institutional elasticity recognises that cross-departmental practices can stretch the boundaries, or remit, of a commissioning department, but does not inextricably change their practices.

Institutional elasticity can be illustrated through the reflections of a production company Head of Development, Gareth as they speak of the stretchiness within commissioning work.

> It [Genre] needs to be used to help make those programmes as exciting as possible - so that is why a history commissioner will borrow some of the excitement of the documentary, or borrow from factual entertainment, or borrow presenters from other genres to bring their subject to life. (Appendix A10)

Commissioning departments, in this context, History, may have their commissioners consider a production project beyond the perceived department's genre boundaries and dipping into other industrially structured genre pools. It is important to note that these genre department boundaries are commercially driven and commissioned projects that semantically relate to history are not bound by that specificity, nor to the structural syntax that may be generally attributed to the history genre. Commissioning identities can carry broad shorthand descriptions, such as the 'Documentary commissioning', but in practice can apply new genre combinations to generate fresh content. This flexibility (or elasticity) in genre commissioning is, as the development head argues, part of an agenda to "bring a subject to life", indicating that successful content is more important than retaining genre specificity.

Institutional elasticity indicates commissioning departments have some freedom to interact in ways that can bring fresh qualities to genre development, and thereby some flexibility is necessary. David Hesmondhalgh (2011) argues within the subject of managing creative

autonomy, "[genre] … determines the ground on which creativity and commerce are negotiated" (p.95). Genre departments are not seeking to restrict creativity by confirming strictly to a genre definition. Creativity can create the much-desired distinction that can make a commodity identifiable through its difference, raising its market potential through its visibility, and with positive reception, market value. Genre departments will look for pragmatic approaches to this end, and creative management will recognise the need for structural flexibility within symbolic material.

Furthermore, concepts that might align with the traditional genre conventions of a commissioning department may be commissioned by another department (or between departments). As factual producer Roger Thirkell (2010) notes, in his experience, there is "often overlap" (p.243) within commissioning departments. This overlap speaks to the symbolic nature of media commodities. In other industries, different material goods may require specific material components as part of the production process, whereas symbolic goods lack the same certainty. The symbolic nature can disrupt the pathway from development to distribution as creative managers seek to make decisions that suit the concept more than the genre. Howard Davis and Richard Scase (2002) make this argument; a rationale for this devolution of power is "to move decision making to the level(s) where information is most readily available" (p.84). Managerial powers are loosened to allow decision-making involving symbolic goods to reside at a lower tier. Commissioning agents thereby have the power to negotiate with industry producers with a degree of autonomy, which aids the elasticity. However, Davis and Scase observe that autonomy is limited within media industries, by budgets, output indicators, and deadlines (p.117), and must align with the coordination of institutional aims and objectives.

In the case of the television broadcast commissioners, output indicators will relate to their department genre objectives, which themselves are labels generated as institutional shorthand. The coordinated aims and objectives will ultimately be part of the constructed identity of a broadcaster. This demonstrates that broadcaster institutional elasticity cannot exist wholly as an individual category of institutional management and its application of genre, but, exists as part of a matrix of corporate strategies deployed to limit market risks. As with genre, they are contingent, and dependent, on the existence of one another to function. Institutional Elasticity, Institutional Shorthand, and Institutional Identity have visible inter-relationships.

2.2 Industry-embedded genre as broadcaster institutional shorthand

Genre as broadcaster institutional shorthand can refer to the designation of genres within an institution that signifies different types of shows. As with textual genres, the naming reflects current conceptions of genre, but the signification itself is aimed at industry agents rather than consumers. Institutional shorthand aids in the construction of different types of shows. It can relate to internal department structuring, or as gateways for producers to pitch their concepts.

Shorthand can also reflect the semi-permanence within genre identification. Genre commissioning departments can be re-configured or relabelled by broadcaster management. Shorthand can refer to institutional requests for types of shows that a broadcaster could be looking for from its commissioners. These can be broad terms to give direction rather than specific requests. This type of ephemeral labelling is referred to by industry workers as buzzwords or buzz-phrases.

There has been little written about buzzwords within British television production and development. Buzzwords have been researched more generally within rhetoric studies, management studies, and broader anthropological areas of communication. Anthropologist Andrea Cornwall (2007) speaks of buzzwords as being "in-words" that have a current vogue that circulates close to the "worlds they make" (p.3), arguing their existence carries a close association between the world they seek to shape, and those who attempt to shape them. Management studies scholar David Collins (2000) notes how buzzwords within management are treated with a pejorative tone, yet buzzwords are a key grammatical attribute to communication, for good or ill, and commonplace in difficult cultural sectors. In a space of dispersed autonomy as within commissioning, buzzwords that flow top-down respond to that devolution of power, offering direction, rather than instruction. In television, one Head of Development, Luke, spoke of the use of buzzwords as top-down communication as "made-up terms" (Appendix A3); that as efficient or simplified direction, they offered little benefit. Buzzwords may be constructed as topical and stark signifiers, yet Andrea Cornwall (2010) warns that buzzwords conceal multiple agendas through their interpretative power (p.5). Such television industry top-down directions are simplified terminology, yet they exist as icons of a hidden topology; networks of agencies at the macro corporate level that are being navigated by managerial powers. The buzzword gives direction but does not speak to their less visible agendas.

Television industry buzzwords, as with all buzzwords, are defined by those who circulate them and participate in their use. The type of words being indicated by interviewees are stylisms, relating to specifically identified embedded genres, or referencing an industry-understood genre type. These genre-types tend to be broad, with a level of elasticity to the term as not to restrict but to suggest. A buzzword such as 'entertainment', a term that connotes a specific meaning to industry workers at a given time, has the elasticity to relate to a range of genre departments. Rhetoric scholar William Benoit (2009) indicates how in a world that is "complex and variegated" we fall back on generalisations (p.77). In an industry as heterogenic as television, which is by its nature, complex and variegated—or as Caldwell (2013) argues for film and television, 'messy'—common industry rhetoric is a key top-down communication tool for unified understanding. Buzzwords may suffer a pejorative reception, but they relay concise agency through a network and thereby carry interpretative power. They relate to both the internalised relationship between executive and commissioning, as well as the externalised relationship between institutional and development clients. In both cases, the receivers, the commissioners and producers, do not always greet such broad, interpretative, buzzwords with welcome arms. As Head of Development Luke explained:

> Patrick Holland [Controller of BBC-2] recently said they [the BBC] were lacking factual entertainment programming, especially on BBC-2, but they always come up with these kinds of buzz-phrases, and one of the buzz-phrases they've come up with is 'specialist factual entertainment formats'. That kind of thing just makes me pull my hair out! Just don't come up with these made-up terms, there is no point! They want specialist factual to be entertaining, but when it becomes entertaining it becomes factual entertainment. Specialist Factual gives you far more education and goes into granular detail. Factual entertainment goes into granular detail but in a more osmosis way. (Appendix A3)

Luke demonstrates how industrial management practices, use buzz phrases as institutional shorthand, as a form of symbolic power (symbolic power as defined in Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011), when seeking to address content issues. Luke presents a specific example of the type of language that they are seeing at the executive level (specialist factual entertainment formats).

This "buzz-phrase" contains the buzzword 'entertainment', an ingredient that the Controller wants to see in Specialist Factual shows. The interviewee interprets the buzz phrase as a nonsensical construct. Based on the analysis, the buzz phrase potentially reveals more about what the executives are looking for (nuanced and educational specialist factual to be more entertaining) than offering a clear indication as to how this would be achieved by commissioners or producers. The use of buzzwords and buzz phrases can demonstrate a dissonance between genre macro-strategies at the top of the television institutions which seek to steer the styles and tone of their broadcasting, and genre micro-strategies that work in departmental practices used to articulate the market interests at a case-by-case basis. Luke goes on to explain how such buzz-phrases are then interpreted by commissioners:

> I think there is a lot of interpretation to commissioners from their leaders. I think
> that there are quite strong leaders at certain channels at the moment, and I think
> people are tending to interpret their wants and needs, and that's lost in
> translations when it gets handed to the production company. Buzzwords
> shouldn't be used unless you can clearly define stuff. And I think they use them
> to help themselves look like they're forward-thinking in the marketplace
> compared to the other broadcasters. (Appendix A3)

Buzzwords and buzz phrases must have mutually aligned meanings for their signification to translate accurately. However, Luke's concern is whether commissioners can correctly communicate the channel's requirements through buzzwords and how their interpretation can be problematic. This argument suggests a disconnect within broadcaster institutions and their communication with the production companies that produce content.

Institutional shorthand is a practice of institutionalised communication, for instance, as signposted pathways for commissioning departments. 'Factual entertainment', for example, can be a commissioning signpost for developers, institutional workers, and identification for relevant industry groups, such as industry-focused journalism with commissioning interests. As with textual genres, industry-embedded genre labels are a shorthand signifier to a specific type of commissioning body. This can result in the structure and agenda of a department changing, sometimes along with the label that denotes that genre commissioning department. This ever-

changing relationship between the signifier and signified can create hermeneutical challenges for producers who must be constantly aware of changes to the industry landscape.

2.3 Industry-embedded genres in broadcaster institutional identity

Genre as institutional identity refers to how genre manifests (or is orientated) through public-facing branding and industry recognition. John Caldwell (2008) argues whereas identity has been at the forefront in audience studies, that it has been neglected in the study of corporations. Structured corporate identities, he suggests, are "control measures" to manage "outcome uncertainties of genres and styles" (p.271). Heterogeneity within television institutions necessitates strong identities. Corporations can maintain a visible and stable presence through a continually transformative industry. Through executive decisions, commissioning, and branding, corporations react to the uncertain market in their internal business choices. It can come as no surprise that, where genre commissioning itself seeks to structure market risk, so do other broadcaster institutional structures that surround, inform, and are informed by, genre commissioning decisions.

Genre is used by television broadcasters to signify their distributed content through public-facing labels, and in doing so, become a form of brand or corporate identity. This can unify industry and audience conceptions of a specific genre, and brand generic material as part of a broadcasting identity. Jason Mittell (2004) illustrates this point with the Syfy channel; a content provider for science-fiction genre-related texts. The identity of broadcasters, and the types of shows they schedule, and at what time, is critical information for content producers (Thirkell, 2010; Lees, 2010).

Broadcaster institutional identity can also link back to the constructed identity of those who maintain corporate decision-making. The make-up of an institution's identity is partially formed by the personalities and agendas of its above-the-line workers. John Caldwell (2008) explores executive identity within television broadcast corporations in Hollywood. He explores how those at an executive level must cultivate personal identities and mission statements that can transcend individual corporate positions (p.271). As is evidenced in the following section, creative managing within British television carries similar relationships, with new placements within management roles being identified by production company practitioners, and changes being

attributed to the agendas of those managers. By seeking to predict changes in audience consumption, shape interest, or differentiate a channel's identity from its rivals, executive management can adjust their company identity through the balance of different genres or sub-genres in their broadcasting output.

2.31 Institution identity and the identity of the creative manager

The crafting of a broadcaster's institutional identity is visible through executive management strategies. Mark Banks (2007) speaks of creative management and its role in the cultural workplace. "Increasingly then, it is the managerial arena that is perceived to be the crucible of creativity, and the effective manager one who can encourage and stimulate this most precious attribute – but of course, not for his own sake" (p.73). Head of Development Isaac spoke of executive management, and management's direct relationship to commissioning, and thereby the type of commissions the ITV head was looking for:

> He said that is because ITV is primarily an entertainment channel and wanted all
> the genres to be shot through with that spirit if you like. (Appendix A2)

ITV's identity is being directly managed through buzzwords from the executive level, and the commissioners take this message to the producers directly, pitching the institution's identity at a ritualised event. The buzzword, in this case, is evocative of a tone of activity, or the spirit of a show: entertainment. As explored in chapter one, entertainment has a long historical association with factual television. It has become a tonal attribute that carries a degree of elasticity across factual subgenres. Commissioning editor Mike reflects on how directors of programming look to tone to guide commissioners.

> It could be a tone; it could be a very specific subject area. It could be, for
> example, "right we've got enough gardening programmes, we won't be
> commissioning on gardening for a while", or it could be "we've got a lot of dark
> series investigative output on the channel, we need something lighter in tone that
> is more uplifting". (Appendix A5)

Mike reflects on how top-down instructions do not necessarily speak to the genre conventions of commissioning, but the feel of a show, or its tone. In the example provided, tone is used to

suggest an absence of a tenor of programming, rather than a genre. This use of industry-focused language does not speak solely to genre or formats, but an institution's need to elicit a type of response from their audience and communicate these needs through a creative management process that lends itself to a creative interpretation of directives.

Isaac identifying ITV as an "entertainment channel" demonstrates how the broadcaster's identity, in this case, as a producer of entertainment-styled commodities, is shaped by individualised policy decision making. Isaac's example used the broadcaster's then-new Director of Television, Kevin Lygo. These decisions align with what John Thompson (1995) define as mediated quasi-interaction. This is where power-aligned communication is monologic rather than dialogic, as it travels one-way down through the institution strata, and does not necessarily have to be bound spatially or in time, and can be produced for "an indefinite range of participants" (p.84). These monologic interactions are noted to impact content producers through industry-embedded ritualised events, where broadcasting representatives promote what types of content they will be after. This will reinforce their institution's identity through the representative's output.

The importance of these executive managers shaping institutional identity should not be understated. Development Head Luke made similar observations as to the relationship between shorthand and the institution's industry identity:

> If you look at ITV now, Sue Murphy who just came in [as Head of Factual Entertainment] has incorporated factual and factual entertainment into her remit when they had separate factual and factual entertainment departments. They've come together to call it factual. (Appendix A3)

The development head theorises that the institutional set-up for genre commissioning has the elasticity to be reshaped and that elasticity comes from the top-down executive (re)organisational coordination. It is a further example of how the shorthand name for a genre department can be augmented to fit to align with new structural strategies. As a developer, Luke indicates how knowledge of the structural setup within institutions is part of genre development working practices and requires an ongoing understanding of how heterogenic television broadcasters are organised, who heads genre departments, and the co-ordinating role of management.

2.32 Identity, the public service, and governmental regulations

In his analysis of industry identity, Caldwell (2008) explains how the creative and business dialectic has been "severely compromised" (p.238). The blurring of creativity and commerce is evident within the production of television shows, and the mythic tension between the 'Artist' and the 'Suits'. In practice, the distinction between creatives and management has become less defined. Above-the-line creativity no longer resides solely with producers, directors, and department heads in film and television, but is now identified more broadly; non-production personnel will have a role in shaping production through the associated business attributes. As has been noted, managing directors of production companies speak of their creative oversight of their company (Ryan, 1992). Likewise, commissioners at broadcasters will have a role in creative management, and indeed the creative blurring extends beyond and upwards, where creativity is managed by the business requirements of the broadcaster. Development Head Gareth explains how this relationship relates to industry-embedded genres:

> Channel 4 does have a public service remit — they are required to produce shows which are about art and history, and about religion, and science, and about all manner of things. That is literally part of their official remit. They are compelled to do that, so genres exist for practical reasons. They need to legally (and are required to) build and maintain what needs to be produced; documentaries about history or art [...] So it's not entirely arbitrary; there is a reason these genres exist. (Appendix A10)

Institutional identity, elasticity, and shorthand are notable in the development head's observations. First and foremost, is the statement that industry-embedded genres are practical: genres are not simply intellectual concepts but are an active component of practical industrial processes. This is a key challenge to the argument that genres are *not* an active component or a conduit of agency within television production. The development head argues that genres are "legally required", referring to the British public service remit for a broad range of programme diversity that the BBC and Channel 4 must be compliant with. Within the interviewee's commentary of institutional shorthand, specifically history commissioning, commissioners may consider a history commission beyond the department's shorthand label. The decision to dip into other industrially structured genre pools is an example of institutional elasticity.

The development head's comments highlight how the interactivity between identity, elasticity, and shorthand within broadcasting institutions shape their practices, and ultimately, their relationship with developers. Of equal relevance, the interviewee references the public mandates that will shape broadcaster output. Public remit and governmental regulation will play a significant part in the executive decisions on the balance of broadcast genres. In the words of production company Managing Director 'Stanley'

> I would say that you must look at it from a broadcaster's perspective, and clearly, we have five public service broadcasters. Their remit is very clearly defined and has to do with the government and Ofcom. Consequently, they do incorporate a mix of genres. There are individuals tasked with managing those as commissioning editors for factual, drama, and so on - and then budgets are allocated accordingly, so there is kind of a master plan before you start … the channels themselves are defined by genre. (Appendix A14)

Stanley argues that genres have long been shaped by the political and regulatory expectations of the national broadcasting infrastructure, as well as cultural expectations and standards anticipated as a public service. These requirements place genres as a critical aspect of the broadcaster's identity. The interviewee's observations suggest corporate and commercial bureaucracy opposition, as argued by Davis and Scase (2000), exists for all five major British terrestrial broadcasters (BBC-1, BBC-2, ITV, Channel 4, and Channel 5), if to varying degrees of latitude. However, the public service model, regulated through the British Government and its approved regulator Ofcom, has set criteria for all broadcasters. All broadcasters are to adhere to a set of standards that become frameworks of sameness, standards that generate a common framework of regulation despite the heterogenic institutions and organisations within the television industry (p.39). These frameworks are not genre-driven but can regulate broadcasts for appropriate scheduling and "observance of the watershed" (Ofcom, 2017: p.8). They provide guidelines for product placements and advertisements and implement specific safeguards on societal, political, and cultural ingredients within genres. Stanley argues that these imposed standards will essentially create a terrain across genre commission departments with economics being an important management factor. Ultimately, the interviewee's observation suggests genre

commissioning is shaped by political and cultural regulations, but equally, it is genres that shape the content and thereby the identity of a broadcaster.

From inside one public broadcasting institution, Commissioning Editor 'Leonard' spoke as to how the public-sector influence translated into institutional practice. The interviewee reflected on the role of a channel's director of programmes and how a channel's public mandate shaped the practices of genre commissioning. Using Channel 4 as an example, the commissioning editor's theorised how the relationship between institutional identity and audiences inter-plays with elasticity.

> [Channel 4] have a public service remit, and some of the programmes they'd commission and produce, others wouldn't. It's not a hard-fast "right, 72% of the output must tick that box...", it's not specifically like that, but that is very much in the back of a commissioner's mind. There will be some programmes that have mass appeal, and others will not, and you accordingly balance the books.
> (Appendix A16)

In the statement, the commissioning editor explains how the director of programming would be key in guiding the content for the channel, and such decisions filter downwards to the genre commissioners. Leonard argues that the company's public broadcast mandate requires a set proportion of genre commissioned content, and that expectation becomes entrenched within the working practices of the department workers. It is a clear indication that, for the interviewee, the institutional policy becomes part of their day-to-day mediation between what could be creatively engaging, and what might be successful as a commodity. Broadcasters that have visible public mandates are impacted by political pressures of public accountability. Howard Davis and Richard Scase (2000) argue "Such pressure has ramifications for the internal structuring of the companies because tighter budgets constrain the resources available for artistic production" (p.152). However, as the interviewee notes, the public service remit is managed through the director of programming, however, the impact of having to meet a criterion is something all commissioners are mindful of when considering pitches. Nevertheless, Leonard argues, the director of programming is key to this process:

> I think this would happen: The director of programmes would indicate we need more output, so we would actively target that [type of content]. In a broadcaster like Channel 4, certain commissioning targets need to be met in the department - and that is key. But I think, you know, ultimately, it comes from on high - that cross-genre view. We're [as commissioners] not required to have that: we just kind of respond. (Appendix A16)

Part of the role of the commissioner is, to some degree, about taking direction from the director of programmes and translating that direction into working practices. Again, the role of broadcaster institutional identity and institutional elasticity are inter-linked with genre output. Identity is forged from political remit that is mediated through executive decision-making. That decision-making is then responded to, and translated by, genre-commissioners.

2.33 Institutional identity: quality, genre, and awards ceremonies

Identity strategies evidence genre's value to the management of British broadcasters in their competitive market, however, genre's relevance goes beyond economic return. Genre has a symbolic value within the television industry. Throughout the conducted interviews commissioners were keen to argue that genre content brings institutions prestige. Genre prestige becomes part of their identity and market value. Commissioning Editor Leonard explained:

> Bosses sometimes say: "I don't care about ratings; we want an award winner! Who do we ring up?" [Laughs] I think strategic pieces are really good for us reputation-wise, but we are a commercial channel, so we need to have bums-on-seats. (Appendix A16)

The commissioning editor identifies genre commodities as holding reputational value however he makes a distinction between award-winning and populism. The commissioning editor notes that their channel has commercial needs; that what brings reputational value commonly does not denote high ratings, and thus premium advertising. Simon Frith (2000) observes that the art-commerce dialectic can be managed by having the popular show's success balance out the losses incurred by a less popular show. This operates as part of an institution's risk-management strategies and where Leonard theorises "bums-on-seats" show might pay for an "award winner".

Award ceremonies are at the heart of "award-winning". Lindsay H. Garrison (2011) describes awards ceremonies as "a significant component of the television industry, offering annual displays of self-affirmation and celebration that mobilize discourses of quality and excellence in the medium" (p.161). Garrison suggests the television industry considers awards as a ritualised and reflexive performance of relevance from which quality and excellence become a discursive focus. Questions of what quality means for television have long been debated. Shows have been considered quality for their aesthetic prestige, authorial capital, or their audience appreciation (Garrison, 2011; Caldwell, 2008). What quality means for industry and award ceremonies is difficult to ascertain. Award ceremonies can focus on a range of qualifiers from professional panels to audience votes, and genres, from documentaries to soap operas. Two award ceremonies referenced by interviewees were the Royal Television Society and BAFTA, which "recognise excellence" (Royal Television Society, 2021) across programming, and award "the best in broadcasting" (BAFTA, 2017). BAFTA has a judging process from members and broadcaster nominations, where broadcasters can nominate two shows that have not had a membership nomination (BAFTA, 2021). There is a direct relationship between awards and broadcaster identity, whereupon broadcasters can have direct input into putting forward shows they want to represent their brand.

According to Lance Leuthesser et al (1995), branded products can shape the consumer's understanding of the brand identity, an act they define as the 'halo effect'. Leuthesser argues that individual products within a brand are dominated by the consumer's overall attitude to the brand itself. They defined the halo effect as a measurement of individuality and subject dissonance in their study of business and product branding. Alberto Bayo-Moriones et al (2015) applied the halo effect on perceptions of "quality" television within Spain. Bayo-Moriones argued news programmes as having a "crucial role in defining television channel identity" (p.816). If news programmes align with the viewer's political ideology, that can become the consumer measurement of quality. Through the halo effect, high levels of broadcast genre content can become a measurement of quality associated with the channel's identity. With award ceremonies defining value and quality through awards, an institution can use such notions of quality genres, and the visibility the awards bring, to feed positively into its own identity.

However, Commissioning Editor Kerry suggested the award ceremony has great value to institutions and that genres are actually the shapers, and even progenitors, of industry genres:

> Personally, I think the titles of genres, in the last ten years, have been born out of awards ceremonies. I really do. RTS [Royal Television Society], or BAFTA. These slew of shows, we don't want to give one award to all the documentaries, so how can we differentiate them from each other? So, they become competitions. (Appendix A8)

Kerry theorises that for the past decade, industry-embedded genres have been directly rooted in award ceremonies and the institutional shorthand that defines the identity of genre commissioning departments is competitively motivated. Bill Ryan (1992) talks at length on the complications of publicity and its relationship to commodities, stars, and styles, and how "cycles of fashion" can devalue the market commodities (p.230). Award ceremonies are one way a broadcaster can publicise its content as high-quality. High quality does not just add value to the identity of the institution but the good publicity can extend the life of its content or even the generic style of its commodity. A popular enduring television show can have an impact on future broadcasting content, reshaping industry perceptions towards a genre. Ryan speaks of the creation and allocation of significance with cultural production. He argues how reputation is the currency of product significance and is analogous to Marxist interpretations of the relationship between value and money. Ryan states that a commodity is advertised to garner a greater reputation than its competitors and that the larger the sum of significance accumulated by a commodity, the greater its reputation and thereby its market value. This market value is a measurement of its reputation and the price of production; the market value is an "economic and cultural" aggregate (p.194). Awards thereby become an industrial ritual that seeks to enhance reputation through being assigned a critical value, and in doing so, generate greater significance. By increasing significance, and thereby market value, awards become a critical part of media industry culture and commerce. Industry-embedded genres can be a structural attribute to award ceremonies that will impact and potentially shape broadcaster policies. This can influence the genre designation of commissioning departments are designated by genre and the reputation that is generated through symbolic value. This means broadcasters can look to genre commissioner acquisitions not simply for ratings, but both the critical and commercial value of their content.

This does not necessarily position all producers as focusing on awards. Creative prestige can carry significant interest to the broadcaster, however a producer, even as the creative partner, can prefer to be identified by their commercial reputation. Production company Managing Director Stanley articulated this notion:

> I'm not thinking of award-winning programming, I'm thinking "what's going to sell?" So, I'm probably kind of different from most creatives in that sort of way. I think of sellability and formatting far more than other people do. (Appendix A14)

Like commissioning editors, Stanley identifies the television broadcaster's desire for industry prestige but positions himself and his company as a seller of products that are commercially successful and pliable to commercial formatting. David Hesmondhalgh (2018) has warned there is a danger in setting "creativity too strongly against commerce […] creators need to be paid" (p.33). The creative/commercial dialectic is important to understanding cultural commerce and the challenges of symbolic goods compared to more material industries, however, it lacks the nuance to demonstrate how and where creativity and commerce may be embraced or opposed within factual television industry culture.

Awards are symbols of broadcaster prestige, commercial value, and genre quality. Awards can thereby become a key agency in institutional policy and highlight the complexity of creativity and commercial agendas within the industry. Their relevance to broadcasters has been argued by commissioning editors to be political agents in necessitating and shaping genre classifications. Their role in genre commissioning is noted by production companies, and in part, plays a part in how producers identify themselves concerning the industry's demands.

Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated how industry-embedded genres can provide British television broadcasters with both flexibility and structure in their ongoing operations functioning discursively, structurally, and as a means of market representation. In doing so, it has further challenged academic assertions that genre has a limited role within British factual television through an exploration of genre's importance to broadcasters. Broadcasters are the purchasers of

television concepts and genres better communicate the company's interests to producers and facilitate the process of commissioning content. Through understanding broadcasters as institutions that produce and distribute media content, their use and value of genre can be understood through its relationship to creative and commercial tensions. Through this dialectic, broadcasters benefit from genre's mutable boundaries and interpretative form. Genre is not taxonomic and able to shift and shape to the conditions that best suit the broadcaster. Genre is thereby elastic by nature, a shorthand for content with loose specificity, and categories that can be used to demonstrate a broadcaster's critical and commercial success.

Through the discourse analysis of the television development practitioners, institutional elasticity is demonstrated in the inter-activity between genre departments. This interactivity does not change departmental commissioning practices but allows commissioners freedom to incorporate different working methods into projects, stretching the genre boundaries rather than reconfiguring them. This elasticity can give commissioning teams greater advantages in creating fresh content, however, it can make it difficult for producers to know which commissioning teams to pitch at.

Institutional shorthand can function as part of top-down communications, where executives in the institution's hierarchy can relay tone or style directions down to genre commissioning teams. These buzzwords can offer thematic directives that fit with the desired tone of future content. Buzzwords can also form part of institutional industrial relations, as part of an institution's pitching strategies to producers as to what type of content they are looking for. These buzzwords can transcend generic barriers, demonstrating further elasticity within institutional genre practices. While commissioners and producers are not bound by these buzzword suggestions, such language is used by institutions to steer both production companies and their department commissioners into developing content that matches the desired direction of the broadcaster.

Institutional identity can be tied to reputation and value. Commissioners argue award ceremonies play a key part in the make-up of genres. It was suggested that over the past ten years, award ceremonies have become key to the assignment of genre departments; the need to create a categorical difference enables award ceremonies to create a framework of competition. According to interviewees, the need for award-winning genre content is of great importance to the value and reputation of a broadcaster, however, it is debatable whether this agency for quality

content affects the ritualised pitching that takes place between content creators and commissioning agents. It was argued that these roles may prefer to self-define themselves and their creative autonomy rather than as a component of the institutional production process.

Broadcasters set the terrain for genre commissioning, and both commissioners and production companies. They both must monitor activity that is continually reshaping broadcasters be they internal changes or external, such as commercial, cultural, or political forces. This knowledge will factor into the strategies production companies will use in planning and targeting their pitches, and it is the knowledge that commissioners will use in their daily working practices. The use of industry-embedded genres within the pitching between commissioners working on behalf of institutions, and the production companies selling concepts are analysed in detail within the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Genre in pitch meetings: the role of risk, trust, and genre between commissioners and producers.

The previous chapters have analysed the theorising of the key groups within British factual television production—genre commissioners, production companies, and television broadcasters—to understand how genre functions within the conditions of their work and practice. The pitch meeting provides an opportunity to explore how these groups interact and what genre contributes as part of the social intersection of agencies, knowledge, and risk.

Pitch meetings provide a vital intersection between media institutions, production companies, and genre within British factual television. Genre is a dialogic tool that facilitates meaning between creative producers and genre-commissioning departments. This chapter argues that genre is also an active component of an industry professional's experience and identity that becomes an integral part of establishing trust in a commercial relationship.

This chapter reconceptualises the television pitch meeting through its intersection with genre. Drawing on John T. Caldwell's interpretation of film and television as a para-industry (2013; 2014), the chapter argues that pitch meetings demonstrate some of the same markers; like the para-industry pitch, meetings are rhizomatic, cultural, hermeneutical, self-monitoring, and messy. The chapter demonstrates that pitch meetings use genre as a risk aversion strategy to hedge positive commercial outcomes for each party, not only used to measure concepts being pitched but the practitioners who pitch them.

The pitch meeting is an act of market engagement that is common throughout the media industries. It is an industry ritual (Caldwell, 2008) within British television whereupon a business arrangement is proposed through face-to-face discourse. Within the television industry, the pitch meeting is part of the industry vernacular, usually referring to the act of negotiation between creative producers selling concepts to broadcaster commissioning agents. Academics have defined pitching within television as rituals of "deal-making" (Caldwell, 2008: p.70), and as a "high concept" approach to marketing, in which detailed ideas are condensed to "two or three spoken sentences", making pitching very much a "performance art" (p.81), or "social judgement

process that experts … use to assess the creative potential of unknown others […] during "pitch" meetings in which screenwriters attempt to sell their ideas" (Elsbach & Kramer, 2003: p.283).

Pitch meetings are thereby critical for production companies, and face-to-face meetings are vital to the deal-striking process. John Caldwell (Caldwell, 2008) contextualises deal-making as "large industry rituals" that involve markets and sales, and unlike industry networking rituals, deal-making favours harder forms of selling with specific financial and legal objectives. (p.99). Caldwell further argues pitching "describes the interpersonal ways that are both enacted and performed among individual creators within the production/development chain" (p.81), a statement that emphasises chains – essentially, networks – where creatives enact – or act – in transformative ways.

The British factual television industry has a mix of practitioners, working in different formations, operating under differing circumstances, and market pressures. Against this backdrop, this chapter positions ritualised pitch meetings as an example of how, through understood structural, systematised, and linguistic markers, genre is a key tool in the function of such a network. Genres help describe or defy mutually understood conventions. The pitch meeting is a concept with limited ritual conventions; negotiations are heterogenic and operate in the methods and choices agreed by the parties involved. What is vital to the pitch meeting, as this chapter explores, is the nature of discourse and social interaction. As Nicola Lees (2010) notes, commissions come from the dialogue that is conducted face-to-face. Establishing professional trust is part of minimising the commercial risk that will be the consequence of any agreement.

Yet it is not just the commissioner who must think about risk. Nicola Lees (2010) concludes that for a producer, a successful pitch meeting is a result of presenting a good idea at the right time, to the right genre commissioners. In the face of these odds, practitioners need certain consistencies and commonalities to be effective. Pitch meetings themselves have little material structure for practitioners to rely on; they are social moments where expected industry conventions are tempered with creative autonomy. An industry-embedded genre can act as an interface that brings much-needed structure to an immaterially maintained space.

To understand the pitch meeting is to understand their social meaning. The following section discusses the framework for the chapter's analysis using John T. Caldwell's para-industry model

and theories on power, knowledge, and social ritual as argued by Michel Foucault, Erving Goffman, Pierre Bourdieu, and Clifford Geertz.

Conceptualising the pitch meeting through theories of para-industry, ritualisation, and social power

To better conceptualise what the pitch meeting represents within the production culture, John T. Caldwell's (2013; 2014) para-industry model offers a framework that can help define some of its features. Caldwell's concept of the extra-textual para industry speaks not just to the volumes of outsourcing conducted within a rhizomatic media industry, but to the social hierarchies, capital, and ideologies that interconnect and transform practices and production. The para-industry, Caldwell (2014) argues, is "an economic and cultural-industrial interface woven together by socio-professional media communities" (p.721). For Caldwell, the para-industry is a label that attempts to expose the complexities of media industries to better comprehend the meanings behind what they do. Caldwell (2013) breaks down his para-industry model into several distinct categories. He speaks of para-industries as being rhizomatic, cultural, hermeneutical, racialized, sexualised and gendered, affective and embodied, self-disciplined through surveillance, aesthetically salaried, textualized, and a mess. Both the para-industry and pitch meetings are concepts that rely on social networks, business relationships, culturally engendered practices that reflect the inequalities, uncertainty, and messiness of industry culture. As pitch meetings are part of the para-industry model, these aspects will naturally align; an industry that is racialized, sexualised, and gendered, will most likely exhibit those qualities in micro-instances.

However, some of the para-industry categories speak heavily to the nature of pitch meetings and can help in defining its relationship with industry-embedded genres. Pitch meetings are similarly rhizomatic, hermeneutical, self-disciplined through surveillance, textualized, cultural, and messy. This chapter uses the para-industry to expose some of the actors and agencies operating within the pitch meeting. These categories become the basis for applying three key characteristics to interview-led practitioner data that reflects on pitch meetings and genre's functions within that socially-led space.

Caldwell (2013) speaks of "rhizomatic networks" and the "fleeting, opportunistic postures of willed affinity, postures that quickly evaporate when revenues do" (p.161) framing such

130

networks as ongoing, changing, and unpredictable. As this chapter explores, pitch meetings are opportunistic; they speak to the commercial desires of different parties who come together for mutual gain for commercial benefits. If the revenues are not present, or capital dries up, the pitch meeting no longer exists. Pitch meetings are self-disciplined, relying heavily on the social performance that functions within expected industry cultural conventions learned through experience, and working practice.

According to Caldwell, para-industries have a hermeneutical context, both from an outsider's position in determining industry meaning, but equally, the culture itself is constantly reflecting and self-theorising as a self-conscious critical or interpretive agent" (p.158). It is a space where opposing agents within the industry culture seek to reveal meanings relating to a pitched concept and a potential agreement. Pitch meetings speak to more than just an agreement on whether a pitch will be accepted by a genre commissioner. The pitching meeting is both a social and commercial contract between a buyer and seller, and the outcome of these agreements is not certain. Uncertainty comes not just in the shape of the product, nor its reception as a text, but also the shape of any future social arrangement. Nor can parties be certain that the product will be delivered as anticipated. For a commissioner especially, the pitch meeting is about making decisions based on uncertainties and having to interpret the social and commercial factors at play in the meeting. The hermeneutical stance speaks to the risk at play in the pitch meeting and genre's role in managing that risk.

The idea that para-industries are 'self-disciplined through self-surveillance speaks to the controlling structures of media institutions. Drawing on Michel Foucault's (1995) reflections on the panopticon model of surveillance, para-industry institutions discipline production professionals through "long-sanctioned rituals" and how industry monoliths, from agencies to broadcasters, to media journalism generate an aura of monitoring. Caldwell (2013) relates this to the production professional; that a sensation of all being monitored—new and experienced workers—must work on their brand through their workplace behaviour, online networking, and "reputation management" (p.161). For producers, pitch meetings are all about performance and a performance that is needed to match the etiquette expected from commissioners. The performance is a calculated show of knowledge, experience, and social skills to convince the commissioner that, as a producer, you can be trusted to produce what has been promised at the

meeting. In an industry where skillsets come from the experience, social interactions, and knowledge gathered from work within its culture, pitch meetings are a space where practitioners are scrutinised, and thereby self-scrutinise, to perform according to an expected industry behaviour.

Para-industry is a textual phenomenon. Speaking as a researcher, Caldwell reflects on the lack of transparency and the difficulty in deciphering what is performed. "What high-level professionals say has almost always been scripted and rehearsed. In this sense, therefore, industrial disclosures to scholars should first be approached as performance, as trade 'stagings'" (p.163). Caldwell (2008) has observed that pitch meetings —along with other types of industry texts which he defines as "fully embedded deep texts"— are "largely cut off from the public and are commercially enacted or circulated by production personnel within the relatively bounded, propriety worlds of work" (p.346). This can make direct observation of this television ritual difficult, and while an interview-led methodology, as applied in this chapter, can produce data from a practitioner's reflections, such reflections are not verifiable accounts of working practices; they are textual, and they are performed. As the industry is self-disciplined through self-surveillance, where branding and performance are ritualised behaviour, pitch meetings are also heavily textualized. As the chapter explores, different agents have agendas and power relations that rely on performance. In this regard, textuality is a key aspect of the pitch meeting.

Para-industries are 'cultural', and as Caldwell explains, "Each socio-professional community in film and television surrounds itself with marks of cultural capital" (2013: p.158). Cultural capital is a vital part of pitch meetings. Caldwell speaks of cultural capital's relevance in all aspects of industry work; from production, marketing, to on-screen values. However, in a pitch meeting, cultural capital can be linked to the reputation of a producer or commissioner. It could provide confidence to a commissioner that a producer can deliver their concept as a television show, or to a producer cultural capital might make a broadcaster desirable through their ability to distribute or promote television shows. Cultural capital could be a mark of the professionalism of individuals within the meeting. Capital can be demonstrated by the network connections of an individual or company. A producer with strong industry connections could pitch a concept with on-screen talent attached that could prescribe a greater market value. Cultural capital is at the

heart of the pitch meeting's hermeneutical processes where practitioners must interpret the potential in their prospective professional partners.

Finally, Caldwell (2013) argues para-industries are 'messy', arguing they are "a series of dense rhizomatic networks of sub-companies held at a safe distance, loosely structured to flexibly adapt to new labor markets, new digital technologies, and consumer unruliness" (p.163). To combat this mess, Caldwell draws on two theorists, Clifford Geertz and Bruno Latour.

Clifford Geertz (1994) suggests that fieldwork confronts cultural research as "a series of texts about other texts, a process best understood as the way a culture represents itself to itself" (p.163). Geertz's observation can be viewed as sympathetic to the methodology presented in this chapter of industry self-theorising and reflection. To understand the pitch meeting is to understand the industry culture and that meaning is being theorised by the practitioners themselves through their practice. Geertz's observations play well with pitch meetings. He argues (as does Caldwell) "societies, like lives, contain their interpretations. One has only to learn how to gain access to them" (p.124). Through ritualised interaction, performance, and interpretation, practitioners seek to make sense of their space. Their hermeneutic social practice, read textually, situates the researcher as an interpreter of British television production culture.

Caldwell (2008) speaks of industry trade meetings as being a space where the film/television practitioner's interactions are vital to understanding their culture. "In very basic terms workers do three things in a trade space: they appear, they act, and/or they interact" (p.72). This action and interaction provide what Caldwell defines as a metacommentary; where the performance, physical and verbal, is tied into their industry culture. Geertz saw cultures as making sense of themselves through their social interactivity and Caldwell suggests that industry rituals do the very same. It is a hermeneutical act that shapes the future of the industry through its cultural interactions drawing on participants' genre-aligned knowledge, experience, and understanding of the professional industry to inform future-changing conclusions. Pitch meetings are rituals, codified industry disciplines, hermeneutical, and deeply embedded into the television culture. Geertz's cultural lens can make sense of the interactive nature of the pitch meeting.

Matrixes and actors are the focuses of Caldwell's second cited influence: sociologist Bruno Latour and his work on Actor-network theory. For Caldwell, Actor-network theory helps "map the ways that agency is distributed and enrolled across human and nonhuman parts of other

production networks (which comprise of tools, spaces, workers, and firms)" (p.163). Actor-network theory (ANT) was Latour's (2007) intervention into understanding social interrelationships devoid of hierarchies and assumptions. This was conducted by empirically mapping present local networks and resisting assumptions made before data collection. To some degree, ANT could be applied to this chapter's argument, as the relationships between human and nonhuman actors, and the transformative powers that create an active network could aid in mapping the use of genre within television cultures. ANT has been used in media analysis (see Caldwell, 2008; Mould, 2009 for examples), however, ANT is about visible network relations, and whilst this chapter considers the importance of seeing the network of heterogeneity within the factual television industry, its primary goal is less about the network and more about the function of genre within pitch meetings. Genre is a symbolic material, neither existing as human nor nonhuman (aside from what it can signify, for instance, to a genre commissioning department). This can make ANT—as Latour theorises it—difficult to apply to genre theory. For a better understanding of genre and its relationship to networks, chapter five explores a local industry network applying a post-ANT form of analysis that also considers the nature of immaterial agencies. However, one of ANT's benefits is its treatment of social objects as social networks of actors. This can be useful to untangle the fluidity and individualism found in pitch meetings as ANT can help trace the messy, rhizomatic arrangements of media actors in the para-industry itself. As a result, this chapter does not be considering Actor-network theory directly, but its presence is notable. The language of ANT does effectively express the connections between social relationships and agency, and its role in social and spatial conduct is examined.

The chapter draws on three more scholars to help better understand the pitch meeting and genre. In extrapolating textuality and self-discipline as self-surveillance the chapter applies Erving Goffman and his dramaturgical theory of performance. Erving Goffman conceptualised social meetings as theatrical in how humans perform face-to-face. Goffman (1956) considered the performance of individuals as dramaturgical interaction; that people perform —verbally and physically— in different situations to different people, like actors on a stage, with a front region (or stage) persona, and a backstage. "In general, then, we must keep in mind that when we speak of front and back regions we speak from the reference point of a particular performance, and we speak of the function that the place happens to serve at the time of the given performance" (p.77). Goffman unites the performance with the space it inhabits and emphasises how space can

function differently depending on the interactional conditions that form the 'setting' for the performance. For pitch meetings, Goffman's dramaturgical framework suits both the textuality and performance of the ritual.

Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's (1993) theories of field and cultural capital resonate with the social makeup of the pitch meeting. The social capital of each participant within the field plays into the power relations between production and commissioning. By field, Bourdieu refers to a space of "objective relations among individuals and institutions competing for the same stakes" (p.133). The factual television industry is a field maintained by power relations built from the social capital of the practitioners. Social capital itself—an outcome Bourdieu argues from social labour built on money, time, and competence (p.33)—speaks to the importance of social performance and identity in selling a concept to genre commissioners.

Finally, there is the notion of power that ties all these attributes together. Power speaks to networked power relations; to the power to perform and interpret performance; and its relationship to textuality. It relates to value and capital within a culture and the power relations that sustain it. Michel Foucault (1978) makes several points that are cogent to considering power and pitch meetings. He notes that power cannot be seized nor acquired, and it does not flow in one direction. Power is itself an active interplay of relations. Power "is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from point to another" (93). Power is a complex exchange of all relations, it is "everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (93). Considering the media industry as a heterogenic and rhizomatic space, the notion of inter-relational power is apt.

To analyse genre within the pitch meeting, these frameworks are to be condensed down into three categories. The following section draws on academic theory to formulate the three key criteria of pitch making: 'Power-knowledge', 'Ritual behaviour', and 'Social interaction'. Condensed into these three categories, the chapter demonstrates how genre and pitch meetings intersect, enabling industry discourse, as a knowledge base, and as a tool of risk management.

Pitch meetings and genre: power-knowledge, networking, and behaviour

Previous chapters have outlined how industry-embedded genre is a function of social discourse within British factual television, as part of the industry structure, and part of production practice and development. As a constant symbolic entity, genre provides the pitch meeting with intrinsic and understood definitions; a shared set of conceptions that enables practitioners to make sense of the subjects at hand. Bill Ryan (1992) argues genres offer visible conventions for artistic work that are understood and have meaning, to artists and audiences (162). David Hesmondhalgh (2018) equally makes such associations, adding that genres provide an "enhanced understanding" (p.98) between these two groups. Power-knowledge, ritual behaviour, and social interaction are all interconnected categories that draw upon genre to aid practitioners to perform, read, and communicate within the shared space.

'Ritual behaviour' refers to anticipated ritualised social conventions, tapping into industry self-discipline and surveillance, it helps make sense of industry messiness by providing cultural expectations. Pitch meetings are part of industry institutional and social structures as well as a system of commercial negotiation. As a space of structualised conduct, the pitch meeting is a point in the industry production hierarchy where developers, usually as part of a production company, sell their ideas up the chain to the genre commissioner who represents an institution that will be the distributor to the consumer (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Lees, 2010; Thirkell, 2010). The formalities of the meeting may be variable; the tone, location, and roles present, however, the meeting itself is an expected and structured point in production development.

'Ritual' can also speak to some of the common conventions of the meetings; features of pitch meetings that are constant and are intrinsic to the value and outcomes of the meeting can include what ANT would label 'non-human actors', such as pitch tapes, PowerPoints, and props. Rituals set up social interaction and power relations based on the expected performances that seek to attain desired outcomes. Genre is very much a part of these structural bindings; it brings structure to discourse and identifies the production pathway.

'Social Interaction' relates to the performance; its textuality, its cultural conventions, and interrelationships, and hermeneutic strategies. With an acknowledgment of Goffman's work,

social interaction considers pitch meetings as performative, with strategies that are deployed to achieve particular goals.

Networking is vital to practitioner interaction and provides a social scaffold for the meeting. As a social ritual, networking is also a key factor within the pitch meeting, in its arrangements, and a part of industry life. John Caldwell (2008) notes "survival of any production company means convincing prospective clients that the company stands as a cost-effective and cutting-edge setter or exploiter of trends" (p.91). For production companies, cultivating strong relationships through industry practice, and maintaining relations enables access that would otherwise be out of reach (Lees, 2010). With television industry culture being highly competitive it is ironic, as Caldwell (2008) notes, that survival is dependent on the "ability to forge flexible, supportive alliances" (p.91).

The difficulties in arranging a meeting with a genre commissioner speak to the practitioner's need for industry experience; an understanding of the rules, codes, and expectations to gain access. A practitioner's knowledge base is built on an understanding of the rituals and conventions of the industry, and in an embedded industry walled with deepening concentric circles, knowledge is best learned through experience. Nicola Lees (2010) observes, "[T]here are many books and courses that purport to teach you the "right" way to pitch, but there is no failsafe technique" (p.184). Industry connections forged through past relations are important for access. If starting, building a rapport through dialogue with a relevant genre commissioning editor (Lee, 2010) could be the start of contact cultivation. Other avenues include trade fares and industry events that often provide pitch opportunities and spaces for direct networking with commissioners (see Chapter 5; Caldwell, 2008). A strong social network is key for the production company practitioner to get the pitch meeting. Pitch meetings are therefore as much about power relations as they are social dialogue.

These strategies look to generate social connections applying networking, and through established networks, positive power relations that serve specific outcomes. Michel Foucault (1978) speaks of power as relational forces that are "intelligible" as power is exercised without aims and objectives (pp.94-95). Power relations are present within social and structural elements of pitch meetings. Social agency and social structures have relational qualities to each other, as Anthony Giddens (1984) has argued through structuration and the making and remaking of

society through human action and their social structures. The impact human activity has on society is due to what Giddens calls structural knowledge (Giddens & Sutton, 2009: p.89).

The last of the three is thereby 'power-knowledge'. Knowledge is cultural, drawn from experience, past interactions, and industry awareness of its ongoing properties, connections, and expectations. In this sense, power-knowledge makes sense of the rhizomatic nature of the industry; its matrix, and its operation. Where there is knowledge, power relations are also present. As Foucault (1995) argues, "there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (p.27). Power is a force that relates to the use of knowledge, and power-knowledge is a key factor of the pitch meeting. It relates to human action as discourse and as a field of structural knowledge. Power sustains the pitch meeting's identity; its relational force is generated through networking, knowledge, and ritual conventions.

Foucault also speaks of the resistance to power being both key, present, and everywhere within any power network (1978). Foucault argues resistance can be large and savage, working against established networks of power as seen in revolutionary social events, but equally, it can often be "mobile and transitory" (p.96). The pitch meeting speaks to the powers and resistances of commercial and creative demands. The knowledge that frames the commercial/creative dialectic is another form of power, power which Foucault defines as power-knowledge, with power-knowledge operating as both power and resistance. "[I]t is not the activity of the subject of knowledge that produces the corpus of knowledge, useful or resistant to power, but power-knowledge, the processes, and struggles that traverse and it and of which it is made up, that determines the forms and possible domains of knowledge" (1995: p.28).

Power-knowledge offers a strong framework of understanding as to how pitch meetings function, for they can neither exist as an exertion of power nor an exchange of knowledge exclusively; it is the relations between knowledge and power that generate outcomes. For Foucault, power works through discourse, and knowledge thereby becomes a force of power (Giddens & Sutton, 2009). Knowledge in a pitch meeting does not simply speak to a concept being pitched, but an understanding of industry structures, systems, and market conditions; knowledge will speak to the network of agents and assets a practitioner will have at their

disposal, to the understanding of commercial pressures on all parties, and to the creative ideas that could steer their proposals.

The following section considers how these three aspects interact within genre and each other through data gathered through industry interviews. To separate these three aspects into individual properties is difficult, as they are heavily interwoven and interactive. The chapter thereby considers the chronology of the pitch meeting to investigate how genre interacts with power-knowledge, social interaction, and ritual behaviour. It explores the setting up of pitch meetings, the informal meet, and the formal meet. Throughout these stages, genre plays a key role that relates to power, action, and ritual, and through these interactions manages the risk potentials in television production. The pitch meeting is analysed through the reflective and self-theorising discourses of producers and commissioning editors with experiences in British factual television production.

1.1 Setting up the pitch meeting

The setting up of the pitch meeting carries many ritualistic elements that are drawn from social interaction and power-knowledge. As a result, television development authors argue that first-time development rarely gets commissioned without a production company. "If you're starting out in the industry, it is likely you will find it extremely challenging to get a meeting with a commissioning editor" (Lees, 2010: p.184), this again reiterates the production industry insider-outsider binary and the concentric circles of embedded access (Caldwell, 2008). John Caldwell defines industry spaces through a set of concentric circles. He places the pitch session as part of the "highly proprietary private sphere"; an industry inner sanctum (p.107). Whilst Lees (2010) recommends that for a new developer to gain access, they must first pitch to television production companies before they pitch to genre commissioners. However, interviewed Managing Director Harrison argues that pitchers do not tend to come from the outside:

> Most of the people pitching to a broadcaster know the commissioner and you
> would immediately say, "Well, everyone has to start somewhere!" The way you
> start is as an assistant producer, where you get to know particular commissioners
> because you're making films for them. Eventually you to a point where you
> pitch something yourself. So, the commissioner is thinking, "Can this person

> deliver the idea?" That's number one. They are assessing the idea and they are assessing whether the person can deliver it. (Appendix A12)

Harrison makes the point that producers begin within the industry structure, already embedded within Caldwell's concentric circles, where they gain ritualised knowledge, social interaction forming networking, which provides the basis for power-knowledge. This point is emphasised by Creative Director Kezia, "Most of the people pitching to a broadcaster knows the commissioner" (Appendix A9). By being an assistant producer within the industry, the experience and visibility that comes with working within a genre may pay off later by becoming a production manager. Access to genre commissioners can come from work history. Harrison indicates that the experience and interactions can be related to genre; that through continued work within a genre, social capital can be gained and access to commissioners becomes easier. Roger Thirkell's (2010) experience of factual television history developments offers a similar story, starting as an "obscure" assistant producer eventually accruing knowledge, connections, and power through a rise through the industry ranks before being positioned to pitch (p.6). In terms of Bourdieuan (1993) field theory, "the occupiers of the dominant position, those who have the most specific capital are opposed in a host of ways to the newcomers, the new entrants of the field, parvenus who do not process much specific capital" (p.133). Social capital and power are contributors to the insider-outsider binary that keeps the pitch meeting interactions reliant on power-knowledge within the field and social interaction that ordains a level of cultural capital.

As part of that field knowledge, industry-embedded genres are important. As commissioning departments are labelled by industry-embedded genres, the interpretation of that genre, (rooted in the institution's broadcast strategies and market identity), is an anticipated part of field knowledge. As part of industrial production, genres can differ depending on the style of programming; different genres have different costs and production requirements that need to be accounted for in the building of a show. This connection between genre and knowledge is raised by Craig Collie (2007) who argues from his experience "An understanding of genre will assist in appreciating how the idea might be realised as television" (p.165).

The importance of assessment again speaks to the relationship of risk to genre. As Harrison argues:

> So, the commissioner is thinking "can this person deliver the idea?" That's number one. They are assessing the idea and they are assessing whether the person can deliver it. (Appendix A12)

For production companies, the value of field knowledge is not only about presenting the right concept to the right commissioner but in the creation of skillsets that practitioners can use to adapt their ideas to the demands of different genre commissioners. Development Head Gareth demonstrates how being able to adapt an idea to meet specific commissioning requirements is vital to his production company:

> What we do is a matter of routine […] If we're struggling to get it commissioned by a particular department, we will take it to several other departments to get it commissioned and that will involve giving the idea a bit of fresh spin. (Appendix A10)

Managing Director Chrissie provides a slightly different position; that ideas are best proposed with an idea of the buyer in mind:

> "I suppose what drives us when we develop things is the quality of the idea and who it is for. You can't just develop an idea without knowing who it is going to be pitched to" (Appendix A6).

Chrissie was resistant to the wide-spectrum approach to pitching, reflecting on how industry-embedded genre operates differently between departments and even individual commissioners:

> […] there are individuals within that department, with their tastes and sensibilities, so you have to begin to understand those too - and then which channel; so if you're pitching to Specialist Factual at the BBC or Specialist Factual at Channel 4, the same idea would require a radically different treatment for each of those broadcasters. (Appendix A6)

For Chrissie, genre can have a different meaning to different commissioning departments — and even different individual commissioners— that require ideas to be subjected to specific

tonalities. This did not mean Chrissie would reject Gareth's approach of going to other commissioners with a pitch. . "Yes, sometimes, but not all the time, you have to keep re-thinking. Some ideas can be re-thought, some ideas can't so well" (Appendix A6). The importance of industry knowledge is vital, as are social connections. If ideas must be tailored to reflect different tastes and sensibilities, industry experience, understanding, and social connections are key to a successful genre pitch. The importance of this knowledge is also reflected in the commissioner's appraisal of the pitcher; commissioners will make decisions on who they deal with based on those producers' performed understanding of the field.

Speaking from interviews conducted with commissioning editors, Lees (2010) presents a commissioner who argues they prefer a pitch to be conducted by the showrunner; someone who has an understanding and experience of the logistics of taking a show successfully through production. From a production company perspective, some practitioners interviewed reflected on how different employees could form relationships with different genre commissioners. Director of Entertainment, Andrew, notes

> I will go and see entertainment commissioners, or sometimes I'll go to someone
> on the factual side. But mainly it will be entertainment commissioners that I see.
> (Appendix A1)

The practitioner makes a distinction between two different genres within their practice, suggesting that power-knowledge provides an understanding of a specific genre. That knowledge adds social capital to a pitch and can secure an ongoing relationship with a commissioner. Head of Development Luke reflected on their skillset and the genre distinction it creates. "I am kind of in entertainment or comedy - probably veering to factual but a more factual entertainment" (Appendix A3). Luke personifies his fieldwork through his genre knowledge; that the practitioners' accumulated skills and experience can be categories against genres or subgenre fields. Luke even reflects on his work identity through a genre spectrum as between factual works and factual entertainment. Genre is thereby demonstrated to be a contributor to the industry knowledge required for production company developers pitching and maintaining relationships with different genre commissioners. For above-the-line production company managers, knowing how genres are articulated by genre departments, and even individual

commissioners is important. It is knowledge that is argued to be gathered through industry work; learned from prior industry roles that have provided them with access to potential commissioners that work within respective genres. Evidence of this field knowledge provides genre commissioners with confidence in the pitcher's ability to shape an idea to fit the required parameters of their institution – confidence can bring trust. This trust is vital for genre commissioners to weigh against the risk of greenlighting a project. Developing a relationship with a commissioner can shift the relationship's boundaries and through that the power relations between the buyer and seller.

At an early stage of contact, power relations are visible between the commissioner and the pitchers. Genre commissioners are deeply entrenched within the industry and difficult to gain access to. Lees (2010) notes that a producer may have to wait for a response from a commissioner and advises no contact in the interim. The first contact with a genre commissioning department can operate at different time frames, but usually "no less than twenty-eight days" (Lees, 2010: p.189). Commissioners will impart advice not to deviate from expected conduct; concept holders should work through production companies; pitches should not be given over the phone, but by email or through website submission pages (Lees, 2010; Thirkell, 2010). In this regard, the power hierarchy sustained by commercial relations of the buyer and seller favours the buyer. In a market that has high numbers of independent production companies, the distributor has leverage. This increase in activity was echoed by production company Director of Entertainment Andrew who explained

> "It is an organic process. They [commissioners] have a shopping list or the source of what they're after. But sometimes an idea that you go in with can inform an idea that they then go for. Back in the day, it might have been so much clearer defined, but not anymore" (Appendix A1).

Andrew paints an ever-changing process, a process that is becoming increasingly hectic, where commissioners have a list of what they require which is then reshaped creatively. As noted by David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011) "With the rise of independent production, these commissioners are also expected to sift a huge amount of programme ideas" (p.98). This blurring of roles and processes has itself become a ritual expectation for Andrew; that commissioners

now will interact differently creating a new dynamic of creativity between commissioners and producers.

This increasingly active commissioner model makes their access for producers difficult to attain. "In television, a number of programme-makers noted the increasing amount of networking time necessary to engage with the now-powerful commissioners […] This means actively working to form networks of friendship with commissioners" (p.108). This emphasises the need for a producer to have strong social networking skills and experience before any pitch meeting with a genre commissioner. Access becomes the lifeforce for a production company and would suggest that the capital and power reside with the commissioner. Yet this argument was reflected differently by some producers and commissioners. Production company Commercial Director Stanley argues that informal and formal discussions have an interim in which producers can use to reflect on the response.

> Generally, we will float ideas with broadcasters, and we'll measure the response
> from broadcasters and then, together with the broadcaster, we'll decide then
> whether we will together invest in further developments and it does differ from
> drama because obviously drama requires working with freelance writers
> generally. (Appendix A14)

Stanley's reflections have him placing his company in a position of power; that his company will decide whether they will work with the broadcaster; whether it is a cost-effective measure depending on the informal meeting. Stanley also notes there are differences between drama and factual output in terms of production costs, again emphasising how pitching has genre-associated costs.

The market has not just become more competitive for producers, but also commissioners; where vertical integration can see producers of content tied to particular company chains, limiting access for commissioning departments from other institutions. Leonard reflects

> The supplier has a lot of power – particularly the bigger companies. Broadly
> that's how it is. The relationship on the personal level does not work like that,
> but in terms of the power shift […] the other broadcasters and other

> internationals are owning all the creative talents. They are snapping up
> everybody! (Appendix A16)

Whilst Leonard notes that the pressures on locating creative content are not reflected within the interpersonal power relations with producers, he does acknowledge that creatives can have leverage in an integrated market. This repositioning of power away from the commissioner does not necessarily place power in the hands of the producer, even if it has raised its capital. The complexities of vertical integration within the media industries (Hesmondhalgh, 2018; Doyle, 2013), and industry changes made in the 1990s forced open the independent sector. With institutions expected to fulfil set percentages of independent commissioning, the changes created a competitive stranglehold on locating production talent, shifting the power relations. The power relations speak to the contest between different institutions. This headhunting strategy to acquire producers demonstrating high social capital speaks to the industry creativity/commerce dialectic where the market demand for strong creative content is bottle-necked by its commercial strategies.

In setting up pitch meetings, genre is a match-maker that can aid in identifying relevant commissioners to pitch to, and can identify producers with particular skillsets and experience that match institutional production interests. Genre is a filter that helps narrow the prospects for both buyers and sellers, which again speaks to the reduction of market risk through refined match-making. Pitch meetings can thereby be considered a flashpoint of creative and commercial tensions that situate around risk management for which genre becomes a managing tool. Once arranged, the pitch meeting is shaped depending on their requirements, these have been loosely described as informal and formal pitch meetings.

1.2 Informal and formal pitch meetings

The shape or type of pitch meetings, the people involved; the content discussed; agendas deployed; outcomes desired, very much depends on the interaction between producer and genre commissioner. Nicola Lees (2010) suggested two basic types of meetings: the informal meeting, which is a discussion with a commissioner, and the formal meeting where ideas that have been given merit take on a more official capacity and potentially involve the presence of a channel head.

Managing Director David outlines his position on the pitching process, making a distinction between informal and formal meetings.

> The first pitch is quite simple, but once you start developing it up, and finding characters, and writing briefs, structures, and formats, you want to be able to sell it to one network or you've done a lot of work for nothing. (Appendix A15)

David alludes to an informal early pitch, that outlines ideas to the buyer. If those conversations are successful, those ideas are fleshed out. However, in doing so, the producer is now generating material at a cost to his company. David explains how ideas need to be pitched to multiple buyers, to avoid the risk of wasted labour:

> If you are going to develop a show, you're going to need to be able to pitch it to more than one network because there's a lot of work in creating an idea and developing it. (Appendix A15)

There are visible limitations to the notion of informal and formal pitches. If an idea is developed after an informal discussion, an unsuccessful outcome between the production company and the commissioning department means the production company is left with an unsold concept that it has invested time and money in. This concept could be taken to other potential buyers, in which the interaction differs from the initial informal meeting; the production company has a fleshed-out concept to sell, which may include formats and structural components. A pitch can thereby begin as an informal conversation about an idea, leading to a developed concept that may have to be pitched elsewhere as a more defined package, which again, may mutate through other conversations with different buyers. The informal/formal meeting structure is too reductive to the selling of symbolic material which is a fluid, interpretative, and individualised process of negotiation.

As Chrissie argued previously, different commissioners have individualised tastes and sensibilities, even when representing the same genres. Pitching is a complex act of negotiation and sometimes multiple acts of negotiation, where industry-embedded genres can provide limited clarity as to what buyers might want, the creative autonomy of commissioners, and the differences within the institutional interpretation of a genre for their brands. It can mean

146

producers must be resourceful and flexible, managing a dynamic market whilst ensuring their company does not make losses throughout the development process.

In attempting to help producers sell their idea, Lees (2010) notes the formal meeting might require specific ideas that are pitched, sometimes with tools such as presentations, written documents, video, or even props. Speaking at a panel at Sheffield Doc/Fest 2017, Marvyn Benoit, commissioning editor for Sky broadcast, explained the process of commissioning for Sky and factual entertainment commissions:

> Short paragraphs - send them in, if we like them, we'll get you in; we'll talk about the ideas. If you've got sizzles – great as it helps to show scale… and get ideas off the page. Once they've been pitched, we'll talk as a team … that goes up to the other team … it depends on the idea. (Benoit, 2017)

Benoit's departmental approach doesn't distinctly speak to the idea of informal and formal meetings. Pitches are made via e-mail and responded to if they are interesting. Sky's Factual Entertainment department's approach positions the commissioners as filters for ideas rather than active face-to-face pitching – that is until they find a pitch that the department wishes to respond to. Benoit's address was as part of an industry panel to production company practitioners, with Benoit articulating a position of control over the pitching process. Benoit also speaks of 'sizzles'. The sizzler (or promo) tape —a construct to illicit conceptual ideas as a media form — is a potent mediator within the network. Nicola Lees (2010) defines the sizzler as being "designed to give the channel executive a 'feel' for what the proposed program would be like in content and tone, rather than show exactly what the finished program will look like" (p.214). Roger Thirkell (2010) speaks of sizzlers as "tasters" advising "but at all costs, make sure it is good, though not over-polished, and with a punch" (p.248). Head of Development Gareth argues that the sizzler is part of a chain of actors that shapes a concept into a genre-bound text:

> You'll write a document that sells the idea, then you'll probably go away and shoot a taster tape or a sizzle. You'll be following the brief or the notes that are given by the commissioner, and they will be led by the dictates of the genre. (Appendix A10)

Gareth notes how genre, through interaction with a commissioner (and the use of documentation and visualisations) can shape an idea towards a sale. The discourse that occurs throughout a pitching event, potentially a chain of pitch meetings, will move the idea closer to the genre conventions that lead the commissioner. Gareth's theory of practice articulates industry-embedded genres as a dominant force with set conventions that the commissioner will draw from.

Managing Director Andrew sees the pitching technique as a case-by-case approach, however, warning that sometimes sizzlers can be too specific and can hamper a negotiation.

> Different people pitch different ways and different ideas require different pitching. How you pitch it depends on what the idea is, and who you pitch it to. You see more tapes made now, but a bad tape can do more damage than a paper pitch. (Appendix A1)

Similarly, for production company Commercial Director Stanley explains how his production company uses sizzlers:

> Occasionally we will go out and film certain sequences or interviews with key individuals, so we have got what we call a taster tape or sizzler, so we have some form of sample for the eventual programme so we can take to the broadcaster to entice their interest and gain a commission. (Appendix A14)

The sizzler for Stanley is not a constant part of the pitch meeting ritual, but an occasional utility that enriches the concept for the commissioner. Like Andrew, the use of sizzlers is a strategy, not a constant of pitching practices.

Commissioners can be keen to see sizzlers as they are there to visualise your concept (Lees, 2010), but Andrew suggests that visualising can damage a concept's chance of success. Lees notes that the goal of a pitch tape must be understood before its creation; is there a need to demonstrate competence or an unknown talent; is there a need for access-driven material that requires evidencing; and most importantly, addressing cost-effectiveness? Lees adds "whether you need a pitch tape at all depends on the idea you are pitching, your track record, and the

person to whom you are pitching" (p.169). Such assets must be considered by the nature and relationships within the pitch meeting.

Roger Thirkell (2010) also notes tasters are an added cost to pitches, risking a loss due to the extra material and labour involved. On this point, Stanley argues different genres operate at different costs, which can mean different outlays:

> So, it does differ from genre to genre. We undertake a risk analysis of cost and
> investment versus return. Certainly, some of our proposals for documentary
> series we can undertake ourselves because most of the research is here.
> (Appendix A14)

Sizzlers are not the only ritual visual way to demonstrate a pitch's effectiveness - props and PowerPoints being other methods of selling a concept (Lees, 2010). However, the decisions of what is required for a formal pitch meeting are considered through further risk analysis again highlighting the uncertainty within the television industry.

Another asset, symbolic in value, that aids in visualising the pitch is talent. Talent is defined by television producer Craig Collie (2007) as an "industry term for non-professional people (as regards television production) who are used for an interview or to carry out some activity on camera" (p.129). David Hesmondhalgh and Bill Ryan (1992) speak of cultural industry risk management as formatting, citing "stars", along with genre, as methods to "minimise the dangers of misses" in their market (Hesmondhalgh, 2018: p.32). Talent can be considered a subset of stardom, reflecting on how a celebrity presenter's consumer popularity equates to production industry value. However, like stardom, talent's value is in its format; that it is a production asset that can be risk measured by the talent's previous audience reception. On-screen talent has gained their cultural capital from positive reception in previous media productions, and often these productions will have a genre association with each other. In a high-risk industry, successful texts will be replicated, equally, their components can be borrowed for shows of similar form or content. Head of Development Isaac theorised:

> All talent usually become famous by being associated with a programme, and
> that defines what genre they usually become attached to; until they become

> attached to another hit show that might be in a different genre. That comes back
> to risk and how much risk commercial or creative companies are willing to take.
> (Appendix A2)

Isaac speaks of the close association between talent and genre, along with the question of risk. Talent can remain genre-locked until risks are taken to deploy them in another genre. Lees (2010) advises "Every factual genre requires a different type of onscreen talent. At the more serious content-driven end of the factual genre, the talent is absent (in the case of narrated documentaries) or relatively unobtrusive— there to illuminate the landscape not obscure the view. In entertainment-focused shows, the talent is the view" (p.148). Talent has significance across factual television, applied in different forms (for instance, presenting an entertainment show or as a narrative voice-over) with different personalities often associated with specific genres. Talent thereby can be used in the pitching process to help commissioners visualise a concept through their familiarity with the talent's past work. At the same time, talent provides commissioners with a possible asset that might draw in familiarised viewers. Talent is a sub-category of stardom in terms of risk management formats (Hesmondhalgh, 2018; Ryan, 1992). Talent can manifest from the commissioner or production company. Head of Development Connor explained the process from the perspective of his production company:

> Normally, we'll try to get an idea that could work with anyone and then have a
> conversation later on with the channel once they've bought into it as to who the
> talent could be. But certain people will help you sell an idea anyway and we've
> done deals in the past - development deals with talent - where we lock them in
> for three months or six months and work up ideas that we can take to the
> channel. We say that this is something we have that has exciting talent attached
> to and that will further help our sales. (Appendix A11)

Connor explains two different avenues where talent can become attached. Through the commissioner, the question of using specific talent can be raised after a successful pitch process, however, production companies can contract talent as part of a package that is then pitched. The latter of these processes can carry certain budgetary risks. Whilst Connor explains his company

will contract talent in advance, Lees (2010) warns that in practice, talent agencies are reluctant to show interest before a commission.

These assets, either symbolic like talent, or pragmatic like the sizzler, have ritual relationships with pitch meetings. Their deployment can depend on the dynamics of buyer and seller, the backing of the institution, and the conditions of the market, (Lees, 2010). The confidence in the pitcher might mean the commissioner does not require a sizzler, or the scale of the pitch might demand a taster to assure the commissioner the concept is manageable. If the concept breaks genre conventions, assets might help demonstrate how the show may work outside of expected parameters. If the market has a downturn, again, greater assurances might be anticipated within the pitch.

Even when pitch meetings are broken down into informal and formal constructs, it is difficult to logically predict their shape. Commissioning editor Mike reflected on his work practice in pitching:

> I think generally there are multiple pitches. We have regular pitch meetings with
> trusted suppliers, we have irregular ones with people who have an idea or ask for
> a meeting that we're interested in. We also do brainstorm sessions with indies
> where multiple commissioners from a department will attend. So, I think it
> varies; there's no kind of hard and fast rule. (Appendix A5)

Mike speaks of the different types of pitch meetings, and the sense of conducting the meeting is very much on commissioner terms; that it is the commissioner who defines the nature of the pitch. Mike does not speak of formal or informal constructs, but his language suggests different styles. Brainstorming sessions suggest an informal atmosphere, whilst requested meetings on a specific idea that the genre commissioner has an interest in speaks to the second stage, where a concept has already been floated. In inviting irregular meetings with people who have ideas that interest the genre commissioning department, Mike frames the pitch meetings as an access point between Caldwell's concentric circles, opening the door for producers to access deeper industry levels. Caldwell's concentric circles of industry spaces demonstrate the closed-off nature of the industry and the binary of inside/outside that exists inside and outside of the rings. Access, should be noted, is necessarily access to a material space. As argued, Caldwell speaks of the high

propriety status of industry spaces that indicate the need for such meetings to exist within private sites, resisting public scrutiny. However, the space, despite being proprietary, is not necessarily private – it could be a public space, as explained by Mike:

> Generally, the meat and the potatoes would be indies and producers coming into the channel and pitching in a room with a commissioner, but different commissioners work in different ways. I don't tend to do lunches or go-to drinks, other people do. I prefer to do it in a more formal setting, and that would be either our office or the Indies industry. (Appendix A5)

The meeting space held in a public space or a private space becomes proprietary to the social object, the pitch meeting. Sociologist John Law (2002) explores the notion of an object through ANT, separating different networks of actors as objects, noting how spaces can have multiple objects. In the case of pitch meetings, the pitch meeting and the locale, perhaps a café or an office (an office could perform multiple operations and thereby several social objects), can all exist in the same space. Law argues spaces have "multiple forms of spatiality", and the "spatialities and the objects which inhabit and enact them are uncomfortable" (p.92). Drawing on Latour, Law speaks of immutable mobiles, where immutable objects, that retain their network can move across space. Therefore, while pitch meetings are an example of a highly embedded television industry interaction, they can be performed in spaces that are themselves public and accessible. Pitch meetings are defined not by their space, but by the networking of their actors; the social interaction of a buyer and seller.

In whatever way the space of the meeting is defined, it is defined by the commissioner, who grants access, and from Mike's reflections, decides on the tone. Mike's expression of his preference as commissioning editor is evidence of the shape of the power relations within that ritual. Mike decides the tone and the location of the meeting and ultimately will be the decider as to whether a concept pitched is suitable to the current requirements of the institution he represents. David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011) conclude that commissioning editors have become the centralisation of power in production (p.97), arguing that the neo-liberalisation of the British television industry in the 1990s saw a growth in the independent sector in both content demand and marketisation, which led to commissioners becoming a critical function in

the flow of content. Hesmondhalgh and Baker also note that the balance of power between commissioners and producers was visible in some of their empirical research, noting a distrust from some producers (p.110). Yet as Foucault (1995) asserts, power cannot simply be imposed, its presence is maintained by all parties and the tension between producer and commissioner is an acknowledgment of those power relations. Foucault (1978) further notes "[T]here is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives" (p.95), arguing that rituals, such as the pitch meeting, exist through a calculated strategy on both sides. Both producers and commissioners have agendas to exert power; commissioners have the power to accept or decline a pitch, and as has been noted, producers have the power to shape a concept to fit more than one genre commissioner's needs and requirements. This application of power-knowledge requires producers to have a keen understanding of their industry, in particular, the current genre tone and content-specific institutions will be looking for.

As outlined in the previous chapter, some of the commissioning editors' power comes from the autonomy the institution provides as a creative manager. Defined by David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011), creative autonomy speaks to the "degree to which art, knowledge, symbol-making and so on can and/or should operate independently of the influence of other determinants" (p.40). Working without oversight, knowledge of both creativity and commerce must be known, performed, and assured to bring certainty that a deal can bring desired outcomes. This autonomy is also part of the industry heterogeneity and Mike expresses his preferences for the style and location of pitch meetings. He notes how they can vary depending on who they are being conducted with, however, he stresses that other commissioning editors may choose other methods. The autonomy given to creative managers is part of the heterogenic practices within the industry, and also part of the power relations in such decision-making that producers will look to adhere to.

The blurring of the pitch meeting's ritual aspects results in a broader autonomy for both producers and genre commissioners to shape meetings to suit their goals. This does not suggest that power relations are equal. Lees (2010) advises producers in first engagement informal meetings "it's hard to judge what is expected. Be too casual and you might come across as unprofessional; launch into all-singing, all-dancing pitch and it might feel embarrassingly over the top, so be prepared for either and take your cue from them" (p.189). Social interaction is

thereby vital in performing utilised ritual knowledge of the field and being able to conform to the expected etiquettes of an initial pitch meeting, with social performance to gauge and assess the dynamic. The autonomy prevalent in creative management (Ryan, 1992; Davis and Scase, 2000; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011) adds a measure of uncertainty; different genre commissioners can operate in different ways. Producers must not only ensure their pitches resonate with the genre department but convince a commissioner they can deliver those ideas to gain a commission. This delivery rests on the backbone of the three concepts. Producers must understand the rituals of the meeting, be able to have either the social skills or social networking experience to conduct their pitch effectively, and to be effective they must be able to demonstrate power-knowledge reflecting an understanding of genre and its related production requirements.

As David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011) observe in their empirical study, "commissioners employ a modern, cooperative form of managerial style rather than charisma or arbitrary acts of cruelty and so at least on the surface warm relations can be maintained" (p.109), and with producers "livelihoods of producers depend on these creative managers, external to their organisations", a status quo of relative co-operation is secured through this power relation. Conner's account demonstrates how the relationship with a genre commissioner is not simply a point of access, but a point of a hermeneutic collaboration that manages a project and its creative and commercial dialectic through "box-ticking".

To make such a collaboration meaningful, a commissioner desires trust (Lees, 2010); someone that will deliver what is promised, and in a risky market, trust is a strong binding agent. Commissioning Editor Mike used the term "trusted suppliers" (Appendix A5) when speaking of production companies with whom he has an ongoing relationship. Lees (2010) points to pitch meetings having certain ritual procedures as do's and don'ts for new developers. However, the rituals change as relationships develop. Drawing on Goffman's (1956) concept of gradual guarded discourse disclosure, social performances shift between parties as each move from a "feeling out" stage; each performer looks to discover "without dropping his defensive stand, whether or not it is safe to dispense with the current definition of the situation" (p.121). Social interactions are fluid, as the relationship changes, with each side looking to see that shift work to their advantage. Such strong relationships open pitch meetings beyond the traditional conception of a producer pitching to a genre commissioner.

Commissioning Editor Kerry illustrated their strategy in working with the company behind a pitch, and how getting inside the production company allows the commissioner to establish that confidence and build a strong relationship.

> A lot of pitches happen in the broadcaster's building, but what I'm intending to do, and I think all commissioners try and do it, is to go to the production offices, because you get such a sense of the team. And I think when you are buying something, you are buying the idea, but you also probably buying something more than the idea, as the idea always changes, you're buying the team, and the company, and unless you go to those companies... well, you get a sense of people, but if you go to the company itself you can get to understand who they are, what shows they have on, what's their infrastructure like, who has the loudest voice in the room. (Appendix A8)

Kerry highlights that the purchase from a production company is not simply an idea, but the production of an idea. Getting a sense of the production company again comes back to risk management; Kerry makes sure she has a good sense that the company can fulfil their pitch and that the production company can be trusted to realise the project as agreed.

A sense of professional trust increases the prospects of future work. In this regard, social capital establishes trust that can result in genre commissioners returning to the same producer with more work. This can further establish a producer's identity within a genre and accumulate further social capital and networking. Genre is a continuity of experiences between producers, commissioners, and commissioning departments. A distinction must be made between commissioners and the departments, as a commissioner may move to different employments, again evidencing the messy and fluid rhizomatic shape of the television industry.

This returning relationship between producers and commissioners is reflected upon by the Head of Development, Luke. Luke explained his experience with commissioners and the pitching when a solid relationship has formed between buyer and seller.

> Channels pitch to tender as well, so if you've got a good relationship with a channel, they'll come to you say: "We've got a slot free in this time slot and we

> want something to do with tattoos or transformation of the body". They'll pitch
> to three to four companies, and they'll pick one of those companies to make the
> show that's pitched. (Appendix A3)

The fluidity of the pitch meeting rituals is considered positive for the production company development head. A "good relationship" provides the production company with a two-way relationship, in this case, it will give the production company only a small pool of competition to pitch against. Luke's key point argues that it is the goals that define the meeting rather than any given conventions. Yet, at the same time, Luke has just demonstrated several pitch meetings constructs; being at the behest of the genre commissioner, or the institution, or the commissioner is at the behest of the production company. Pitch meetings require a good relationship for positive results, which again means successfully maintaining social capital on behalf of the production company, which to do so, must meet specific targets and attribute to successful past pitches. The ritual side of pitch meetings is visible, even if they are not rigid, they are definable by the practitioners. It further positions genre as a legacy of experience between practitioners. Where the good relationship is forged and sustained by a history of successful shared projects within a genre. As commissioning editor Mike explained, genre can become more elastic if the relationship with the producer is strong:

> Different broadcasters operate in different ways, certainly, it is my experience.
> There are blurred lines between genres and departments. A lot of commissioners
> depend on personal relationships, so if you've got a relationship with a
> production company or a producer and they bring you something that is on the
> periphery of your core output, that doesn't mean you'd dismiss it. (Appendix A5)

If there is a successful relationship between producer and commissioner, trust in the producer is strong enough to negate the need to rely on the risk management strategies of genre contexts; commissioners like Mike will consider an idea on the merit of the production company's track record as to how well it fits their department's mandate.

In terms of the genre commissioner's relationship within a pitch meeting they have requested; Commissioning Editor Kerry explained how she approached a production company:

> I think it's very rare that you'd take a fully formed idea and give it to a company, but you would go to a company that has delivered in that area before and say, "it's worth thinking about this idea because there's a big gap", but no, I've never heard anyone being given a fully thought-out idea. (Appendix A8)

While there can be a two-flow direction of contact, the concepts rest with the production company, and the commissioner takes the commercial requirements to the creatives. Such requirements can be genre-focused, or schedule-related, with particular timeslots on a broadcast channel needing filling. Returning to Development Head Isaac's reflection on schedule slots in chapter one, he demonstrated how producers need an awareness of broadcaster schedules as part of their genre skill-sets:

> Genre is key because it gives everyone an understanding of the type of shows that you are talking about; the cost; the expectations; the slot. All those things are very useful to navigate getting a commission. (Appendix A2)

'Slots' are a common term throughout factual television practitioner discourse from both producers and commissioners, and producers are expected to have a strong understanding of how schedules, programme slots, and genres function. Commissioners expect producers to be aware of their channel's scheduling and content, and how genre commissioned material relates to specific timeslots in terms of form, content, and cost. This information contributes to the power-knowledge expected within a pitch meeting. Power-knowledge of industry information is thereby critical to the pitch meeting, and it is within the power-knowledge, as exampled with schedules, that the association of genre has uses, values, and meanings.

In this regard, genre becomes a vital part of the pitch meeting discourse, as different genres can predicate different timeslots; a 9 pm timeslot for one broadcaster could be regularly filled with a particular type of show which could differ from the type of show they air at 8 pm. Different slots will have different audience expectations and different budgetary requirements. Brian, a managing director of an independent production company, explained how he saw the system of genre commissioning and how that system affected his pitches.

> … [A]t say at Channel 4's Features and Formats, there are seven commissioners
> in that one department. They each get to make one to two shows a year, and if
> that show goes beneath the slot average, which let's say is two million viewers,
> and they get 1.5 million viewers, they're fucked. Their job is on the line, their
> mortgage, their everything […] So as an indie, I'm now pitching into this very
> small window of sameness and mediocrity just because they want something
> similar so they're not going to fail. (Appendix A4)

Again, the issue of risk management becomes a factor in the types of shows commissioned, concerning the expectation of how it should perform in a certain slot, which can lend itself to generic output. In Brian's model, the personal agendas of genre commissioners, whereby successful commissions maintain their social capital, trickle down to the politics of commissioning safe projects, forcing his production company to pitch what he considered "mediocre". Under Brian's conception, this top-down political manoeuvring shapes the outcome of what concepts are pitched and commissioned by genre department agents.

The importance of scheduling and pitches does not appear to solely rest on commissioners. Production company Director of Entertainment Andrew explains how the unpredictability rooted in the television industry creates a scenario that can have genre commissioners request last-minute pitches.

> Slots move, things drop out, or something hits them. Sometimes you get those
> calls "we've got a show that's meant to go out in six weeks and it's not going to
> make it, can we talk about this" things like that. You never quite know where the
> next show might come from. (Appendix A1)

The uncertainties in television industry production are highlighted here; how unplanned problems with one production can lead to a genre commissioner seeking a fast pitch from a different producer. It demonstrates how genre commissioning has to be reactive to projects as well as proactive and is an example of Foucauldian power; where power is not structural, nor bestowed on an individual but "a name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society" (1978: p.93); for here the commissioner is in an uncertain situation for which a producer can be the key to regaining project stability. In such cases, genre provides a network

of potential production agents for the commissioner to draw upon. These agents will be defined by genre, through their established genre-market identity, as indicated, often through past experiences with commissioners. To call on a producer to help through a problematic situation suggests a sense of trust, that itself will come from professional experience. Genre in this case is part of the socio-industrial networks generated by practitioners that can be drawn upon in unexpected situations.

From the arranging of a pitch meeting through to its informal and formal stages, genre has a constant role as a tool of communication. Industry-embedded genres as discourse are another asset in industry risk management. They contribute to the commissioner's decision-making process helping them to interpret and evaluate the prospects of market success. To be valued as a producer, you are expected to speak the industry language. Genre, as part of industry language, is thereby a contributor to the accumulation of power-knowledge in a pitch meeting. Genre is a learned set of signifiers that do not only aid in the communication of ideas but also their interpretation, as well as operating as part of the producer's social performance. Industry-embedded genres are a demonstration of the producer's industry knowledge and this can contribute to their social capital and increase their value to a genre commissioner.

Conclusions:

This chapter has argued it is important to reconceptualise the pitch meeting from being a place for deal-making to a liminal site of social interaction that relies on industry-embedded genres to aid in achieving the best outcome. One production company summarised the pitching relationship through an industy axiom:

> Well, there's a sort of adage isn't there? With the commissioning editors, saying "give me something new, just like the old one" - you know, no one knows, you're both looking for something new. (Appendix A7)

Pitches are a space where the commercial desire for something recognisable and yet unique are confronted and negotiated. This practice sees both buyers and sellers using industry-embedded genres as one of several tools and strategies to navigate this commercial dissonance. Pitches are conceptual by nature, yet commissioners must decide whether or not this symbolic asset can

translate into a commercially successful television product. Industry-embedded genres provide both parties with knowledge that can better aid in this difficult decision-making process.

The chapter has applied John Caldwell's breakdown of his para-industrial model to distill three key areas where genre performs in pitch meetings. Genres are active within social interaction, through a ritual-industrial context and power-knowledge. A producer demonstrating a strong mix of knowledge, ritual understanding, and social interaction will appeal to genre commissioners looking for project managers they can trust to deliver successful material, limiting some of the market risks. Risk management exists on the producer's side as well – choices regarding how much expenditure to put into a pitch that has no certainty.

Through the interrelationships of social interaction, industry ritual, and power-knowledge, the chapter has revealed how genre contributes to the hermeneutic processes at play in the pitch meeting. Ultimately genre is an interpretative measure against the commercial risk for practitioners. A producer's knowledge, value, and socio-professional relationships are forged through their experience within a genre sector. A commissioner will be interpreting the social capital of the producer against the risks in a high-cost deal. The commissioner will also be qualifying whether the concept itself fits with their interpretation of their institution's genre requirements. This hermeneutical activity speaks to Geertz's belief that cultures must theorise and interpret their social meaning. Both producers and commissioners operate as a social dialectic, with producers bringing creativity that must match the industry market demands as represented by the commissioner. This is not to suggest that producers are not commercially driven, nor that commissioners as creative managers have no understanding of idea development, but from an industry perspective, the producers are expected to bring fresh ideas, whereas commissioners are there to ensure ideas fit the requirements of their institutions. Genre thereby sits in the middle of the dialectic, as a concept that ideas can be measured by, either through conformity or defiance.

To successfully demonstrate their proposed concepts, producers must use the pitch meetings to demonstrate their value through performance. They must build strong social networks with commissioners, seeking to build relationships and build trust, trust that can be measured against risk. Through such relationships, access to genre commissioners becomes far easier. Producers pitching concepts tend to rise through their industry field, working on productions rather than

leading them, gaining experience, knowledge, and contacts until they can manage their projects. The pitch meeting is thereby a moment where networks of actors are drawn together and utilised to demonstrate their strengths. These strengths draw on Goffman's theories of performance and Bourdieu's cultural capital, as the producer's performance must effectively demonstrate their capital to the genre commissioner. This capital is usually constructed from competency and experience within a related genre to the commissioner. That capital can be demonstrated materially through the use of sizzle tapes, props, and PowerPoint presentations, or their established network of relevant agents. Talent can have genre associations and those associations can be used to help the genre commissioner visualise the concept. Equally, as a fellow format of risk management to genre, Talent can be evidenced as another factor in minimising the risk of product failure. However, attaching talent can be costly, and some producers and commissioners argued that pitch meetings have been a space of collaborative discussion that shapes a pitch. Talent can be part of that discussion and from that discussion, the broadcaster can contact the relevant agencies.

What ideas the producer brings to a pitch, what assets they bring, and how they perform, all speak to the power relations within the meeting. For producers, access to a commissioner requires a demonstration of value, and that value is not measured solely on an idea, but their work and experience within the genre. Their social capital is demonstrated in the practice of power-knowledge; professional experience, social networking, and understanding of the industry are vital ingredients to this power-knowledge. Importantly, they all carry genre significance. Professional experience will speak to the practitioner's history within a genre (or, it should be noted, in a closely related genre; genre boundaries are not stable, nor fixed). Social networking will draw on actors that relate to genre productions and associated agents. Industry understanding relates to current trends and movements in relevant British television genres. Genre is thereby at the heart of the power-knowledge relationship.

With performance being an integral part of the pitch meeting, communication and the use of language are key components. Both language and communication necessitate the use of genre. Producers must demonstrate an understanding of the industry-embedded genres and their current relationship to the industry and market. As outlined in chapter one, industry language is important to the transference of knowledge and meaning; a good producer will be able to outline

and promote their ideas through intrinsic and shared language. The use of industry-embedded language from producers demonstrates to a commissioner that the production company representative understands the industry and has the skills to navigate a concept into production. Genre again becomes a risk management tool providing buyers evidence of industry experience and understanding.

In pitch meetings genre has shared use as a culturally bound language, as an understood structural element of the industry, and as part of market risk management. Pitch meetings are a critical point in production and good decision-making is based on the interpretations made in that space in which genre is measured against an uncertain market and an everchanging industry. Genre cannot predict certain results, but it provides rules that a pitch proposal can be qualified against. Genre measurements do not stop at the concept being pitched but reach into the industry itself. Practitioners are also measured against their experience and success within genre production. Evaluating risk and developing trust is thereby vital to the commissioner, and genres help demonstrate a producer's experience and knowledge.

Industry-embedded genres are also prone to change, and such changes must be accounted for and acted upon, by industry practitioners. Genre, in whatever form it is interpreted, is used to build trust, manage risk, and communicate ideas in pitch meetings.

Chapter Five: Genre's uses, values, and meanings within a film/television industry festival

As previous chapters have demonstrated, genre plays an integral part in the working practices of British factual television production, from its use as a discursive tool within product negotiation, to its application as part of the television industry's structural and systematic construction. So far, this thesis has explored how genre's use, values, and meanings are reflected by practitioners in the production of factual television, demonstrating industry culture self-theorising. This chapter applies field study participant observation to compliment interview data and textual analysis as part of the thesis' integrated methodology. Recommendations for the choice of industry field study came from interviewees, providing the thesis with a snowballed synergetic shift towards the sociocultural industry that had been reflected and theorised. The chapter, therefore, provides an opportunity to observe industry practitioners interacting within their own cultural space and to explore how genre may function as part of their working lives and practices. Where interviews provide data on how practitioners reflect, construct, and perform their industry world, participant observation provides the researcher with an empirical space to analyse some of those relationships and theories in situ. To this end, the British factual film and television festival Sheffield Doc/Fest 2017 was selected for the chapter's field study.

There has been little written about British television industry festivals and genre, and Doc/Fest is by its nature a genre festival, focusing solely on factual film and television. Sheffield Doc/Fest invites genre commissioners across factual departments from a range of broadcasters for networking and talks on production commissioning strategies and requirements. Being commercially driven, the television industry offers few opportunities for those outside its walls to witness the relationships between its practitioners, the industrial rhetoric that sustains the commissioning market, and the structures that inform, and are informed by, its agents. The working practices of television development present researchers with limited access, being spatially dispersed, deeply embedded, and wary of observation from academic outsiders. Localised, ritualised, and industry-respected events such as Doc/Fest can provide researchers with unusually visible and self-contained methods of study. Through first-hand ethnographic observation, the festival offers a rare glimpse into some of these industrial aspects, and their

relationship to genre discourses and structures. This chapter demonstrates how these different applications of genre are visible and integral to the working culture of television development and production practitioners through an ethnographic localised study of Sheffield Doc/Fest.

Sheffield Doc/Fest is an annual media industry event that is held within the city of Sheffield. It is a site of networking, information gathering, showcasing, celebration, and promotion between non-fiction films and television makers. The festival was conceptualised by Peter Symes of the BBC TV Features department in 1990, although the festival did not launch until four years later. Symes conceived the festival as a forum for British documentary practitioners, and Sheffield was picked for its growth in media and culture. Initially, the festival board comprised representatives from distributors Channel 4, United Artists, Discovery Channel, Central TV, and Granada TV and for several years the attendance ran between 475-700 (Ritchie, 2013). In 2006, The growth in the global market, and the rise of international co-productions, saw the festival reshaped to meet producers' demands for greater networking, unable to rely on the large British broadcasters for commissioners. The same year, Doc/Fest introduced the MeetMarket pitching forum and the Crossover International Summit which has since begun networking across media platforms (Ritchie, 2013; Rosser, 2013). Sheffield Doc/Fest occurs over one week in summer, now attracting 25,000 attendees and around 3,5000 delegates from 55 countries (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2019). Whilst international in content, the festival is always held in the UK and hosted throughout Sheffield's city centre. Sheffield Doc/Fest carries significant capital within national factual television. It is an industry space where practitioners generate new social networks and sustain established ones. Whilst Doc/Fest infers a focus solely on documentaries, the Sheffield Doc/Fest speaks to a broad range of factual genres from which documentaries may be represented.

To some degree, Doc/Fest reflects John Caldwell's para-industry model (2013; 2014), where its micro-network of heterogenic practitioners, businesses, and agencies are drawn together into a rhizomatic web. This web is given shape by the infrastructure of the festival itself and its broader interrelationships to the British factual television para-industry. Through this web of social and structural connections, genre practice and function can be traced through the events and industry practitioners.

Considered as a social object, Sheffield Doc/Fest exists in time as well as space, with pre-event and post-event as essential aspects of the festival's infrastructure. Doc/Fest is seen by the British television industry as a ritual space that provides a multiplicity of networked temporal and spatial functions, many of which relate, or are sustained, around the use or value of genre. Revealing and identifying the network, its actants, and their relationships reveal how genre itself influences, and is influenced by, agency, relations, and structures within British factual television. Consequently, this chapter aims to move beyond an investigation into how genre affects the working practices of television factual industry workers, to consider how they are key actants in a social network that is shaped, sustained, and transformed by genre.

To complement and enrich an observational methodology, the chapter applies a form of Actor-network theory as an analytical tool to map the inter-relations supported or created by genre within the festival. As discussed in the previous chapter, Actor-network theory has limitations in applying its analytical toolkit to trace the agency of non-material symbolic entities, such as genre. Using post-Actor Network theory (ANT) triadic analysis, the chapter positions industry workers as dynamic hybrids from which genre can contribute to actions formed from either material or immaterial agencies. This use of this triadic method of ANT analysis seeks to overcome ANT's limitations as to immaterial agencies, such as emotion, memory, language, and metaphor, to demonstrate genre's importance as part of the festival's event legacy, applying Jordan Dawson and Heike Jöns (2018) research and method for sporting mega-events.

The chapter functions in two parts. The first part reviews the methodological and analytical tools being applied to Doc/Fest; how the data was collected through ethnographic observation; and how ANT's common ground with urban studies can complement the ethnographic research. It then interrogates the limitations on ANT and how Dawson and Jöns' post-ANT triadic theory offers suitable solutions in applying network theories to ritual festivals. Part two offers an overview of the Sheffield Doc/Fest and its key components. Asking how and why the Doc/Fest exists as a social object becomes a critical first step. From that analysis, how and where genre functions as part of that network can be considered, and in turn how genre can shape the network and the experience of the agents within it. The main body of the chapter is split into analytical subsections that adapt Chris Gratton and Holger Preuss' (2008) sports legacy event analytical framework onto the television festival, dividing the Sheffield Doc/Fest into its uses of

infrastructure, knowledge, performative aspects, networks, and cultures. Through these categories, the ethnographic data is analysed through the ANT analytical lens. This is then applied to the post-ANT triadic theory that considers genre as both material and immaterial entities, and how the two are given agency through the human actor, the industrial practitioner.

The chapter demonstrates how genre functions in, and impacts, British factual television production through tracing its presence and necessity within an industry ritual that exists as an intersectional space between developers and commissioners within the field. Whilst the importance of genre to industry practitioners has been dismissed or under-estimated by academics and practitioners alike, the chapter evidences its significance as a part of discourse and structure through this Sheffield Doc/Fest 2017.

Part 1: Sheffield Doc/Fest: an urban television genre festival

Before investigating where and how genre operates within the festival, the festival itself requires some consideration. Sheffield Doc/Fest is a multi-layered industry genre event running over six days, with staging sessions and activities across Sheffield city. The heart of the event is Tudor Square, mixing film screenings, talks, and virtual-reality experiences that are surrounded by food and drink establishments. Such catering provides a hub for networking close to the Crucible Theatre which is situated in the Square and is the venue for many of the talks and panels. Other event-hosting venues in Sheffield include the Winter Garden, ITV Town Hall, and City Hall. Sheffield Hallam University provides administrative support with the delegate centre. Festivalgoers are supplied with an Industry Catalogue to help navigate their time at Sheffield Doc/Fest, both in terms of geography and schedule, and the Decision Makers Guide that lists relevant delegates. A free digital app provides further information, navigation, schedule, and a list of all festivalgoers and delegates. These navigational, promotional, and knowledge-giving aides are key to the participant's festival planning, providing information to the event's geography, its contents, its participants, and scheduling. Digital technology is being used to change how attendees navigate, experience, and interact with a festival, individualising the experience. Such mobile applications are becoming common to large international media trade festivals. Edinburgh's Television Festival (Edinburgh Television Festival, n.d) also provides an app for programme access and delegate list, and internationally, the MIP Entertainment content

festivals, hosted around the world, currently provide an online app for participant searching, organisation, and synchronisation (MIPCOM, 2018). As this chapter explores, tools such as mobile applications and programme guides are important parts of the festival infrastructure and social network and provide a conduit for genre-conditioned social interactions.

For the 2017 Sheffield Doc/Fest Festival, Director Liz McIntyre (2017b) described the festival as a pioneering space for creativity, urging attendants to be part of "groundswell movement[s] to make change". McIntyre strongly affirms the creative spirit of the festival as sympathetic with Sheffield itself being a "city of makers" (p.3). Doc/Fest seeks to position itself as a hub for non-fiction filmmakers rather than as a contributor to industry commerce. It situates itself as artistic, creative, inclusive, pioneering, and engaging with the needs of the practitioners within the industry, even if that need is to benefit the commercial prospects of those workers and their companies. As part of this effort, Sheffield Doc/Fest aligns its genre identity, a showcase for factual creativity, with Sheffield itself: a city reputed to be a catalyst for creative development and discovery.

For Doc/Fest, festival passes give direct access to events that run in a multi-scheduled format across six days. The festival Industry Catalogue programme (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017b) breaks Doc/Fest down into five general categories offering different spaces of engagement. The first category is Film – the festival prides itself on showcasing films across the festival. Attendees have access to live screenings and performances throughout the week, some of which are screened in public areas where non-pass holders can view the films.

Second, there is what Doc/Fest coins Alternate Realities, much of which is presented at the heart of the festival space. Alternate Realities speaks to festival content that is both interactive and virtual, with exhibitions, summits, and talks focusing on techniques, performances, and implications in and of virtual and interactive spaces.

Thirdly, the Talks and Sessions category refers to the Sheffield Doc/Fest talks, panels, and summits for expert discussions and roundtables. These events are commonly formatted for hosted debate with the opportunity for audience questions at the back end of the session. These sessions can speak to a range of topics across non-fiction film and television, focusing frequently on factual television genres, with panels of commissioners that cross both channels and

continents. These sessions are dispersed around the festival's city venues but are largely situated within the Crucible Theatre at the heart of Doc/Fest.

Fourth, there is the Marketplace and Talent category for Doc/Fest Festival's marketplace, providing schooling, pitch opportunities, and networking spaces. Doc/Fest offers a space for direct engagement with industry delegates pitching in the appropriately punned Meetmarket. As explained in their attendee supplement, the Sheffield Doc/Fest Decision Makers Guide 2017, "Meetmarket offers a special pitching opportunity for selected projects through matchmade one-to-one meetings with industry Decision Makers" (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017a, 2017: p.195). Other marketplace events can include round-table gatherings and ten-minute pitch-meets with leading industry professionals. These markets offer more specific industry matchmaking focuses, such as the On-Screen Talent Marketplace "to connect subject-specialists with producers, commissioners, and other Decision Makers looking for free faces for their programmes" (p.198). Marketplace carries a competitive angle with performative spaces where projects can be pitched to select panels and audiences. Some work sessions give attendees opportunities to meet distributors and sales agents, to learn about trade, how to network, and "exchange business cards" (p.199). Further sessions provide information and schooling for producers in industry commerce, with titles such as "Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Sales and Distribution but Were Afraid to Ask". These events demonstrate the importance of social interaction and networking in these festival events, and the substantial guides that provide information and promotions play an integral part in connecting services and events with attendees. While the Sheffield Doc/Fest requires a paid pass for access to these five categories, semi-public tickets were sold for specific talks, providing access to non-festival participants. Sheffield Doc/Fest's full pass access draws interest across several sectors. Aside from the television industry and those involved in the development, production, commissioning, and distribution of non-fiction genres, other sectors (as evidenced through their attendee database, accessible through the Sheffield Doc/Fest's supporting app) included press, political figures, and education (both staff and students, the latter formed some of the support staff for the festival, based at Sheffield Hallam University).

Finally, the Sheffield Doc/Fest prides itself on its social opportunities for informal networking, categorised as Parties and Social, with evening and late-night party events, including

award ceremonies for non-fiction and virtual reality categories. Late-night social events are hosted for attendees each evening, each running until 2 am. Early evening networking events, such as the BFI Film Fund Pitch Drinks Reception at local café-eatery Tamper, provide a spot to "wind down post-pitch" (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017b: p.207). Late-night events take advantage of Sheffield nightlife club spots such as Plug and Code. The extended evening planning is intended as part of the Doc/Fest networking strategy where attendants can "get cosy with faces old and new" (2017b: p.207).

This breakdown illustrates how the event theorises itself; how, as a festival, Doc/Fest identifies its role(s) as an industry space, or as the chapter argues, as an industry network. These five categories also form sectional breakdowns for the festival's retrospective Sheffield Doc/Fest Festival Report (2017) that is released after the festival closes. The report is considered later in the chapter for its contribution to the ongoing practices that perpetuate and justify the festival's industry identity, quality, and relevance.

1.1 Ethnographic methodologies: participant observation at Sheffield Doc/Fest

Data for this chapter was gathered from an ethnographic study of the Sheffield Doc/Fest held between 9th-14th June 2017. Having an ethnographic contribution provided the thesis with a method to study some of the compiled industry reflections. By demonstrating how television production practitioners interact within an industry ritualised space, participant observation places the researcher within the community of study with "a distinct and accepted role as an observer" (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013: p.185). Whilst practitioner interviews provide verbal responses to research questions, an analysis of the practitioner's environment demonstrates the difference between actual behaviour and actuated behaviour (Bogdewic, 1999). It can also provide the researcher an opportunity to observe the "sequence and connectedness of events" (p.49); an opportunity to see first-hand some of the British television industry culture. Aligned with industry interviews, this integrated methodology provides what John Caldwell (2008) calls a "method of cross-checking" that provides comparisons between different registers of analysis (p.4). Through this integrated method, the reflections of practitioners can be considered alongside the observation of practitioners working within their cultural space.

As the industry interviews were the primary method of research, the field study would need to align with interviewing schedules. Gaining interview access within the television industry was difficult. Interviews required a lot of flexibility to plan; as expected, there was a low yield of interview responses, and those interviews agreed would need to be scheduled and conducted around the interviewee's schedule. Therefore, any decision as to what field study would fit the thesis was dependent on the schedules of interviews and the fixed dates of the festivals. The possibility of applying a participant observation ethnography had been considered at the planning stage of the thesis, but Sheffield Doc/Fest was not one of the appraised field studies. The Edinburgh Television Festival was a leading possibility for observational research given its close relationship to British television and high profile. The decision to select Doc/Fest came from references and recommendations by a television production company interviewee. The interviewee suggested without prompting that Doc/Fest was relevant to his company's industry networking. Sheffield Doc/Fest's focus on factual television made it an applicable choice of study, and to have an industry practitioner recommend it not only added credibility to the decision but gave the ethnographic component a strong tie to the research that informed the field study.

James Spradley (1980) has argued the researcher's method of participant observation separates them in six distinct ways from the ordinary participant. These differences are unlikely to be outward. The participant comes as a dual observer, to engage and observe. They have explicit awareness, for the researcher seeks to see what an ordinary participant will ignore. They have a wide-angle lens approach, seeking to absorb a broad spectrum of data. The participant will have the insider/outsider experience – an observation that speaks to the tension between researching a specific culture and being a part of that culture. "Although not unique to ethnographers doing research, this experience is much more common to those who do participant observation" (p.57). Finally, there is introspection: the researcher assesses their experiences with greater clarity than the ordinary observer. To match these requirements of the participant-observer, Spradley argues the researcher must appear as an ordinary participant. A participant-observer would seem "to all outer appearances, like an ordinary participant" (p.54). Whilst Caldwell (2008) notes the codified uniforms of specialised roles in the film and television industry (pp.72-73) and their trade rituals, festivals such as Doc/Fest invite a wide range of attendees, from journalists and politicians to media students and teachers.

However, there are debates around the effectiveness of short-term participant observation. Participant observation commonly operates under long-term social inclusion (year-long, intermittent, or recurrent time-mode practices, see Bogdewic, 1999; Jeffrey & Troman, 2004). Substantial time in the field is argued to enable the researcher to gather a greater yield of data for analysis and interpretation. Susan James' (2006) work in compressed time participant observation argues against reductive conclusions to short-scale ethnography, noting that long-term observation cannot always be possible or suitable to all research situations, and compressed time modes can be suitable for doctoral research. James concludes that short-term participation observation can provide data that non-participant observational methods, including objective observation, will be unable to unearth.

Participant observation opens a considerable range of methodological implications. Unlike other ethnographic studies, and as with interviews conducted for this study, participants are aware of the research; such an open relationship does not exist in a participant observer's field environment (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Yet at the same time, the participant-observer can never be wholly removed from the site they are studying with "implicit, and probably also through explicit, negotiation with people in that field" (p.4). For Doc/Fest, explicit contact was made with the organisers beforehand to provide transparency, implicitly, my lanyard on display had my university institution, identifying my position as being "outside" the factual television industry. Participant observation, therefore, can operate in different modes, depending on how much the researcher needs to interact with their subjects.

Participant observation can be from "overt to covert" (Jaimangal-Jones, 2014: p.47), with decisions made before the field trip as to the nature of the ethnography, how best the data can be gathered, and what pragmatic factors may require different levels of interactional engagement. Participant observation must be adjusted to reflect the needs of the research at hand, and whilst participant observation has been a common methodology in media festival research, festival research has yielded a variety of applications. Cala Reigada, Salvador Martín-Utrilla, and Pilar Pérez-Ros (et al, 2019) apply a structured participant observation in their study of understanding illness through film festivals; Sherry Ortner (2010) uses participant observation at film festivals as a "'halfway' or 'interface'" access to Hollywood film culture (p.219); and Dewi Jaimangal-

Jones (2014) uses the field to explore participant observation, applying a mixed-methodology approach to explore ethnographic values in festival and event research.

Each applies a different participant observation method to solve their question in or around festival cultures. For this chapter, a covert participation observation was selected, to observe the patterns and relationships forged by agents, structure, and the symbolic, within industry culture, and how they informed or resisted collected interview data. With the interviews providing semi-structured data, the field study could be free to observe how industry culture reflects and theorises itself (Caldwell, 2008; Geertz, 1994).

The Sheffield Doc/Fest field observation took place over the festival's single week of events. Bob Jeffrey and Geoff Troman (2004) speak of compressed time modes of participant observation. Compressed time places the researcher *in situ "*documenting the visible and less tangible social structures" (p.538), although Jeffrey and Troman argue short periods do not give enough time in the field for researchers to find the "contradictory behaviours and perspectives" or to allow "continuous reflections concerning the complexity of human contexts" (p.545). However, for this project, compressed time participant observation is uniquely suited. For Sheffield Doc/Fest, held annually for one week, there was a limitation to the time that could be spent in the field. The intentions of the research conducted could not, and did not, require the weight of long-term deep analytical research. Sheffield Doc/Fest was an observation of participants within a short-term event, and the research aims were to observe how participants engaged with—and were engaged by—the festival. The methodology did not aim to embed the researcher into the long-term working practices of the attendees, or the staff. It sought to reveal what the festival provided for the practitioners, how those practitioners interacted within a complex industrial space, and through their practices how genre would be of use or value. As with pitch meetings, the industry festival is not about simply a geographical space but a web of social interrelationships. Structure is important as it enables social interactivity, but as argued by Anthony Giddens (1984), social agency informs the structure. Through a study of the festival, and, through that festival, the practitioners attending, there is an opportunity to observe the meeting of industry structures and industry social agency, and what networks bind these oppositions together.

Facing an outsider-cautious media industry (Caldwell, 2008), the festival provides a space to gain some insight into a deeply embedded and walled-off culture, and how the significance of genre relates to the practice of British factual television practitioners and its role in industry structure. As noted, participant observation can be a difficult methodology for media researchers who are forced to acknowledge what John Caldwell (2008) calls the television and film industry's "vested political and economic interests that are always at work in the highly commercialized trade sphere" (p.106). Such gatekeeping can lock doors for researchers seeking to observe *in situ*. Whilst Caldwell has convincingly argued that the barriers between production industries of film and television have "largely collapsed" (2009: p.215), the industry remains cautious of outsiders (Ortner 2009). This can extend to researchers with industry experience (Caldwell, Malcolm, Hill, & Henderson, 2009: p.218), and those who interact incorrectly with practitioners, using the wrong terminology or expressing confusion, can find themselves labelled "an Ivory Tower Intellectual" (2009: p.218).

Key ritualised interactions between producers and commissioners such as pitch meetings are particularly difficult to access, being the "inner sanctum" of what Caldwell defines as "proprietary private spheres" within the industry (2008: p.107). The nature of pitch sessions differs within the festival settings; such interactions function within a different environment. However, the agency of the pitch and the interest of the commission is real, providing the next-best alternative to observing the rhetoric, agencies, and power relationships within such interactions. With a festival so expansive, and yet so short in duration, participant observation can only offer a snapshot of data, but data that can complement research compiled through industry interviews as part of an integrated methodology.

In terms of specific participant observations methodologies used at Sheffield Doc/Fest, observational field note-taking was central (note-taking is what Jeffrey and Troman (2004) argue as being vital to compressed time mode ethnographies) and the use of a digital audio recorder to record panels and events (with approval provided by event managers). No recordings were made of informal conversations by attendees, staff, or delegates. Given the event had multiple scheduled events, choices as to what to attend were primarily based on their conjected thesis relevancy. For example, panel discussions with genre commissioners were prioritised. The time and location of events and whether they could be realistically attended also factored into the

decision-making. In-between events, spaces where I could observe networking industry participants were selected. Some of these were formal, such as networking drinks sessions, and some informal, such as public spaces where attendees were collecting. I also factored in opportunities for moments outside the planned schedule that presented prospects for interesting observation.

Invariably, such a short period of participant observation, across a five-day city-wide festival, cannot truly penetrate such a large-scale social object. As Quentin Stevens and Haeran Shin (2014) reflect on their participant observational research in urban festivals and local social spaces, festivals are not simply about what is structured, but also the spatial experiences of those who participate. However, the data obtained, when approached with an Actor-network theory framework to aid in the analysis, provides a range of results in how and where at Sheffield Doc/Fest genre functioned as material (non-human actors) and immaterial entities (motivational agencies) through the festival industry participants.

To conclude, Doc/Fest is a compressed time participant observation, running for less than a week. However, these time limits must be considered as a natural constraint as the time of event field study is limited by the duration of the event itself. For this thesis, a covert participant observation provides a complementary methodology to the interview-led data collected from industry practitioners, providing a space to test this socially-driven data within a social object. Furthermore, as an informal gathering, with a range of attendees from different professions, Doc/Fest is particularly suited to covert participation. As a festival that provides space for informal and formal networking, research can be conducted without being conspicuous. As a researcher working within the field, there is little concern with blending in or adopting particular social codes or conventions, as might be required in the conduct of the participant-observer at other media festivals (Jaimangal-Jones, 2014).

1.2 Urban spectacles and event legacy

As an industry event, this chapter treats Doc/Fest as an urban spectacle, a definition applied by Kevin Fox Gotham (2005) that succinctly draws together "spectacular public displays, including festivals and mega-events, that involve capitalist markets, sets of social relations, and flows of commodities, capital, technology, cultural forms and people across borders" (pp.226-227). This

definition becomes especially important in analysing Doc/Fest and its genre relations and interactions. The urban diffusing of the Doc/Fest across the city centre is part of the festival's construction as participating events have both specific hierarchies of value and scale of attendance that can factor into where they are held and scheduled. A further factor of event studies has been legacy, a term that has commonality with heritage, impact, and effect within and surrounding events (Dawson & Jöns, 2018). To clarify, Holger Preuss (2015) speaks to legacy as having positive and/or negative effects, that can be intentional or unintentional, and can be tangible or intangible. Event legacy characteristics can be situated in both time and space. They can have value, and they can produce new initiatives. In terms of genre industry analysis, event legacy broadens genre's relevancy beyond the duration of the event. Through an event's legacy, genre can be relevant to ongoing agendas; genre has relations through the continuum of an annual festival's pre-planning, reflections (in Doc/Fest's case, as a published report), and the (re)building of ritualised systems and structures that lead into future pre-planning. Doc/Fest is not just a physical construct, but a social object: a web of relations that binds the events, participants, and attendees, and even genre, in space and time.

1.3 Data analysis: actor-network theory and beyond

Participant observation provided a method of gathering field study data. This data required an analytical approach that could reveal how social interaction and festival structure worked with genre. In line with Caldwell's (2013; 2014) theories of para-industry, analysis well suited for making these cultural connections was Actor-network theory (Latour, 2007). Actor-network theory has been used in researching large social ritual practices such as public festivals (Dawson & Jöns, 2018), carnivals (Ferdinand & Williams, 2018), and tourism (van der Duim, 2007; Beard, Scales, & Tribe, 2016). Actor-network theory (hereafter 'ANT') argues that agency is heterogenic, and an entity of agency does not necessarily have to be human. ANT thereby can be considered an analytical tool that will speak to the importance of buildings, information guides, computers, and signage. ANT's toolkit speaks to materiality, and as previous chapters have noted, genre functions as part of material objects, from sites of production to genre departments, to sizzler tapes. ANT asks researchers to avoid asymmetrical presumptions in their analysis of social objects, be they society/nature, subjects/objects, or human/non-human (Latour, 2007) to avoid binaries for what Dawson and Jöns call sociomaterial hybridity (2018). ANT encourages

sociology to presume less and rely more on empirical observation. ANT encourages and enables the researcher to acknowledge the interconnectedness of all aspects of that object, rather than move towards expected binaries and hierarchies. It can be beneficial when studying a rich, multi-layered event, such as the Sheffield Doc/Fest, to apply an analytical tool that does not resist investigating visible relationships and agency. As Latour (2007) notes, this does not suggest ANT demands all human/non-human actants are considered evenly without any placed hierarchical value. Regarding Sheffield Doc/Fest and genre's functions, ANT can aid in locating genre relationships within a network of interconnectivity that could otherwise be overlooked, drawing the research away from looking at just the participants, to include how urban spaces, paraphernalia, financing, and scheduling may play a factor.

However, there remains the problem of Actor-network Theory's heavy focus on material actors, whereas genre remains immaterial and symbolic. The limitations of ANT proved a problem for Dawson and Jöns' (2018) investigation of urban spaces for sporting mega-events.

Dawson and Jöns (2018) approach their mega-event analysis with a post-ANT application, wary of some of the limitations ANT may have in analysing an event in terms of legacy and immaterial entities. They note that the symmetry between the human and non-human cannot account for immaterial entities such as emotion, memory, and metaphor; that ANT is *too* material in seeking relations. Dawson and Jöns note how structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) does draw the immaterial into its relations between human agents and structure through memory; how agency maintains or reshapes structure through time. Dawson and Jöns (2018) argue immaterial in structuration theory is missing in ANT. "ANT's focus on material mediators and outcomes of practices has resulted in the neglect of previous social constructivist research foci, such as the role of human interests, beliefs, and prior knowledge in the production of scientific knowledge" (p.50). With genre existing both as part of human agency and as structure, ANT could be argued to be limited, lacking a clear framework that draws immaterial entities into ANT's material semiotics. Where the question of genre's relevancy to the industry practitioner is situated and often contested by the worker, genre's immaterial importance cannot be ignored within any relational framework.

Dawson and Jöns thereby propose a triadic theory that sees humans as dynamic hybrids that become the conduit for both matter and meaning. Dynamic hybrids are "able to connect the

realms of matter and meaning because they resemble a dynamic combination of their constitutive material and immaterial entities" (p.50). Via this framework, non-human and human become related to the physical whereas motivation and meaning are situated separately as immaterial, and the dynamic human becomes the third element. This triadic post-ANT approach benefits the events legacy model, allowing researchers to consider the event within time as well as space so "tangible built environment and intangible memories, symbols and heritage can be significantly broadened through a new focus on human agency that considers, for example, the practices and lived experiences of the general public visiting post-event spaces, as part of both event legacies and leveraging strategies" (p.50-51). Humans are the only actors that can dynamically combine both material and immaterial, matter and meaning, and their agency cannot be restricted to the event itself, but as part of the event's legacy (how these dynamic human relations stretch before and after the event).

In terms of Sheffield Doc/Fest, this framework becomes particularly relevant as it connects the festival, as an industry ritualised event, to the working practices that shape, and are shaped by, the event itself. Genre can be traced to the planning of the event, its impact, its application on macro and micro levels of relations, and its industrial legacy. Through this post-ANT framework, ethnographic participant observation data derived from the festival attendance can be analysed to trace genre relations through the event and outside it. It can consider how genre can have relevance to the individual attendee (and how those relations are forged) as well as how the event itself uses (or does not use) genre as defined through industry language and structure. Through all this, the post-ANT analysis keeps the industry practitioner at the forefront, as the dynamic hybrid, the conduit of social agency which binds matter and meaning. The dynamic hybrid is the point at which genre is tangible and structured. It is where genre has currency through communication, motivations, and industry-embedded knowledge. The post-ANT triadic analysis provides a framework to trace the importance of both the material and immaterial within an industry space. With genre itself being used by practitioners both tangibly and intangibly, this method of analysis seeks to emphasise both the importance of the material and immaterial when studying human agency within social networks.

In making sense of such a highly complex social object as an industry festival, the post-ANT analysis is categorised through five lenses. These categories are case-study responsive but derive

from research into events and festivals. In particular, the analysis adapts Chris Gratton and Holger Preuss' (2008) six-event structure framework for their research into the Olympic games (infrastructure; knowledge, skill-development, and education; image; emotions; networks; and culture) into a more condensed framework which reflects human activity within an industry festival space. For this, I have chosen the following categories of how genre can travel through a television industry festival:

Networking: How the festival offers space to educate and facilitate formal and informal networking practices and how such practices can relate to genre.

Performative: Performative acts are key to the festival. These can range from presentational panels to pitch-session competitions. They can also speak to the nature of social networking within the festival environment.

Knowledge: As with Preuss and Gratton's study, knowledge, skill development, and education play a part within the television festival, and relate to the roles and activities of the industry practitioners.

Cultures: How Doc/Fest speaks to cultures forged within and outside the industry, and how genre relations are formed by cultures of delegates and attendees. It is through the culture practitioners perform, network, and express their experiences and knowledge.

Infrastructure: As the final condition of the five, infrastructure networks the culture and its actors together. For media events, infrastructure can relate to how events must label and designate areas of activity to function effectively. Event infrastructure can evidence the thinking around genre and how that can impact or influence attendees. Infrastructure is considered both material and immaterial, physical and social.

These sections are not wholly separate and, as part of a social network, are inter-relational. However, as categories, they provide focus on how these groups might exist as material or immaterial bodies and how they can be significant to the attendees and practices that relate to genre.

Part 2: Sheffield Doc/Fest: a case Study into Industry Ritual gatherings and genre

This section breaks down Doc/Fest into the five posed categories of Networking, Performance, Knowledge, Cultures, and Infrastructure, combining participant observation with post-ANT analysis to demonstrate genre's uses and functions through the festival and its legacy.

2.1 Networking

Networking is a vital component of Sheffield Doc/Fest. John T. Caldwell (2008) responds to the focus on networking within industry discourse as a "recurring preoccupation and trope in trade talk" (p.89), emphasising that the interest in industry networking is not an outsider observation, but a recognised part of industry culture. In enabling effective networking, Doc/Fest itself draws upon industry-embedded genres to signpost relevant spaces for social activities. Networking was the key feature that Head of Development manager Gareth noted when interviewed. He saw the importance of the industry festival as a tool of social interaction to find new contacts or sustain older ones: "You get there [to festivals] and you schmooze" (Appendix A10). Networking and the obligation to network are part of the ritual activity. David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011: p.108) speak of the media industry's "obligation to network", and networking is a key aspect of Sheffield Doc/Fest, both in how it is represented through its literature and its practitioners. Lucy Brown and Lyndsay Duthie (2016) argue television festivals "often run pitching competitions to win development money, which is a great way to get on the decision makers' radars", citing Doc/Fest as one of the "key television festivals in the UK" and one of the "great places to learn about the industry and rub shoulders with the channel executives" (p.32).

Attendees of Sheffield Doc/Fest come from a variety of industry-related backgrounds. The Sheffield Doc/Fest app was used to survey the full-pass attendee list for the first 400 names, noting their assigned attending status. The list was alphabetical rather than relating to any industry designations. These assigned statuses were provided by the attendee, rather than assigned by the event, however, through the labels within these first 400 names, the designations could be coded into Academia, Production Company, Distributors, Sheffield Doc/Fest staff, and Industry relevant participants (journalists, arts council representatives, and trades not otherwise

labelled). Through these categories, the following breakdown was calculated as illustrated in table 2.

Attendee designation	Number fitting designation	Percentage (out of 400)
Academia (University Staff/Student)	35	9%
Production Company	220	55%
Distributors	41	11%
Doc/Fest Staff	61	15%
Industry (Journalism/Arts Council/Other)	43	10%

Table 2: Breakdown of Doc/Fest attendance using attendee identification from the Doc/Fest 2017 phone app

This data indicates over half of the overall number define themselves as production industry workers. Whilst the data-pool represents only a fraction of attendees, it does offer a broad suggestion as to the festival's make-up and illustrates that whilst attendees are predominantly production practitioners, the festival full-pass provides access to related industry specialists such as journalists, distributing bodies, academics, and art council representatives.

The festival literature puts heavy emphasis on the festival being about showcasing, putting production-related attendees as a key component of the festival's function. The Festival Director notes in the Industry Catalogue introduction: "Come find points of connection, not difference, with the most amazing storytellers in the world" (McIntyre, 2017b: p.3). Networking, therefore, exists as an opportunity for production practitioners. To help guide networking engagement, producers have material actants with the Doc/Fest mobile app and the hand-held Decision Makers Guide. The Sheffield Doc/Fest's paraphernalia, specifically the Decision Makers Guide 2017, defines decision-makers as "commissioning editors, funders, distributors, sales agents, programmers, exhibitors, mentors, and executive producers" that are "united in their power to make decisions that can have a massive impact on your ideas – creatively and financially"

(Hurley & Liden, 2017: p.1). Both online and paper lists detail the decision-makers (sometimes referred to in the literature and website as "buyers"). The list gives details of their name, role, country of origin, and in the Decision Makers book, structured replies from the decision-makers. The Doc/Fest Decision Makers Guide 2017 lists a category labelled Strand/Slot/Genre for each decision-maker that provides them with a genre-based context. The listed keywords extend beyond the industry-specific genres, adopting categories that relate more broadly to content types (common examples included geopolitics, human interest, social issues) as well as genre department signification (common examples included factual entertainment, history, and current affairs). Genre thereby becomes an immaterial contribution of the material Decision Makers Guide. The guide itself is a physical actant that generates relations and enables the human actor to locate decision-makers that might relate to their strand of production.

The second material guide, the Sheffield Doc/Fest Industry Catalogue 2017, provides information on formal and informal networking, designated Marketplace and Parties & Socials respectively. The Marketplace section relates to the Decision Makers Guide content, combining the Meetmarket with a range of networking activities and support including "one-to-one meetings with Decision Makers" (Hurley & Liden, 2017: p.195). The section speaks of the seven pitch events running through the Festival. These are not genre-specific, but some do have specific limitations, with pitch sessions relating to subjects as short documentaries, Korean content, and producers from the North of England, all hosted by topic-relevant bodies.

Pitch sessions are, at their core, a formal type of networking where the goal is to establish a commercial arrangement. As a form of networking, the semi-public pitch-session competitions at Doc/Fest were genre-bound. Of these pitch-sessions, I attended the *Guardian* Documentary Pitch. All films at this session were short docs topically situated on climate change. Whilst each pitch was not presented with rich genre rhetoric, the session's content was bound by an industry genre classification, the short doc, which each pitch had to comply with for entry into this form of networking. This type of pitching was performative rather than interactive, with the pitching producers hoping that through their successful performance, new social connections might be generated thereby increasing their network.

Whilst formal and competition pitching and networking are promoted throughout the Doc/Fest schedule, informal networking is also central to the festival guide and event ethos.

Parties and socials provide spaces for networking and were hosted by a range of groups, each with different agencies. These groups are hosted or funded by collectives with genre interests or which carry genre identities, such as the Discovery Drinks Reception, ITV Drinks, and The Channel 4 party. All were immaterially coded by branding, and this branding operates as knowledge that functions as "a shorthand device for indicating the general identity of a network" (Johnson, 2012: p.5). Genre, like branding, codified the commissioning panels, with commissioning panels labelled for specific genre groups. Representatives of these channels were also identified through the Decision Makers Guide listings, enabling industry attendees to manage their selections for attendance through cross-referencing event schedules, represented distributors, and distribution agents through the Decision Makers Guide, Industry Catalogue, and Doc/Fest mobile app. As each full-time attendee was mandated to wear their pass on a lanyard, their identity would be easily confirmed in any social interaction, as would their event designation, and company association. As a networking event, Doc/Fest's key strategy is making industry-related networks visible. Lanyards provide visible network transparency and immediacy for networking, enabling practitioners to locate the form of practitioner they seek. In doing so, the network transparency reveals the genre connections. As the previous chapter demonstrated, industry knowledge is vital for networking, and knowing the production companies, the broadcaster agents, and the individual practitioners that represent them will improve social networking opportunities.

As part of the genre commissioning panels, networking was commonly highlighted as part of the industry ritual. Two commissioners on the Commissioner Question Time: Feature Length for All Platforms panel spoke of meetings and networking; that their time as commissioners at the Doc/Fest was taken up by meetings and seeing some of the Doc/Fest content proved difficult as a result. On the Arts Documentary for All Platforms panel, the session Chair reminded the audience near the end of the session that they "knew what they [the panel] looked like", and they would expect to be "harangued" and "pounced upon" afterward, rhetoric which humorously depicts the audience of producers as passionate and mob-like, even predatory, in their networking. It was an attitude that, whilst said light-heartedly, suggested the producers were not simply expected to network aggressively, it was actively encouraged.

Further visibility of networking was evident in the advertising materials that were scattered around some of the venues. This could be described as cold networking, where they attempt to build commercial connections that are open to anyone who locates the advertisement. Postcards would carry a logline, synopsis, and contact details. Through these objects, their networks could potentially create new relations. Networking at Doc/Fest was a human endeavour but relies on non-human materials, paraphernalia, and actants.

Casual networking was evident in queues and spaces outside events or sessions before their start or after they had ended. Attendees would "bump" into acquaintances in the queues for commissioning panels, suggesting the commonality of genre development would bring familiar faces together. Conversations appeared to re-establish networks, sharing recent work histories and their recent experiences of the festival. Production company Head of Development Gareth affirmed how important social meetings are to Doc/Fest and similar industry events:

> Discussions take place all the time. The big TV festivals I would go to would be things such as Edinburgh Television Festival, the Sheffield Doc/Fest Festival, and at those festivals, there are panel discussions, and lectures from industry figures. And in terms of how you promote the company, we have a visual presence there. I will turn up along with members of our team and chinwag with people and schmooze. (Appendix A10)

The interviewee articulates Doc/Fest as a place for interaction, and one that several members of their production company will attend to informally network, or "chinwag" (Appendix A10). The interviewee speaks of providing his company with a visual presence, indicating that ritual festivals carry promotional value to practitioners and their companies. Such actions indicate the strong connections found within industry festivals between networking and performance.

2.2 Performances

As explored in the previous chapter on pitch meetings, performance is a vital part of industry practice and facilitates discourses in genre between producers and genre commissioners. Performance delivers a practitioner's knowledge and experience with a genre field. Face-to-face performance is a prerequisite in creating new networks, maintaining current ones, or

reinvigorating past ones. Erving Goffman's definition of 'face' in a social context first considers how a social face is created. Goffman (2005) first defines a line as "a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he [the participant] expresses his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself" (p.5). A line is not always voluntary, but in mediated contact, a participant will generate an impression on others. The face is thereby defined by Goffman as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (p.5). Goffman would argue face is thereby a social dramaturgical construct, akin to an actor on the stage. Such performances were evident from observations of festival participants, from panel members to attendees in queues. Posture, articulation, discourse, and attire all played into participant performance, generating a face that suits their agenda. Goffman explains "when the individual presents himself before others his performance will tend to incorporate and exemplify the officially accredited values of the society, more so, in fact than does his behaviour as a whole" (1956: p.23). Goffman speaks to the importance of performance in social interactions, and how it mirrors the expectation of society, to which he means the society in which the performance is presented, n this case, the social conventions of British factual television. Specifically, the practitioner demonstrates their industry value through their performance; their experience, and knowledge of industry-embedded genre conventions.

Caldwell's (2008) analysis of industry workers' performance within film and television trade spaces is based on three basic functions: appearance, action, and interaction, and how these are integral to the culture and role the practitioners operate in. Caldwell notes the heavily codified dress-sense operating within film and television trade spaces. Industry professionals express their vocations through their attire as uniforms. Caldwell explains action and interaction are key within trade spaces and can be formal constructs, such as pitch meetings and panels, or informal, such as socialised networking at parties or gatherings.

The obligation of networking within creative industries cannot always if ever, be entirely natural, as it is critical to the practitioner — and through them, the company they work for. As David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011) observe in their empirical study, "Even if producers felt personal dislike or distrust of the commissioners, it would be necessary to suppress those feelings" (p.210). The performance of the practitioner is therefore key to the

company's identity and acts to further its aims through networking. Such networking will not necessarily be about discussing genres, but the genres that are key to a production company's current agendas, or prospects, and impact on the choice of network relations.

As established in previous chapters, genre in factual television is most visible within industry commissioning, where genres are established, maintained, or replaced. As for performance, genre was most evident at the Doc/Fest in the genre commissioner panel sessions. Commissioning panel sessions at Doc/Fest were commonly structured around genre, and with genre's strong relations with commissioning, performance was demonstrated by the commissioning editors that sat on several panels. These panels were named through their relations to industry genre specifications, such as Commissioners Question Time: Specialist Factual for All Platforms, or Commissioners Question Time: Factual Entertainment for All Platforms. In these panels, genre was the material nature of the panel and the immaterial content that was discussed between commissioners, articulating different commissioning methods, goals, and personal successes. The conversations performed in the panels appeared relaxed and informal, with both action and interaction conducted between commissioners, the host, and finally, the audience. The audience also performed in the session's back-end questions segment. Questions were sometimes articulated in a manner that was promotional as much as inquiry, offering details about their work, sometimes to a biographical extent.

Audience questions could carry an aggressive tone — in the questions for Commission Question Time: Feature Length for All Platforms, exchanges about access to commissioning bodies for producers carried an air of frustration as the audience member indicated their company struggled to get responses from commissioners. This frustration demonstrates the difficulty of commissioner access for producers and could explain why some audience members will formulate questions that are as much self-promotional as they are a query. In these cases, practitioners are making their identity, work, and social capital visible to genre commissioners, who they can then seek out after the session. For producers, this makes the panel events a gateway to genre commissioners and thereby a further act of industry networking.

Other panels showcased producers, such as Extreme Factual: No Pain, No Gain, which mixed commissioning, celebrity, and producer. Such panels are keenly sought after by production companies. Head of Development Gareth noted, "Also, it's good if you are invited to speak on a

panel; it raises your profile and raises your company's profile. You play the game in that sense" (Appendix A10). The interviewee highlights the strong relationships that flow through the material non-human actant of the production company and the practitioner; the agency of the practitioner is transformative, both through the panel and upon its production company. Genre becomes a key conceptual actor in that network, an immaterial actant, transformative to the practitioner's performance within that panel session. Their role as an actor equally relates to the material actant of their production company. The "ontological difference" between immaterial and material actants is bridged by the practitioner, the human dynamic hybrid; dynamic because the human is the active hybridisation of those two realms (Dawson and Jöns, 2018: p.51). Equally, genre commissioners represent their distribution company and speak of their role, and the agency of their company, within their panel sessions. The commissioner's team and distribution company are spoken about positively; anecdotes, expressions of company identity, mandate, and agency, are all carefully articulated, and thereby become political performance. Using non-human material actants, panels actively showcase their work through selected clips to the audiences. These clips again are to demonstrate success within their genre contribution: they have selected highlights of works that maintain or increase the value of their company's output. Such clips are presented through the respective genre commissioner, who will give a historical background to the showcased clip and will articulate their relevant contribution. Therefore the clip is as much about the value of the genre commissioner's role as it is the company. As with sizzlers giving genre commissioners a taste of a pitch, the clips in the genre commissioner sessions give producers a taste of finished content. This offers producers an indication of the direction that specific genre commissioning departments are moving towards, and commissioners are keen to explain the contribution of an upcoming show to their channel's content. Genre panels thereby provide producers with another avenue of public access to commissioners, and space for genre commissioners to give producers an idea of what specific commissioning departments are looking for.

Other pitch sessions are less interactive. Competitive pitching, as an act of performance, exists as a very different environment and set of relations as in common industry settings, whether it be one-to-one pitching environments such as the Meetmarket, or the competitive realm of the competition pitches. In terms of hierarchical relations, the buyer has status as a decision-maker, a titled individual, and the pitcher is one amongst many others seeking to sell

products. Whereas a more conventional meeting can be situated within a public or semi-public place, a festival is a structure to itself, with specific spaces and structures that have a relational effect on the meeting itself. The rules of performance for both pitcher and catcher are different, affected by their entangled relations with the festival itself. For competition pitchers, the spaces become semi-public at best, with industry individuals watching as an audience. Like the pitchfests described by Caldwell (2008) that use "semi-public panels intended to mentor newcomers" (p.87), the pitching panel attended was aimed at young professional filmmakers. As mentioned previously, the act of performance was aimed at the room and its audience as much as the judges who sat on a raised platform near the producers. This setup took out the interactivity from the pitches and transformed the pitches into performatively assessed presentations. In both cases, structurally, genre carried little visibility and the pitch contests were not necessarily categorised by genres. In illustrating US pitchfests, Caldwell likened the format to that of a quiz show, where each pitch has to be sold within a five-minute window ("three minutes to make the hard sell (one minute to summarize the project; one minute to answer questions)") (p.85). Their appraisals bear some similarity to the experience at Doc/Fest. The audience was less than half a meter from the stage, bringing an immediate intimacy between pitchers and spectators. The pitch was directed at the audience, not the judges, making it a further step from a traditional industry pitch meeting. While the Doc/Fest was less theatrical than Caldwell's experience (there was no gong to mark the judge's signal of poor quality (p.86)), it did echo the imbalance of power relations. There was no specific commissioner to pitch to and the producer carried no social capital. The session demonstrated the difficulty for less experienced producers to make inroads deeper into the embedded culture and social networks within the British factual television industry. Producers perform to the audience with the hope of gaining the interest of the panel who carry social capital.

2.3 Knowledge

As indicated by the Head of Development Gareth, Doc/Fest is valued for its panels and "lectures" (Appendix A10). Knowledge is a key aspect of Doc/Fest and ritualises industry learning strategies through didactic learning or social networking. Industry knowledge is genre embedded; practitioners frequently work and build experience crafting their skillsets within related genres that generate social capital that can provide them with greater access to

commissioners. How to better facilitate and hone relationships between producers of film and television, genre commissioning bodies, and distribution outlets, run throughout the festival. In situating itself as a site of learning and knowledge, Doc/Fest's strategy is solely focused on the filmmaker; knowledge is top-down. Where knowledge is offered to attendees through the festival with panels and sessions, knowledge is imparted downwards through the industry chain from delegates, decision-makers, and distribution representatives. In the pitching competitions, knowledge as proposed content is imparted through the pitches by competing filmmakers but is then assessed and judged by the panel as to its contextual value and merit.

With the industry practices and social networks being subject to concentric circles of access (Caldwell, 2008; Ortner, 2010), knowledge relating to working conventions and experiences can have limited access and are themselves ongoing and changing. Industry-embedded genres are part of such knowledge exchanges and are neither static nor are their conventions unilateral across different companies. To provide creative producers industry guidance, top-down knowledge sharing is integral to the Festival's Sales and Distribution sessions. As the industry catalogue defined the 'Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sales and Distribution but Were Afraid to Ask' session, the discussions would lead to "explaining how filmmakers can work with sales agents and distributors and how to best navigate the marketplace" (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017b: p.199). The catalogue pitches Doc/Fest's Sales Distribution day as a place to "learn about how sales agents and distributors are working with filmmakers to deliver new films to audiences worldwide" (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017b: p.199). The catalogue suggests knowledge is shared, as an immaterial entity, through the distributors to enable filmmakers to shape their strategies to match these selected sale methods. Knowledge is then interlinked with networking and the importance of the business card. The catalogue speaks of having an afternoon where "industry representatives will present to introduce themselves and give an overview of what they're looking for. Bring your business cards!" (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017b: p.199). The catalogues put a strong emphasis on networking using these material actants, the business cards, throughout the literature.

Knowledge is again key to the genre commissioning panels, where the interaction within the panel (and later with the audience) is about sharing an inside understanding of how commissioners operate as catchers within their selected companies and genres. In these spaces

knowledge of genre functions as symbolic representations of material objects, such as commissioning departments, and as immaterial entities through the relations, discourses, and agencies that result in broadcast productions. Methods and ideologies of commissioning are disclosed, compared, and contested within the panel interaction, with the Chair seeking to guide the panel's responses through questions that relate to producer interests.

The commissioning panels would discuss genre's nature in-depth, how genre relates to the vision and identity of their broadcaster, and the differences between the broadcasters represented on the panel. Through these conversations, the nature of the established genres, represented by the panel's commissioning roles, was discussed as a means of knowledge giving. Producers within the audience were often acknowledged by the commissioners in the panel conversations. "Please watch it," noted the ITV Commissioner Kate Teckman during the Commissioner Question Time Factual Entertainment for all Platforms, before turning to the audience. "And please come to us with ideas".

The panels discuss genre with an industrial perspective and, in doing so, go some way to deconstructing what those genres mean to them. Kate Teckman (2017) notes that for Factual entertainment, ITV likes human talent in their shows because "Names [talent] immediately signals entertainment". By doing so, Teckman is drawing out what ingredients define a show suitable for her commissioning department. Kelly Webb-Lamb (2017) for Channel 4 makes a similar assertion for the factual entertainment genre. "I agree format and talent are important and will work together and that's why I think [The Great British] Bake-Off will be bloody brilliant on Channel 4". The ingredients for genre are discussed directly as genre components. At the Factual Entertainment Panel, Chair Krish Majumdar (2017) asked the panel about the "collision of genre". Discovery Channel's Ed Sayer (2017) in the Specialist Factual Commissioning Panel argued genre is not important to him as a specialist factual commissioner:

> "I don't want to be a contrarian, but I'm unfortunately going to be one. For me, Specialist Factual is not about genre first and foremost. So, I don't ever go "Oh here's a history thing – people often don't like history, but I'm going to tell it in an interesting way and thereby that's Specialist [factual]. For me, it's about the biggest stories, and more importantly, the biggest questions." (Sayer, 2017)

189

The dissonance within the industry knowledge of genre is telling, where the concept of genre, and its value, is discussed as an entity separate from their role as a commissioner of an assigned genre. What genre is in practice, and what genre is as a structural component of distribution, is never really challenged but accepted as two different forms of what genre means to the industry worker. It demonstrates how genre can be an immaterial agency of innovation (what conceptual components make a great genre pitch to commissioners) and a black box (an ANT definition for a set of stable relations, see Latour, 2007) material structure (the genre commissioning department).

It also provides an example of the industry self-theorising, as proposed by Caldwell (2008) building on Clifford Geertz's theories of cultural interpretation (1994) as to how industry practitioners reflect on the meaning and value of genre. In doing so, it demonstrates possibilities as to why commissioners do not consider genre as a part of their work, despite working in defined industry genre roles. These reflections are then amplified through panel discussions, where the top-down knowledge is articulated by guests, potentially re-enforced by peers, and fed to the producers in the room. This does not suggest that such shared responses are met with broad agreement from their audiences, but such arguments are delivered by influencers in the field and can feed into industry genre discourse.

Knowledge is a subject of value within Doc/Fest, providing glimpses for producers of different levels of experience of what content is being created and desired by distributors. Genres have different conventions and requirements that are complicated by their interpretations by different institutions and the agents who represent them. Through their localised network of events and sessions, festivals such as Doc/Fest provide attendees with knowledge that could otherwise be difficult to access. This knowledge can reinforce certain conceptions of genre, or shape new ones. Knowledge in British factual television is deeply bound within its own culture, a culture which, as Caldwell (2013) has theorised, is not maintained as one silo community but as a rhizomatic and "messy" (p.157) network that maintains strong gatekeepers that suit their commercial requirements. These individual sets of working cultures are visible at Doc/Fest working in negotiations, in partnership, didactically, and occasionally, as seen in panels where producers accuse commissioners of lacking access, against each other.

2.4 Cultures

190

In analysing sports events, Gratton and Preuss (2008) consider culture in terms of cultural identity, cultural ideas, and cultural products. For Doc/Fest, these categories can be useful in analysing the event, however, they cannot be considered evenly weighted, and do not articulate the importance of discursivity at the festival. Discourse and reflexivity could be categorised as cultural ideas, but for Doc/Fest, considering culture through cultural identity, cultural politics, and cultural products, conceptualises the festival's intent with better clarity. These categories also provide better visibility to the event's cultural relationship to genre.

Doc/Fest's cultural identity draws on the creative and commercial dialectic that informs genre industry discourse as a celebration of the commercial industry and its practitioners' creativity. Doc/Fest's industrial connections are an active part of its own cultural identity; there are producers, genre commissioners, sales and distribution agents, delegates, and celebrities, all of which relate to factual content. As indicated by the breakdown of attendants, the Doc/Fest is predominantly an across platforms film-maker-focused culture, with the festival offering an infrastructure to support and promote that profession. There are other cultural groups within Doc/Fest from education, journalism, and relating arts industries that will draw upon the knowledge, performances, and networking opportunities in factual production presented at the festival. In this sense, Doc/Fest carries a cultural identity that is inclusive of actors outside the television production industry. In 2017, Sheffield Doc/Fest (2017d) identified itself as "a world leading and the UK's premier documentary festival, celebrating the art and business of documentary and all non-fiction storytelling." Doc/Fest is a response to industry discourse and production; however, it identifies as a factual showcase that extends beyond the borders of its practitioners' culture. As a celebration of genre, Doc/Fest defines itself with the broadly recognised genre labels of documentary and non-fiction[1], both of which carry meaning to consumers and producers of texts. Further, into their website's statement of identity they speak of the "factual markets" and about virtual reality emerging from "documentary, factual or hybrid genres". In doing so, the festival identifies with all facets of factual content within a textual and industrial context, enabling the event to invite all creative ideas without boundary interference

---

[1] Whilst not a commissioning genre, non-fiction is used within production discourse as a synonym for factual or an antonym of fiction (Lees, 2010; Holland, 2000).

operating within genre definitions that are understood by, and can relate to, interests both inside and outside the industry.

This cross-community identity is also visible in the event's interest in its host location, the city of Sheffield. Doc/Fest seeks to promote itself as part of Sheffield's legacy of being makers of things. Sheffield provides the festival with both material and immaterial roots. It provides Doc/Fest a geospatial identity; when people consider Doc/Fest, it is associated with the city's location. The literature describes Sheffield as being "lucky to be the home of, and welcome, the finest documentary and documentary makers" (McIntyre, 2017b: p.3), clearly making relations between the immaterial attributes of the city, the documentary genre, and through the art, the genre makers. With Sheffield also being an industrial heartland, their CEO speaks in their programme guide of Sheffield being "a city of makers – from steel, to beer, to documentary makers" (McIntyre, 2017a: p.1), connecting the identity of Sheffield to a production heartland as well as the art of a specific genre, rooting its function as an expression of factual industry culture. These relations situate Doc/Fest and the city as being a permanent resource, and home, to the factual genre, and an invitation to makers of factual film and television.

As Doc/Fest seeks to identify itself as a culture of factual, it seeks to defy conventions and promote innovation within these boundaries. Doc/Fest promotes itself as an idea-driven cultural space, "to make change and create impact through an explosion of creativity in storytelling" (McIntyre, 2017b: p.3). However, the ideas celebrated by Doc/Fest are always associated with the particular conventions of factual. The CEO notes, "From young smartphone filmmakers to award-winning greats, we love that everyone has a great story to tell" (McIntyre, 2017a: p.1), however, those stories celebrated by Doc/Fest must conform to specific story conventions associated with factual. Cultural ideas in an industry space speak to the industry's specific needs and requirements for fresh content. Whilst genre has some antithetical value to the idea of fresh material, Doc/Fest is a space for the industry where its culture transforms concepts into genre products.

Yet Doc/Fest's function is not to create television industry products, but an interactive space where the television industry can promote, self-theorise, and reflect on its work. It does, however, create its conventions in which to motivate discourse and showcase works. A foregrounded attribute of Doc/Fest's industry-facing identity is "Alternate Realities", a

continuing key festival event relating to the virtual reality experience and interactive documentaries. While not a commonly recognised industry genre, Alternate Realities speaks to a kind of non-fiction filmmaking that revolves around interaction and immersive experiences — this provides set boundaries of classification. Alternate Realities is more branding than genre, it has no broader permanence as a signifier outside of the festival. However, in understanding how genre is perceived within an industrial setting, such branding cannot be ignored. Branding or labelling can be a first step in establishing a genre within a local industry culture. It can gain traction in a broader cultural setting if such signification becomes mutually accepted as a shorthand meaning for a kind of work (Mittell, 2004). In this sense, as the categorisation of virtual reality, simulation, and interactive film, "Alternate Realities" has genre attributes within the festival setting. As an annual festival, Doc/Fest's labels have the potential to become genre-active further within television and film industry cultures. The identification of Alternate Realities within Doc/Fest demonstrates how labels and signs have the potential (and only the potential) to establish new genre labels. Alternate Realities is a leading part of Doc/Fest's identity and advocacy of the importance of the factual genre's digital domain. Identities forged by social groups offer the potential to change cultural perceptions of genre. Industry festivals operate to promote new ideas and content that can shift cultural perceptions of genre conventions by becoming cultural products.

Genre is both part of industry discourse and practices, and thereby a component of cultural politics. In commissioning panels, leading figures within the industry culture discuss genre and its uses, often dismissing the very boundaries that define the panel. Such panels are spaces where cultural-political discourse is performed, often between commissioning editors representing rival institutions, each promoting their latest content and the significance of their role.

Cultural politics is evident across the attendees and delegations. As this chapter has demonstrated, social politics, particularly between production company representatives and genre commissioners, is evident throughout the structure of Doc/Fest. The politics of networking is couched as friendly and "cosy" (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017b: p.207) and an "open, friendly environment where everyone is accessible" (Hurley, 2017: p.1). Despite Doc/Fest's positive rhetoric, cultural politics are evident throughout. As in the television industry culture beyond

Doc/Fest's walls, genre commissioners remain institutional gatekeepers, and access has high political value with respective genre producers.

Culture combines the immaterial —the knowledge, the performance, and the networks— into a material space. These cultural components, the festival's identity, the products it showcases, and the politics it engages with, need structure to give these components meaning, visibility, and a network for agency.

2.5 Infrastructure

Infrastructure is an open-ended term for underlying construction that according to Mitchell Schwarzer (2017) is "Far more than architecture, infrastructure responds to the transitory imperatives of economics, society, and technology" (p.48). Derived from the Latin *infra* (below/under) and *structura* (construction/organisation) (Schwarzer, 2017), infrastructure can have a far more complex meaning when relating to event management. Doc/Fest shares Sheffield infrastructure—roads, hotels, buildings, and institutions—and it is organised through its structures. However, without the organised networks of technology, staff, and categorisations Doc/Fest would be a confusing space for attendees. Infrastructure for an event can thereby relate to its material needs, such as urban spaces, but also to its content infrastructure, where guides, categories, and labels are vital to maintaining the event's shape and purpose.

For a festival situated within a populated pre-existing urban space, infrastructure is an important aspect of analysis: how and where the Doc/Fest is shaped to the confines of Sheffield city, and how Sheffield city is reorganised by the presence of the festival. Such analysis cannot simply be confined to space, but to time. As Gratton and Preuss (2008) explain in their analysis of Olympic events, we can look at such event legacy as pre-event, event, and post-event. However, the infrastructure for an Olympic sporting event and its legacy to the host city as a transformative and regenerative construct creates a different set of conditions and expectations than to a recurring city industry event.

A space of infrastructure must be navigated. Whilst not relating to physical infrastructure, or structure of schedule directly, in alignment with ANT thinking, the provided Doc/Fest guides and apps are key to the notion of infrastructure as part of the festival experience and movement therein. As John Law (1992) argues:

> The Actor-network theory approach is a theory of agency, a theory of knowledge, a theory of organization, and a theory of machines. And, more importantly, it says we should be exploring social effects, whatever their material form if we want to answer the "how" questions about structure, power and organisation. (p.389)

This broad observation as to the benefits of ANT seems pertinent at this juncture as it can help link the components that bind the social agency to structure and reveal the relevancy of genre to the festival within its network. ANT's perhaps most significant contribution is encouraging researchers to put aside existing assumptions and reconsider a social object through whatever actors are visible. The attendee guides and social app are key parts of the festival infrastructure and are also material entities that direct and connect the attendee to different spaces, events, and other human actors. The guides are non-human actors; their existence has agency on other actors. Human attendees, which Dawson and Jöns (2018) would describe as dynamic hybrids, will mediate the material actors such as guides with the hybrid's immaterial agencies. Producers that operate within specific genres, who might be looking for participants and guests who speak to that field, are making decisions through the immaterial agent of genre. An understanding of genre influences a participant's decision-making and choices. Genre thereby has agency on the human hybrid who mediates this with the knowledge provided by the non-human material guides. The guides are therefore a critical part of the festival's social infrastructure that works closely with the attendee in combination with the attendee's immaterial agencies that will include genre.

Doc/Fest's content infrastructure can be evidenced within its showcasing of factual production and how the content relates to their categorisations. These categories do not necessarily align with industry-embedded genres and can be categories that are specific to the festival itself. These labels share the festival's branding and are integral to its unique structure. Doc/Fest categories of film screenings are prefixed with the Doc/ convention. Example categories are Doc/Expose for "thrilling investigations exposing corruption, crime, and injustice, from frontlines to headlines" (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017b: 39), or Doc/Love for "pulsating, intimate stories celebrating the power of love, family, and friendship" (p.53). Such branding steps away from industry-embedded genres to adopt labels that categorise content rather than

stylistic properties. However, attendees will be navigating screenings using categories that again have genre properties (Doc/Expose being very much a current-affairs styled label) even if they do not carry any industry or cultural genre signage. Doc/Fest's categorisation uses both its branding and industry-embedded language. Doc/Fest labels its commissioning panels through industry-embedded language, yet at the same time seeks to promote its Doc/Fest brand where possible.

If genre is considered to exist at the heart of the industry commerce and creativity dialectic—operating as risk management between the lineage of successful conventions and new ideas—Doc/Fest has no investment in that discourse. It is neither a distributor nor producer of content and thereby genre has a reduced function in its industry-related interests. Doc/Fest speaks of the importance of creativity in its literature (McIntyre, 2017a; 2017b), and commerce is promoted through knowledge, networking, and opportunities. However, much of Doc/Fest's rhetoric situates itself as a "space" (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2019) for the television industry to showcase and interact, rather than as an active part of industry production culture. Whilst Doc/Fest speaks of genre in its programme—because it is the language of those attending from the production industry—Doc/Fest itself is a promoter, not producer, of non-fiction/factual television and films. As a social object, the festival itself does not directly speak the language of industry-embedded genres; it provides a platform for those who do.

Guides can be considered content infrastructure as part of the pre-event and event organisation. As the integral and most immediate connection between the practitioner and the festival, the guide maps both the physical and social structure of the event and thus carries a significant relationship to genre and genre practices. The guide provides the attendee with access to the festival infrastructure and locates where genre-signified sessions, events, and activities exist materially. It gives a summary of the immaterial agencies offered as well as the human and non-human actants involved (as a film screening can be considered as a genre non-human actant).

Post-Event can consider the legacy (see Preuss, 2015) of a festival and can reflect on its performance and the event's relationship to its surrounding urban infrastructure**.** Decisions made post-event can inform the pre-event organisation of the next festival. Legacy can look for positive and negative results in all aspects of the festival's infrastructure, to maintain or reshape

the infrastructure based on the outcomes of the event itself. Event attendance is monitored and, in some cases, recorded through the attendee's pass, providing data that can be critical to decision making as to what aspects were successful or unsuccessful and to what unseen (or unforeseen) factors may be relevant. Legacy can thereby shape the genre make-up of successive festivals through a retrospective analysis of the previous festival. Whilst Doc/Fest is a continuous project, the festival will change, affected by both internal and external forces. Doc/Fest publishes an annual report (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017c) that provides an analysis of that year's festival. The report provides statistical data as to the attendance, programmes, events that took place, as well as the economic impact on the city, its press coverage, and the festival's key successes. Invariably the report provides a positive pitch of events—where the festival has done well; what aspects were particularly successful and an improvement on previous years; and examples of positive feedback—but the report maps out the infrastructure in review, with such findings being continually compared, and expected to exceed previous Doc/Fest years. Within the 2017 report references to genre are very much absent; however, this ties very much into the ethos behind Doc/Fest as a space for industry rather than a part of that production industry. The report speaks of how Doc/Fest 2017 was "championing diversity and excellence in storytelling" (Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017c: p.4), with the ambition to "inspire, inform and create business opportunities across the Festival" (p.1). In both cases, Doc/Fest positions itself as an industry space that promotes creativity and provides business opportunities. It is a platform for creativity and commerce, rather than a profound shaper of either. Industry-embedded genres are part of the discourse and industry structure in factual television and whilst Doc/Fest is an industry event, it is not an active agent in industry work and practice. However, Doc/Fest's infrastructure is there to provide a space to encourage work and practices of factual television production, and through being a platform it does become part of the work and practices of industry practitioners.

Infrastructure draws all the aspects of a festival, networking, knowledge, and culture, and provides a social and physical map of the festival as a network. Through infrastructure, material or immaterial, the festival can be considered as an object that exists through time as well as space, where the network is built, enacted, and then rebuilt. This infrastructure becomes a platform, or, in Goffman's terms, a stage, for the factual industry cultural performance. In this light, Doc/Fest's infrastructure is not genre-focused but provides a network for those who do use genre to define their work, to produce content, and as part of the interaction. In this regard,

Doc/Fest is part of the television industry's lived-in practices, even if its infrastructure is not seeking to directly shape or participate in the creativity or commerce of industry production.

Conclusions

The chapter has sought to demonstrate, through participant observation, how genre and genre practitioners within factual television operate within an industry environment. The festival itself is built on genre foundations as a factual television event (despite the branding focusing on its opposition to fiction, that its purpose is factual). It is a documentary festival, and as an annual festival genre is encoded into its construction as it is in its performance as an industry and art event. Genre is not seen as a unified subject of classification, neither by the event nor its attendees, but for industry workers, genre forms different components of their working realm and Doc/Fest provides a social network of opportunities to explore and practice within a genre-defined space.

Participant observation of an industry festival with a focus on factual television provides an environment to better experience inter-industry relationships with little disruption from the researcher. Where industry interviewees have articulated their understanding of genre, Sheffield Doc/Fest 2017 has offered an opportunity to place those observations into a real-time context. Through Doc/Fest there are examples of how the festival uses established industry genres as well as its own ritualised labels. The festival provides examples of how genres can function as part of a television industry event. Genre is evident within the festival infrastructure and industry practitioners use genre knowingly, and unknowingly, as part of their working practices at the festival.

Post-actor-network theory triadic analysis has been used to reveal what may not otherwise be observed in the function, perception, and value of genre at Doc/Fest. By considering Doc/Fest as a social object, it is possible to observe genre working both as a material and an immaterial force. Whereas Gidden's structuration theory looks to the ongoing transformations of human agency and structure, it fails to engage in the effects of non-human agency. Conversely, where Actor-network theory places the importance on material semiotics and the symmetry between non-human and human actors, it fails to engage in the immaterial agencies that drive people as social actors. As a symbolic concept, genre is immaterial, and triadic theory provides some

means of making sense of how it can exist within a material setting, given use, meaning, and value by the human actor. The post-Actor-network theory triadic analysis forefronts the human but does not ignore the importance of material or immaterial entities. For a study on television production practitioners, post-ANT triadic theory positions the analytic lens squarely on the industry worker and their ontological relationship to their immediate working environment.

Through this approach, and by approaching the analysis through distinct categories, it is possible to see how the material and immaterial actors operate together. Genre is an immaterial entity that can identify and bring value to material actors (such as a commissioner) or spatial spaces (such as a genre commissioning panel). Dawson and Jöns' five-event analysis categories of networking, performance, knowledge, culture, and infrastructure are demonstrated through the study to intersect. Networking has strong associations with performance, which itself is bound by the cultural relationships between two industry groups: producers and commissioners. Doc/Fest's infrastructure can be considered as a physical reconfiguration of the city, or as the constructed social pathways that can be navigated through the festival's very thorough guides and apps. Analysing the infrastructure gives us a strong position to see the festival as being a temporal as well as a spatial social object. Through all these five categories we can see where genre is (and sometimes is not) visible.

The festival is built around the production practitioner, and for Doc/Fest this mandate expands not simply to television, but in film also. The festival attracts a range of attendees beyond the industry producer, from education to ancillary industry organisations. However, networking, exhibition, knowledge-gathering, competitions, and industry discussions are all of fore-front importance to the industry producer. The relationship between producers and genre commissioners is repeatedly visible, within the presented panel sessions, and the hierarchy of value placed on distributors to the attendees. The cultural politics between these two groups is evident in the staging of events and the interactions between them.

The festival's link to the city has become an integral part of Doc/Fest's identity and branding, as an urban space for makers of documentaries. The branding of the event and the need to create its own identity see exhibition categories adopting Doc/Fest brand names to delineate differences within the showcase catalogue. The festival has also continued the branding of Alternate Realities annually to interactive and virtual filmmaking. In both cases, industry genres, sustained

and re-shaped largely by the institutions that buy and distribute from producers, are only notably situated in events where those institutions are key, such as genre commissioning panels. Pitch competitions and pitch sessions again focus less on established genres, but to content themes or production practices. Despite the festival's overall theme being genre aligned as factual, established genres do not play a prominent part in its make-up and are often either replaced by festival branding or focus on other types of categorisation. Genre's importance is present throughout, being itself a festival that celebrates specific genre qualities, but this is not necessarily reflected in how genre is articulated or understood by those who participate.

Networking saturates Doc/Fest and is evidenced within both the festival's mandate and in its rhetoric, through its guides and its event hosts. Networking can be seen in formal and informal guises, with sessions dedicated to the act and the art. There are social events to encourage informal networking, and impromptu networking can take place before or after sessions. Networking is seen by industry professionals as a type of performance, and that performance has a commercial agency for their represented production company. Networking is articulated by both festival literature and industry workers as part of the lifestyle, and as such, the festival is built to facilitate that function. As networking is enacted for commercial benefits that link to the practitioner's place of work, the mandates of that workplace flow through the practitioner. A production company's commercial motivations regarding its genre-related projects will be articulated through the practitioner's networking. Doc/Fest offers opportunities for practitioners to access new resources, promote past or recent successes, showcase new products, or re-establish network connections, all of which are performed at the festival and are an expected role within industry practice.

Doc/Fest's identity is defined by the documentary and related factual genres, yet genre's nature is contested, dismissed, or even unnoticed by many who attend. The research into Doc/Fest has demonstrated the festival to be a complex social object providing opportunities for showcasing, knowledge gathering, and commercial negotiation, and all these aspects relate specifically to non-fiction genres. The festival becomes a catalyst for industry practitioners to gain information, contacts, and power to define and refine pitches to genre distributors within a highly competitive industry. What appears evident at Doc/Fest—and reflective of the interviews with factual television producers and commissioners—is a dissonance between industry-

constructed genres and the practice of creating genres. Practitioners look to genre as being a material part of their world, be it a commissioning department's designation, or a festival that identifies itself as a celebration of the documentary. They then also view genre as an intangible, conceptual component of creating shows. Commissioners will question its value at panels that define their role by genre, demonstrating what genre means to some practitioners does not always align with its industry use. Genre's immaterial worth is debated by producers and commissioners alike, while at the same time, these same industry workers can attend a session that is defined by a genre designation. In this respect, the dissonance located with the understanding and value of genre is evident within the study of an industry event and correlates to interviewee empirical data. Doc/Fest, when viewed through the lens of post-Actor-network triadic Theory, demonstrates how genre is both part of the industry discourse and dismissed by practitioners. It demonstrates how Doc/Fest is an industry festival that provides a platform for film and television producers to promote, showcase, learn, network, and reflect on their world. Doc/Fest's agency speaks little of genre, but it is a genre-defined platform that provides space for genre practitioners to reflect, interact, and showcase their work.

Conclusions

The thesis argues that genre has an important function within the study of British factual television production. It has provided clear examples of genre having structural properties that are unique to the study of British factual television, contributing to the argument that genre must be studied with medium specificity. Academics and practitioners have frequently discounted genre's importance to television research, yet as genre is a cultural construct, genre must have meaning in the creation of cultural artefacts. A close study of the inter-relationships and agency behind ongoing social action within factual British television reveals genre's role in production; how it offers intrinsic structure—be it as institutional frameworks or linguistic utterances—that provides a sense of coherency in the fast-moving, ever-changing industry culture. The thesis has sought to understand how the lived-in practices of production could dismiss genre, yet exist within a culture that locates and produces meaning from genre.

The thesis concludes that the value of genre is drawn from its use, and therefore its social specificity. Academic culture use genre to better understand cultural meaning through textual interrelationships; through the study of media and the circulating cultural discourse of that media, meanings are revealed through genre texts or textual genres. Practitioners in industry cultures are self-theorising through their work and lived-in practices. However, the industry does not look for signs of genre and they are not seeking to theorise genre's uses or values as is in this study. Industry culture's conscious priorities are more pragmatic, and as such, genre slips under the radar. A chef might use a sturdy table to cook his food, and without that table, with its durable surface and drawers, his work would be nearly impossible. Yet for the chef, after being asked what that table means to their work, would they will be uncertain how to articulate that answer, even baffled at being asked the question? Genre is a function of the television industry; however, it does not directly generate profit, nor does it generate employment in any meaningful way. Genre's value is measured through its function to negate risk. Negating risk is evident through genre's use as a language; what it means to production company managers and commissioning editors as a shared cultural knowledge, and how genre functions within television industry structures. Genre does not provide visible outcomes and gains to practitioners; genre is a tool; a hardhat to protect the industry practices from failure.

The study of genre and television production demands continuous research as industry-embedded genres are culturally bound, changing in response to ongoing practices, structures, and discourse. The methodologies and analytical tools used in this study are argued to be effective measures to gain insight into the secluded practices of a complex and ever-transforming industry culture within British factual television.

To understand how genre operates in television production without distinct textual categorisation, the thesis has acknowledged genre research beyond the analysis of media texts. It has considered studies within rhetoric, linguistics, and discourse analysis that are well served to explore genres outside of the categorisation of media texts. Industry-embedded genres are a part of a cultural language; an intrinsic component for the flow of meaning, that reflects industry structure as much as it acknowledges traditional media genre labels. In the British television industry, traditional genre labels such as comedy and drama sit alongside historic, industry-generated genres such as specialist factual or factual entertainment. Television, as an industry, is constantly changing, requiring continual changes to production culture and language that becomes intrinsic to that culture. This calls for continued research into genre and production cultures of all media types.

Whilst media types share characteristics, the works of David Hesmondhalgh, Jason Mittell, Rick Altman, Steve Neale, and Jane Feuer have demonstrated the unique properties within different media platforms and cultures. Furthermore, industry cultures themselves differ between nations. For this thesis, the focus has been localised in place and time with the research into British factual television production responding to the industry broadly between 2015 and 2018. At the time of writing, three years after that end-date, significant changes within British factual television calls for further research relating to the evolving relationship between non-fiction and digital streaming.

To conclude this thesis, I first draw together some of the key findings of this study. I then present some reflections on the integrated methodology. The thesis findings have relied on interviews and field study observations to gain insight into the closed-off industry of factual television. Reflecting on these methods, the conclusion considers the strengths and weaknesses of these combined approaches and how they benefit media ethnography. Interview methodologies are often framed as a tool of the social sciences rather than humanities,

whereupon face-to-face interviews are commonly argued to provide the best results. However I do not believe media research seeks the same aims as advocated in social science literature, and its interviewer-to-interviewee relationship involves different power relations. This conclusion seeks to widen the debate on methods best suited for media industry intervention.

Finally, I consider what value this thesis might offer to future research into genre within British television. With the ongoing changes within television distribution, with online algorithmic streaming models continuing to grow in prominence, what future role might genre provide for the factual production industry?

Thesis conclusions

British factual television uses commissioning labels such as specialist factual, current affairs, and factual entertainment. These genres, which this thesis has defined as industry-embedded genres, get little acknowledgment or use outside the factual British television industry. Industry-embedded genres are generated and sustained through their use and value to institutional structure (such as genre commissioning departments) or can manifest through production practices, where labels (such as fixed rig shows) manifest through discourse to become a shared signification between those in the industry who need to understand their codification.

Industry-embedded genres are an ongoing function of British television production culture. Whilst this thesis has provided examples of genre's use, values, and meanings to television production from 2015-2018, as the industry changes, television producers will continue to look for ways to make sense of their complex, rhizomatic industry, and its competitive, fast-moving market. They will look for languages to contexualise and categorise production practices to predict and match the desires of its consumers. Studying what meaning genres bring to television production is unlikely to become redundant, but the uses, values, and meanings will change.

This is because industry embedded labels are not static; historical evidence demonstrates how a changing industry has an impact on genres. Factual entertainment coalesced from an increasing need for entertainment-driven schedules following the neo-liberalisation of the industry in the 1990s. Institutions will augment their genre labels and their department hierarchies to fit new brand identities, commercial strategies, or structural changes. Genre has meaning and value to

individual institutions. These changes are ongoing and impact current and future industry dynamics. It is the knowledge that producers must attain from their industry manoeuvring, providing them with the ability to sustain their networks of contacts, and strategize what to pitch and to whom.

Genre's value, both discursively and structurally, always involves the measurement of risk. In an industry built from symbolic products, that carry high production costs and relatively low distribution costs, and which sell to a market of ever-changing tastes and interests, genre provides a measure of protection for production practitioners. For producers, genre provides development teams with blueprints that they concede to, or break. Ideally, they do both. For production company managing directors, it provides a different set of blueprints; roadmaps for a complex and messy media industry; providing clear avenues of contacts, and a current set of market stylistic conventions. Genre provides them with a way to distinguish a producer's market position; their identity as a company that delivers successful genre content, or as a company that produces successful content that defies expected conventions. It can pigeonhole content creators into a style and provide a set of broad blueprints that they can measure, cost, and replicate, enhancing their market identity. For producers across the managerial roles, genre speaks to risk management.

For commissioning departments, genre is instructional. It speaks to their department's remit, which is, in part, shaped by the institutional politics and strategies above them, steering the company's identity and content direction. Commissioners are given a degree of creative autonomy allowing them to stretch the remit rather than be controlled by it. Yet the autonomy comes with risks; their decisions as to what will be commercially successful, or critically acclaimed (or ideally, both), will come from the concepts they greenlight.

Genres give commissioners a base to build their relationships with producers. It offers a set of shared conventions that speak to their institution's current content and identity. Producers will seek to pitch concepts that build on those set conventions to generate new content. For commissioners, genre is not a rigid set of boundaries, and production practitioners will speak of how commissioners will go beyond their department conventions if it will aid them in realising a concept effectively. Genre in this sense is a key ingredient in-market success, but it is not considered an exciting one. Once a show is created, industry embedded genres have little

importance and offer the product little commercial gain. The British television industry culture is shaped by its commercial imperatives; what is unique has value, and that value adds to the practitioner's social capital.

In interviews, commissioners would speak of genre being important to institutions as they define the categories of industry awards, enriching company status, and market identity. But genre itself was never articulated as an exciting nor interesting concept unless its conventions were being defied by practitioners. Interviewees would reflect on the project with a sense of accomplishment for breaking conventions, but never for conceding to them.

Genres are not celebrated by practitioners for their value. Their value is intrinsic. For an industry that is both heterogenic and messy, as described by Bernard Miège (1987) and John Caldwell (2008), genre brings commonality, and that commonality establishes trust. Trust is measured through the social capital that practitioners or institutions demonstrate in the field. Trust thereby measures against market risk. Be they intrinsic to discourse, or the signification of industry structure, industry-embedded genres provide practitioners value through their use. Genres communicate meaning as a common tongue between cultural bodies. In an industry that is fast-moving, ever-changing, and carrying high costs in production, the ability to communicate intrinsic, industry-specific knowledge efficiently and accurately, is vital.

However, even as the television industry changes, as a distributor of symbolic goods, it continues to carry high production to low-end distribution costs. In this scenario, genre's role as a buffer against commercial and critical failure in British factual television will remain unchanged.

Methodological questions

Gaining industry access had methodological complexities. Media industry self-disclosures are a part of the industry's deep texts and are difficult to access from beyond media industry walls (Caldwell 2008; 2009). John Caldwell (2009) has argued that there has been a weakening of those walls, with academics more frequently having industry experience, yet the industry remains a difficult terrain to traverse. Obtaining access to above-the-line practitioners for this thesis carried a ten percent return on invitations. Caldwell's media interviews noted academics

are still seen by some practitioners as living with an "ivory tower" mentality (p.218). And as Sherry Ortner (2009; 2010) discovered interviews can be shut down if the wrong type of question is asked.

Coming from a production background, when first entering academia I recall having similar scepticism when reading scholarly work relating to my fields of experience; how could an outsider possibly understand the complexities of *my* production culture without lived experience? That suspicion was echoed in Su Holmes' (2008c) interaction with industry practitioners. It was also evident in some of the early conversations with practitioners for this thesis. Whilst industry walls have undoubtedly been weakened (I am an example) the experience in setting up research for the thesis revealed that while they may be eroded, they are not gone. Knowledge, working practices, and social behaviours are still embedded within layers of industry hierarchies of knowledge and power.

Because the industry culture has firm gatekeepers and its practices are so deeply embedded, lack of access to knowledge can lead to assumptions, such as those challenged in this thesis; that genre has little role or meaning within production cultures. The thesis has argued for the use of analytical frameworks such as Actor-network theory in analysing the British factual television industry that provides methods to avoid pre-loaded assumptions. Actor-network theory is advocacy for empirical work, that social scientists should avoid assumptions, and that the nature of social objects needs close practical study. The nature of this thesis made ANT not wholly practical. ANT functions best as part of an open-access ethnographic field study. Such access is difficult to gain in a closed industry. However, its philosophy speaks to the thrust of the thesis; that a close study of the network and its actors can reveal how genre shapes, and is shaped by, an ongoing relationship between industry structure and discourse.

Bruno Latour (2007) notes "Even though most social scientists would prefer to call 'social' a homogeneous thing, it's perfectly acceptable to designate by the same word a trail of associations between heterogeneous elements" (p.5). The study has not solely relied on (or complied with) Actor-network theory. However, the spirit of the theory speaks to some of the key problems with academia's attempt to view media worlds; that others do not speak, think, or act as we might expect, even if parallels can be drawn (as noted by Caldwell (2009) and Ortner, (2010)). Latour notes "It is as if we are saying to the actors 'We won't try to discipline you, to

make you fit into our categories; we will let you deploy your own worlds, and only later will we ask you to explain how you came about settling them'" (2007: p.23). As Caldwell stresses, that given the importance of recognising separate cultures and observing how they reflect and theorise on their world, ANT calls for such a separation away from assumption and viewing their world as it is now, and not through projection. ANT helps unclutter the terrain and make visible actors that might otherwise be overlooked. ANT proved a good starting point in considering how a social object was going to be researched, and what interactions might be important to establish the functions with British television production.

With genres being a discursive construct, a semi-structured interview-led methodology was deemed a suitable approach. As a researcher, I felt the semi-structured interview encouraged a deeper investigation of the interviewee's experiences and knowledge. The controlled exploration of an interviewee's reality was a dynamic approach that revealed new ideas and directions, including my choice of field study.

In reading prior research into semi-structured interview methodologies, face-to-face interviews are advocated as the gold standard in methodological research (Irvine, 2011; Wengraf, 2001), with the debate over the differences in communication methods commonly scrutinised (see Irvine, Drew, & Sainsbury, 2012; Janghorban, R., Roudsari, R. L., & Taghipour, A, 2014; Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Sedgwick & Spiers, 2009). It is the conclusion of this project that for interviews with above-the-line workers in television, issues surrounding pragmatics, power relationships, and data analysis may steer researchers to consider the benefits of telephone or online audio communication over face-to-face encounters.

Face-to-face is commonly advocated because it is argued that an interview is an experience beyond an audio transcript; that the nuances of physicality can tell an interviewer more about the interaction than an audio interview (Wengraf, 2001). It has also been argued that despite the pragmatic benefits offered by telephone interviews, the duration of telephone interviews is considered shorter, and the interviewee's participation is argued to be reduced. (Irvine, 2011). Yet for media interviews, pragmatics is a priority for the researcher as the power-relationship between interviewee and interviewer may differ from social research in other fields. As Howard Lune and Bruce L. Berg (2017) note "[S]ome artists and actors are perceived by their peers to be exceptional while others in the field are viewed as mediocre; a similar assessment may be made

about interviewers" (66). This power relationship, coupled with the difficulties of industry access to commercial television producers, can result in interview arrangements being arranged at the discretion of the interviewee. Above-the-line work schedules can make interviews difficult to arrange, and interviewee suspicion of researchers can make participating less attractive. Several participants in this thesis felt that genre was not something they talked about. Why was I interested? Why was their work important? One interviewee was suspicious that as a researcher I may have ulterior motives in the data gathering. These were never impolite, but concerns were verbally raised, particularly as to the ramifications of taking part that may impact their future industry employment prospects.

Participants were more comfortable with taking part anonymously, fearing the academic research may have an impact on their career. In acknowledging these vocational concerns within the research methodology, the project acknowledged one of its key tenants that researchers must listen to subjects of the culture being studied. Through the mediation of research requirements and cultural practitioners' needs, better foundations can be built between the interview and the interviewees. Finding approaches that bridge cultural divides and speak to the needs of those being studied, can reveal new information about those cultures. One commissioner explained that there was a limited number of commissioners within British factual television, and vocational movement between different institutions was common. They were concerned that openly contributing to an industry analytical study might have political ramifications in gaining future employment. This statement resonates with Caldwell's para-industry observations of the culture's self-surveillance and self-discipline; that regardless of whether employers are monitoring employees, "everyone learns quickly to act like they are" (2013: p.161). Shaping methodological practices to match the needs of the interviewees can help bridge the divide between interviewers and participants and reward the researcher with a greater understanding of the practitioner's conditions of cultural labour.

At a practical level, industry gatekeeping, busy interviewee schedules, and cultural suspicion also leave the researcher with little real power to arrange interviews on their terms. Media researchers might be best to acknowledge that the interview method needs to be flexible. With only ten percent of the invitations to participate being acknowledged for this project, there was little doubt that I would have to be driven by the needs of my participants rather than a pre-

determined and inflexible model of interviews. All interviewees were offered a choice of interview method. For the project, it transpired telephone and Skype interviews were commonly preferred. Broadly, the interviewee preference for this study was not to engage in face-to-face interviews, despite this arrangement carrying no expense or travel for the participant.

Only three face-to-face interviews were requested by participants. These interviews were to be conducted within their cultural spaces to limit the disruption to their daily routine. In this arrangement, power relations inevitably factored into the interview process. Above-the-line managers are busy, and only one interviewee suggested a face-to-face meeting outside of their workplace (which was then re-arranged on the day to take place in their offices). This takes the interviewer away from neutral grounds and places the researcher into an environment where they have little control over space, time, or conduct.

Two of the three face-to-face interviews were with broadcasters, and access meant security checks, ID passes, and social displacement. One of the benefits of this approach is the ability to experience a 'day at the office' providing the researcher with a micro field-study experience. Waiting in one institution's foyer, I could observe the flow of practitioners, from below-the-line work to the occasional public face. On-site interviews do provide researchers with an opportunity to observe as passive participants in the culture of study. Yet in terms of the interviews conducted on-site, interviews can carry some drawbacks. The duration of the interviews when on-site was more micro-managed by the interviewee's schedule and interest. Audio interviews provide a more neutral ground, where interviewees appeared to be more relaxed and less motivated by their schedules.

Telephone or online audio/visual interviews enabled some interviewees greater freedom to take part in the project, with one interviewee requesting a call to their mobile while at home on their day off. The telephone benefited the lifestyle and practices of several practitioners. It also gave them the comfort of knowing they could end an interview with less social awkwardness than in a face-to-face. In my experience, no interviewee decided to prematurely end the interview, but the capacity to do so, clearly outlined at the start of the interview, can prevent an interviewee in a remote interview from feeling boxed into a conversation that they no longer wish to continue.

This is not to argue that remote interviews are without drawbacks or compromises. One key concern is that the telephone minimises sensory reflections and observations during the interviews. Tom Wengraf (2001) argues "Our face moves as we talk, our whole body shifts position, we fidget, make notes or not, adjust the tape recorder, move our chairs around and move in our chair, our bodies do several things, often out of our own awareness, but within the awareness of an anxious interviewee" (p.69). These are salient points. But it could depend on whether your interviews are about the person or the reflections. In my experience, the formality of office meetings did not provide me with any physical cues or relevant personality quirks, and, as a media researcher, I do not see myself as qualified to interpret those I did observe with certainty. The nature of this thesis was to understand the British factual television production cultures through the practitioners' reflections and self-theorising rather than to interpret the motivations of the individual. On the telephone, the pauses, notable irritability, good humour, sarcasm, or bemusement were present but did not inform the research aims.

Of the remote interviews conducted, two were via online video link. No interviewee specifically requested video in advance, and video communication was not anticipated as it is perhaps today. Video does provide some, but not all, of the social cues that face-to-face provides. For a project focusing on how interviewees reflected and theorised on their culture, and not as a study of the interviewee, the need to observe paralinguistic messages was not an essential ingredient of the interviews.

This is not an argument that the benefits of face-to-face should be dismissed from media interviews, and some studies have concluded that researchers are best to choose a method that best suits the nature of their project (Irvine, 2011; Sedgwick & Spiers, 2009). For research into the above-the-line practitioners of media, telephone and online interviews provided many benefits that face-to-face did not. The opportunity of scheduling a face-to-face above-the-line media interview in neutral territory is unlikely without the interviewer either evidencing enough social capital or suggesting a local space that will not hamper the interviewee's schedule. On-site interviews do provide the researcher with a brief ethnographic experience; however, they do diminish the interviewer's environmental control. Remote interviewing can make the experience more comfortable, eroding some of the walls between interviewee and interviewer. It can be a more practical and cost-effective method for both parties, and if the interview's data analysis is

based on the interviewee's reflections and theories, the need for paralinguistic interpretation is minimal. Remote interviewing provides an imperfect middle ground that offers a degree of neutrality.

The second methodological approach was the participant observation study at Sheffield Doc/Fest 2017. As with the interviews, the participant observation had a semi-structured process; some planning was required in advance, but the research had the flexibility to be shaped by the field experience. At the same time, participant observation is distinct from the interview data; data is witnessed rather than synthesised through another actor. As Geertz theorised, and Caldwell (2008) appropriated for production culture research, culturally-embedded practices are ritualised and often unspoken, locked within the experiences and shared knowledge of its workers. Observing the practitioners and listening to their discourse reveals the shorthand and intrinsic language. Yet as Sherry Ortner (2009) notes, whilst cultures can be distinct, there can be shared parallels. The experiences of Doc/Fest 2017 were a reminder of the cultural reflexivity, performances, and ritualised social networking that exist within academia. As a researcher with a background in media production, I felt the cultural distinction; that I may have once been part of that culture, but it was no longer. To be part of that culture was not something that could be shared through observation or memory; culture is a continuum of shared agency. As a participant observer, I could experience the culture as an outsider looking in. As Geertz and Caldwell would attest, it was an over-the-shoulder cross-cultural experience. This experience was not a negative one but demonstrated the importance of correlating data from those who are active agents. That knowledge complimented and gave meaning to, cultural observation.

As my first time in such an extensive field study, lessons were learned on the ground. Audio recorders did not give the best results in large auditoriums unless they were close to the stage, and darkened rooms made discreet note-taking difficult. Participant observation is a difficult method of research that benefits from learned experience. My experience of researchers (and people generally) is that they rarely fit the alienable archetype of the responsible investigative reporter. Researchers must be open about the difficulties participant observation can harbour, and be prepared to adapt their strategies if access to chosen avenues proves less fruitful.

Cultural events such as Doc/Fest are filled with research potential, and it is not always gaining access that is the problem, but the amount of access available and how best to manage the limited

time and experience. I found Actor-network theory a useful analytical toolkit for participant observation. ANT's advocation that social objects should be considered as networks of actors, that themselves can be human and non-human, provided an analytical perspective that helped map the event through its interacting elements. Through ANT it became apparent one of the most important aspects I needed to consider was not so much grounded in the event's social interaction, but in its use of social media apps as a non-human agent of social navigation. How the Doc/Fest app operated as a conduit between event infrastructure and social participation became a critical component of the study which, if it had not been for ANT, I may have otherwise overlooked.

Textual analysis as a third register provided an effective cross-reference for both interviews and participant observation. It was through an analysis of the commissioning sections of broadcasting websites I saw how frequently the language of industry-embedded genres shifted and how different broadcasters adopted different labels that suited their output. This helped make sense of commissioners speaking about the "territories" of channels (Appendix A7) and producers understanding of different broadcaster interests (Appendix A9). For participant observation, it was useful to be able to test the experience of walking the festival with the attendance data provided by attendees, and how the festival represented itself in its literature to the experience of the event itself.

As an integrated methodology, semi-structured interviews and participant observation have complementary characteristics as well as divergent ones. They are sympathetic enough that their data can be compared, yet have differences that provide their data with unique qualifiers. As a result, the integrated methodology enabled the project to experience how British factual television reflects on the meaning of genre and to witness the same cultural practice within a genre-defined space.

Impact on future research into genre and television production

One unused dataset that emerged from the interviews spoke to the current shifts in the industry model. Since 2013, there has been an increase in the video-on-demand market, and, in more recent years, factual content has seen market growth. This platform shift was a topic that came up in interviews through questions that evolved through the semi-structured interview method. It

was data that did not fit with the shape of this project but speaks both to the use and value of genre within British factual production companies.

Some of this data was tested at MeCCSA 2019 (McLean, 2019). The paper responded to a growing influx of data reported by British television industry media as to the evolving relationships between factual production and digital commissioning. This ongoing shift is particularly interesting to factual television, a style of television that has often been connected with notions of 'liveness' (Kafka & West, 2004). Event and liveness television has been argued to be more suited to broadcast models, limiting a factual genre's move to digital, yet other types of factual are emerging. Netflix has since commissioned popular documentaries such as *Tiger King: Murder, Mayhem, and Madness*, (Netflix, 2020) and current affairs such as *The Great Hack* (Netflix, 2019). The pool remains small, compared to the high number of production companies in the UK, but this leads to interesting questions as to how do production companies factor this growing industry, and how does genre function within the digital paradigm? Where platforms do not rely on external advertisers, public viewer ratings, and narrowcast selection methods generated through algorithms rather than schedules, what place does genre have in the production practices of British factual television? At the time of conducting interviews, practitioners spoke of a hesitancy to change their practices until they are forced to. With most British factual content being commissioned either by national broadcasters or in global commissions, production companies were indicating that their interests remained where they traditionally worked. Some practitioners spoke of digital platforms beyond VOD distributors, and to their use of social media to promote broadcast shows to digital users or to release content segments to encourage interest.

A few years have passed since the interviews were conducted and with the increasing influence of digital media today's practitioners may tell a different account of the British factual television industry's use of online platforms. How producers respond to the changing market terrain, networking, knowledge, and social capital will continue to be the vital questions researchers must ask, and how these aspects contribute to the industry practices themselves. Such socially-bound components are likely to remain heavily industry-embedded, making a strong argument for future research to be conducted through methods that provide direct access to the lived-in experience and reflections of the British television culture.

As with any project reflection, paradoxically, the things that you would have done differently stem from the data your methods gathered. Through the genre analysis there emerged evidence of distinctions within managerial roles in independent production, and at the same time, reflections that suggested significant heterogeneity in the management structure. Whilst John Caldwell (2008) has researched American film and television's above-the-line and below-the-line practitioner cultures, the inter-relationships between above-the-line creative management in production could be explored in greater detail in British television. Questions of knowledge, power relations, networking responsibility, political strategies, and creative autonomy, could all be explored through industry-shared concepts such as genre. Through the conducted interviews, it became clear that genre had assigned meaning to different roles within management structures that represented different practices, engagements, and expectations. If the meaning of genre within production cultures is researched further, investigating the responsibilities tied to individual managerial production roles could reveal further embedded knowledge as to how agency and structure are informed through genre, and how genre's meaning can shift depending on the manager's function.

With genre as an ongoing product of production as much as distribution, that has ongoing shifts to its use, values, and meanings, research into its role in media production will be necessary. The methodologies and analytical tools used in this study are argued to be effective measures to puncture the already eroded walls of British factual television to gain insight into the secluded practices of a complex and ever-transforming industry culture. Through research into genre as a function of media production, there is a better understanding to be gained of how such an organic, densely networked industry is creating factual content that reflects the discourses of contemporary British society. It is an ongoing project, and industry-embedded genres are culturally bound, providing specific meaning to a particular cultural set at a particular given time.

This thesis offers a method and conceptual mode of industry analysis that could benefit future research for different platforms or cultural media creators. Genre is an inescapable fragment of symbolic content that binds authorship, production, distribution, and consumption. Further exploration into how commercial productions use, value, and identify with genre is a vital piece to a larger cultural puzzle.

Appendixes

A1: Interview 'Andrew' (Independent Production Company, Director of Entertainment)

What does genre mean to you as a producer?

It's a very difficult subject because increasingly the lines have become more and more blurred. Not just in the definition of what the genre is, but also in the day-to-day of who in the channel might be looking after shows. […] I mean what is *The Great British Bake-Off*? It was a factual commission, and yet it is a factual show if you like, but it is an entertainment show. So, what is that? Is it Factual entertainment? Is that Entertainment factual? That's the problem - because when you boil it down that seems to have been a big reason why it moved to Channel 4 in the end: it was still getting the lower factual tariff, the one it was originally commissioned on (or thereabouts). It was a Factual commission on BBC-2.

The bottom line is the audience doesn't care about what the genre is. The audience cares about what shows they like - what's the show? What's the kind of thing I like?

Genre an industry process?

Absolutely, I think genres just help the overall process from a channel perspective - from a sense of order and a sense of budget, I would think. They portion this amount to factual; they portion this amount for entertainment. […] There's a nuance: Factual, or Factual entertainment or whatever so yes I think a lot of it is industry terminology, almost because there's drama, there's scripted comedy, they are more definitive - but then there is a comedy-drama. I think the audience dictates what a lot of it is. Look at the *X-Factor* as an entertainment show. *Strictly* [Come Dancing] is an entertainment show. *The Apprentice* is a big BBC show. That was the factual show back in the day: Britain's brightest business brains. […] Obviously, there is the straight entertainment show - Michael McIntyre['s Big Show], [The] Graham Norton [Show] - that's an entertainment show. These are purer definitions, but the factual bit... that's where the lines are very very blurry and it is what it is, and it comes out of a certain department because it has to come out of somewhere.

I

There are separate sorts of teams we have: an entertainment development team and a factual development team. They talk to each other a lot of the time. Words and ideas. They cross-pollinate quite a bit. […] It comes down to the fact our job is chasing whatever the commissioner has been told is the type of show that their boss wants to see on the channel. And that is ever-changing, so in a way, it's a responsive job. We don't go in and say "well, what sort of factual show shall we do now?" It's just not like that. The instructions you get from the channel are very varied, it just depends on what they've decided they want.

Sometimes you come up with things, sometimes something will strike you, and you think "I'm going to develop that because we think there's something in this?" It is an organic process. They have a shopping list or the source of what they're after. But sometimes an idea that you go in with can inform an idea that they then go for. Back in the day, it might have been so much clearer defined, but not anymore.

Are you pitching thinking about what has worked or what is fresh?

I will go and see entertainment commissioners, or sometimes I'll go to someone on the factual side. But mainly it will be entertainment commissioners that I see.

How important is genre to pitch negotiations?

Different people pitch different ways and different ideas require different pitching. How you pitch it depends on what the idea is, and who you pitch it to. You see more tapes made now, but a bad tape can do more damage than a paper pitch. It varies, it varies - it varies with the idea and the person you are seeing.

Is it an organic process?

Yes, absolutely. The more you see and get to know them, you understand what works for them, what's the overall view at the channel, and what they're looking for. It's very difficult to say "I think this time next year we'll have this show" because you don't even know what the slots are. Slots move, things drop out, or something hits them. Sometimes you get those calls "we've got a show that's meant to go out in six weeks and it's not going to make it, can we talk about this" things like that. You never quite know where the next show might come from.

What makes some genres more accessible to make than others?

II

James McLean

[…] The trick of it is to deliver the show that you pitch. So often commissioners will say to you as part of the pitching process 'but can you do this? […] I think we have a reputation that we'll make you a very, very good show, and we'll do it well. If a commissioner wants to know that the show they're getting, the cut is good, and they're going to be able to see their boss and say, "oh this is good—it needs this doing to it—but it's good", that's a big part of it too.

Does genre awareness bring security?

[…] I think definitely that it helps. You see time and again the same channels will commission for a pool of companies that generally bring them stuff […] Any idea can fall apart for any unforeseen reason, and that's always the risk you take going into these things. Yes, a lot of money is being spent […] If the commissioner you're speaking to has made factual shows in the past, they know what the pitfalls are. So I think it helps to be able to simplify the conversation as you're dealing with someone with similar expertise who can see whether this idea is possible or not. So I think that helps in the commissioning process; that you are dealing with people who know their area.

If genre can provide a broad set of show relationships for audiences... what is it for the television industry? Is it a risk strategy...? Does it enable production? Does it help you navigate?

I think in terms of the industry these terms are there for several reasons. They help collect things together. There will be historical reasons for it. People know drama and comedy, but when you get into factual entertainment, and all... I don't think people think like that.

It is knotty and complicated, and just the way it is - I think it helps the industry side. I don't think audiences think like that. Certain types of shows, I'm sure but that doesn't mean you just like factual shows: you like all kinds of shows. Like I said earlier, *The Apprentice* is a factual show, but so is *24 hours in A&E*. They are different.

How do genres relate to formats?

Again, it's very difficult because you can go "right, a quiz format is a format". But again, you go back to [Great British] *Bake Off* - god knows how many countries it has sold in. It is a format, but it is a factual show. It's impossible to say that you have formats in a certain genre, there are

III

formats in all kinds of genres. Comedy and drama are separate issues, but in terms of factual entertainment there are formats in other genres, there are genres in the middle. I think it's an interesting question: "what is a format?" *World of Weird* is regarded as a format, but it's a much, much looser format than *Great British Bake Off*. [Great British] *Bake Off* has an entire series structure that leads to an overall winner, so it's far more formatted broadly as a series, and also in the individual beats of an episode. There's a format to making that show, but it's not a format in the same way that *Officially Amazing* is a format. So again, that is a term that is useful but also broad, very broad.

But it's an ever-growing sprawling industry and digital bleeds into it, telly bleeds into digital. It's all changed. You now have people who are broadcasting from their bedrooms. It's an ever-changing industry and very, very, very fast-paced. So, it's very hard to quantify in a real categorical manner because everything's different. In the same way, viewing figures, that's an antiquated system. I don't think the majority of people watch live anymore, all these changes, and they're changing very, very fast. And the industry is so big and sprawling and it's finding it hard to keep up. I think of the phrase "genre-defining" … the irony in that is that a show that is genre-defining is a show that has changed a genre and has mixed it with something else.

Are industry genres static?

Head of Light Entertainment, if you google that phrase, you'll probably get the people who commissioned *Morecombe and Wise*, it was probably the Head of Light Entertainment. Back in the day, you'd just have BBC-1, so probably there would have been a channel controller, but there wouldn't have been factual.

Andrew. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 26 Nov. 2016.

A2: Interview 'Isaac' (Production Studio, Head of Entertainment Development)

Is genre part of a language shared throughout the television production industry? How do you talk about creating content?

Yeah, yeah it does get talked about. ITV runs the annual thing called the Producers Forum where the commissioners stand on stage and tell the producers what they are looking for, and this year Kevin Ryder, who is the new ITV head-honcho, sort of pointed out that everyone now has entertainment in their title, so factual entertainment, comedy entertainment… entertainment. He said that is because ITV is primarily an entertainment channel and wanted all the genres to be shot through with that spirit if you like.

I think the schedule dictates and tells the audience what to expect at what day and at what time, and that tends to be genre, those two things are interconnected, so you are more likely to see on ITV something factual during the week and later on in the evening than you will, you know, on a Saturday or Sunday evening.

In regards to content creation and idea devising, how important are genres to industry compared to their importance to consumers?

This is definitely true for commercial channels. Some genres are more expensive than others I always think that quiz - the daytime quiz - is sort of purpose-built to the schedule's needs. The schedule needs something long-running and relatively inexpensive, but they also want a bit of glamour. So, you've got a bit of a combination of market forces and creative forces creating something unique in Britain. I mean, they do have quizzes in other countries but not the sort of volume we have here. Anyway, where the money is and what it is spent on dictates genre as well.

What about formats? How do genres relate to formats?

Weirdly quizzes don't sell too well internationally. Some of the ITV ones do, but a lot of the BBC ones don't because what they're great at doing is celebrating knowledge which is harder to find a place for in the more commercial markets around the world where all they want is high-stakes/high-money based quizzes; the *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* mold rather than *University Challenge* or even *Pointless. Pointless* is up to its 1000th episode but I don't think it's

V

near the global smash that [Who Wants to Be] *Millionaire* or *Deal or No Deal* is and that's because it feels particularly British in its form.

In Roger Thirkell's book on the production industry, he urges producers to defy the expectations of genre commissioners: do you try to defy their expectations?

It's always a conundrum. I've grown up in the TV development industry. It was very young when I joined, and it has matured now. It was all focused on award-winning formats as a business. To defy what the commissioner wanted … outwardly… you might say that would be too risky what with the pressures of the big multinational bearing down on you. Of course, you want to defy conventions because how else are you going to create something original? My boss is very good at saying to me "don't worry about the slot, don't worry about what's gone on before and what's gone on after, just bring me the idea and we'll find the right place for it!" Because the more walls you put in front of something, the narrower stuff becomes. I love the spirit of that idea, but I've been in situations where that's not encouraged.

How do production development ideas work - is it looking for things that defy what has been done before, or looking for something generic and then looking to break those barriers?

Having run development teams, you can try all different ways. You can start with a genuinely blank piece of paper and spend a few days trying to come up with a thing, but I think you are naturally drawn to where the opportunities are […] and sometimes it is good to start with a piece of talent or a genre or an area and build from that […] you want to go where there's a gap in the market, but sometimes you find there is a gap in the market for a reason - so there isn't an exact science to it and you just try as many different ways as possible. I always say to my team, it's panning for gold. You can be standing in that stream for months and months and find nothing, despite your best efforts, and then one day it will just appear. It can be very frustrating, but then if it was easy everyone would be doing it.

It is a language that has grown up for us to be able to talk about ideas and navigate them, and frame their expertise naturally. Their careers become pigeon-holed in one or two genres and that permeates to the commissioning teams and then to the channels. Genres have grown more interesting as TV has become a bit more mature. It's also changing as well - the line between

factual and entertainment is more blurred than it used to be. The role between drama and factual is as blurred. It's a joy to have these genres is to break them down and create new ones.

What is the relationship between on-screen Talent and genres?

We're all walking genres aren't we [laughs]. All talent usually become famous by being associated with a programme, and that defines what genre they usually become attached to; until they become attached to another hit show that might be in a different genre. That comes back to risk and how much risk commercial or creative companies are willing to take.

How important is genre to pitch negotiations?

Genre is key because it gives everyone an understanding of the type of shows that you are talking about; the cost; the expectations; the slot. All those things are very useful to navigate getting a commission.

Isaac. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 4 Oct. 2016.

A3: Interview 'Luke' (Independent Production Company, Head of Development)

Can you give a bit of your industry background?

I am kind of in entertainment or comedy - probably veering to factual but a more factual entertainment […] I started the media world in a record company and then I moved into Radio and then I moved into TV. I had a heavy music background.

What did you work on before your current role?

So, I worked in music, live events, comedy/scripted, comedy/entertainment, fact-ent... the problem with TV is there is so much genre-blurring now; that you can make anything fit into your genre. It's blurring the boundaries, like, *Wife Swap*. Some people would say that's what today we would call features, but at the time was fact-ent, or factual. *The Apprentice*, which started as a business show, so you can say it's factual or factual entertainment, but actually, where it has progressed to now it is more an entertainment show … and the business element is secondary. People want to be entertained.

So, does genre-blurring make it easier for you or harder to create?

I think it makes it easier because we're in development and development is creative. They want ideas in this area, so let's think of ideas in that area but not necessarily genre-specific because you can take an entertainment show and strip the entertainment value out of it and make it into a factual show. The whole point of developing is you can modify things to fit, but when I was at the BBC they were very specific in their genres … like you were entertainment, or you were factual entertainment, or you were specialist factual. If you talk to people who have been in-house at the BBC for years and years and years, they don't think outside of the box. "I've got a really good factual entertainment idea, but nobody wants it!" and what I would do is say "Okay, let me turn it into something 'entertainment'. I could add a few more celebrities, makes it 'ITV' because it adds a bit of sparkle." But they tend to put it in a box and go "okay, well we're not going to do that". So, I think genre-blurring has positive aspects, you know, it is making people look outside the box more, or thinking outside their known ground but then at the same time, there is an issue with genre-blurring because with commissioning, sometimes commissioners get confused about what they want and what they can commission and don't commission

Channels pitch to tender as well, so if you've got a good relationship with a channel, they'll come to you say: "We've got a slot free in this time slot and we want something to do with tattoos or transformation of the body". They'll pitch to three to four companies, and they'll pick one of those companies to make the show that's pitched. So, there is nepotism in that sense well, in terms of programming and genre-defining and all of that. It's kind of, there are so many aspects to developing that are difficult, it's not just genre-blurring, it's also relationships with commissioners and channels, and a company like TWOFOUR or Studio Lambert will get a phone call saying, "we want ideas on this". So, rather than saying "Oh, you've just given us an idea in that genre", they're told the genre, the time, and the channel that's needing more programming. […] I'm not thinking of award-winning programming, I'm thinking "what's going to sell?" So, I'm probably kind of different from most creatives in that sort of way. I think of sellability and formatting far more than other people do.

When I talk about formats I'm talking about a 'repeatable programme' but for commercial formats, they're talking about 'something that allows you to take ownership of the IP' even though they can't do that - copyright and stuff […] they can say it is theirs. I'd say that term is used quite liberally to describe a programme you can sell elsewhere and has returnability; that's how developers see formats. They see it as something that has returnability and saleability […] If you say it's a format, someone goes "Oh! Oh! Maybe we can buy this!"

What makes some genres more accessible to make than others?

I would say quizzes are harder to get away with because ITV only commissions internally because of IP etc. So they're harder to get away with. I'd be honest and say... do you know there are one hundred hours of programming at the BBC? They haven't specially said, but it's probably more factual/fact-ent? So, there are openings there at the moment. It depends where's there is an opening in the schedule. That would be my response to that. I don't think it's easy to get an idea away at all, because of the amount of digging and pulling apart and re-sticking together that they do.

Patrick Holland recently said they were lacking factual entertainment programming, especially on BBC-2, but they always come up with these kinds of buzz-phrases, and one of the buzz-phrases they've come up with is *specialist factual entertainment formats*. That kind of thing just makes me pull my hair out! Just don't come up with these made-up terms, there is no point!

IX

They want specialist factual to be entertaining, but when it becomes entertaining it becomes factual entertainment. Specialist Factual gives you far more education and goes into granular detail. Factual entertainment goes into granular detail but in a more osmosis way.

Is genre part of a language shared throughout the television production industry?

I think there is a lot of interpretation to commissioners from their leaders. I think that there are quite strong leaders at certain channels at the moment, and I think people are tending to interpret their wants and needs, and that's lost in translations when it gets handed to the production company. Buzzwords shouldn't be used unless you can clearly define stuff. And I think they use them to help themselves look like they're forward-thinking in the marketplace compared to the other broadcasters.

So, are genres buzzwords?

I suppose they're looking for genre hybridisation. That was another kind of term they were using as well. I think it can help you be focused to an extent, but it can also ring-fence some of the things you do because if you were told that a feature show needs to be at 8 pm on a weekday on Channel 4, why would you pitch a *Wife Swap* to them? Is there enough take-out? You could argue that there was enough take-out as it was a parenting show along with being a family relationship show? So, there is take-out. Is ring-fencing an area... a good thing to do? I don't know. Does it allow your creativity to go into a different area? Does it set boundaries that can't be broken?

Can genre be detrimental to development?

I understand why they put genre in place and say, "This is an entertainment show" or "I am an entertainment commissioner" but in terms of programming, I don't think you have to be genre-specific to come up with ideas because ideas are adaptable. So, I think it gives people a fundamental grounding in where to go with your ideas and who to pitch the ideas to. Particular genres work at certain times in the scheduling, but I think when it comes to ideas you should be open to every single genre and be able to play with genre and the formats.

Is genre part of a language shared throughout the television production industry?

X

If you look at ITV now, Sue Murphy who just came in [as Head of Factual Entertainment] has incorporated factual and factual entertainment into her remit when they had separate factual and factual entertainment departments. They've come together to call it factual. Because, if you think about it, the spectrum of factual goes from specialist factual to factual entertainment.

Are industry genres a more practical approach to categories than categories relating to concepts?

I think it needs to be more fluid but I think they are doing that. There is another case in point which is, for instance, *The Jump* on Channel 4 which should have been an entertainment show but was commissioned out of the factual entertainment department. So you get variations like that. [Great British] *Bake Off* again wasn't commissioned through Entertainment or Factual Entertainment, even though it's one of the BBC's entertainment shows now. It was commissioned through Documentaries.

Luke. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 4 Oct. 2016.

A4: Interview: 'Brian' (Independent Production Company, Managing Director)

I don't think of Altman and Steve Neale in-depth, and I have to say I don't intellectually pursue this, but I do think a lot about what the audience is expecting, and I do think genre expectations is a massive part of what we do - so I think that feeds into how we make shows. I get completely passionate about that sort of playing with genre and form

If genre can provide a broad set of relations for audiences... what is it for the television industry?

I think that audiences think about genre one hundred percent, but whether they are aware of that I don't know. So if you decide to watch *The X-Factor*, you are watching *The X-Factor* because you want to watch an entertainment show and any surprises that you have within the context of that show are couched within the genre of what you are watching. So you are not expecting to watch *The X-Factor* and then to have a nature programme in the middle of it as that would defy genre expectation in audiences. If I watch a rom-com in the cinema I watch it because it's a rom-com. It's going to give me certain story beats and certain expectations of a happy ending and some tears in the middle and some romance, so I go and watch it for that. The same applies to TV.

In Roger Thirkell's book on the production industry, he urges producers to defy the expectations of genre commissioners: do you try to defy their expectations?

It's definitely what we're known for and it is a slightly 'fuck you' thing. After this show I made, there were lots of people in the industry saying "all the rules have changed now because of this show". Grierson defined documentary as the creative treatment of actuality.

So, you challenge commissioner expectations, but can companies afford to do that with genre?

I'm smiling because it is very rare these conversations, and you've got to the nub about the fucked-up nature of our industry. It is lovely to have this conversation. So, this is the problem in our industry: we're all fucked. We're all arranging deck chairs on the Titanic. This model is not going to continue, and this model is built on fear. As a commissioner, if they knew what they wanted they'd just say: "I want to make a 50-part programme on GPs!" They don't know that. If they knew it, they'd go and do it! So I've never listened to a brief. I've never gone and said, "what

do you want?" I go in and say, "This is what I want to do! Do you want to do it?" If they say no, I say "I'll go to someone else!" […] I purposely go out not to do what they're asking for. Secondly, the fear thing - and who has the power, is all-important, because at a broadcaster, say at Channel 4's Features and Formats, there are seven commissioners in that one department. They each get to make one to two shows a year, and if that show goes beneath the slot average, which let's say is two million viewers, and they get 1.5 million viewers, they're fucked. Their job is on the line, their mortgage, their everything […] So as an indie, I'm now pitching into this very small window of sameness and mediocrity just because they want something similar so they're not going to fail. […] So, it's very hard to get those different ones away because they're so risk-averse.

The other thing is if you are really in the shit with money, or you've got six weeks to go as a company, you want to take any show you can. Or if you have an investor who wants a return on their investment, you need a show that's going to make their investment sort of worthwhile. This means you are desperately trying to please the channel to get everything you want which is why all the shows are the same. By the way, to get into television you have to be rich, which is why everyone is middle class and wears fucking Barbour coats. It's depressing! So, we're set up purposely differently because I think it influences our creative output. We had an investor, but he didn't qualify for his tax breaks so we had to give the money back, so by chance, we don't have an investor, which means we're not answering to anyone and I can try one-offs, or online experiments or things like that because I just like the show.

I interview all the work experience people, as I think that is where our company will grow. If I can get them growing up understanding our DNA and sensibilities, I will be able to bring them on. So, thirty per cent of our staff is from ethnic minorities and quite a lot come from not your usual background which means our output is slightly different.

How about genre and commissioning editors?

Just on that point, I think commissioners work the same way. People have different outlooks and very different ways of working. Some will come to me and tell me "This is what I want!" It's all so much based on relationships and relationships as to how different people work. I didn't know anyone when we started our company, I knew one commissioner. People give us things

XIII

because, as a company, we are right to make that sort of show, which is ridiculous, but actually, it comes down to personal relationships - sort of who your friends are.

Who do you end up pitching to?

Documentaries, factual, formats, and entertainment.

How flexible are the commissioning departments?

Pretty flexible. For instance, a lot of our content at Channel 4 went through a woman called Kate Teckman. She was a features commissioner but had a reputation as a creative, rebellious person […] you don't read briefs, you go with who you want to work with because making a show is fucking hard work! You want to make a show with someone who is going to be on the same page creatively and who you want to go through the difficult times on the edit.

I know about Altman and Neale because I studied drama at university and documentaries and film as part of the drama degree. A lot of people coming to TV want to be actors who are coming out of Oxbridge or whatever and thinking they're very clever and doing whatever and I think that's a bit bollocks.

But I think the reason perhaps genre isn't talked about when discussing factual is that the pursuit of factual is truth (which I think is a fallacy). If you put a camera on me, if I was at home, I'd be wearing a T-Shirt and slippers and no pants (that's what I'd wear until my wife says "that's going to damage our children irrevocably, put some pants on!"). For this call, I'd act in a certain way. I would try and sound more intelligent and say certain things. If you put a camera on me I'm going to show you my best, like most people. Then you could edit me in this conversation because I've said fuck, like four times! You could make me out to be a massive swearer! Or you could use that bit at the beginning where I lose my train of thought, and have had a massive pause to say I was completely incompetent! Or you could cut me to look like a maverick genius! None of those would be true, they're just bits of me. I don't think it's possible to be entirely truthful in factual, but all the discussions are "how can we get closer to the truth?" or "how can we make this more entertaining?" I mean, *The Apprentice* isn't factual - it's formatted. *24 Hours in A&E* is closer to the truth because it's a rigged show. But there is a very interesting thing that, from a creative point of view, if you're making a drama, people are much more interested in what

sort of genre it is. But once we get into factual, they just think "this is real" when it's not. Genre is just as important in factual as it is in comedy or drama or anything like that.

Is genre part of a language shared throughout the television production industry?

If we just take the rigged shows as an example, a viewer, an average viewer, Mrs Johnson, sitting in Sunderland who is 65 - she doesn't know whether A&E is filmed on a rig, or a handheld camera, or a go-pro: she doesn't give a shit. What she wants is great content or great storytelling, yet we are obsessed with "Is it a mini-rig? Is it a rig? Is it POV shooting?" All that kind of stuff, and within the industry, they'd define that as a genre in itself. Rather than say "I'm making an ob-doc", I'd say, 'I'm making a rigged show on a skip company […] sort of becomes a genre without people realising it.

I think it's not talked about because they don't think it will have that much effect. I think they're just thinking "How can we tell this story?" But actually, they're completely ignoring the expectation of the audience, and I would say, that is the most powerful thing. They get completely obsessed by ratings […] They aren't thinking "This a rigged show".

How do you think audiences think about genre and factual categories?

I don't know whether audiences need it. I don't know the answer to this, but what I think is that within the industry we place great store on whether something is personal testimony.

But also, in pointing out that I am an anomaly in this industry**.** I have a slightly "fuck you" attitude to the whole thing, but in most places that I've worked their tactic for getting a commission will be "Right, let's try and get what this commissioner wants! Let's lip-read her brief, and playback her own words as to what she said she wants because she said she wanted that!" That's what people go and do and I do the opposite. So, I'm in 1% maybe 2% of what people do. Because I think if they knew what they wanted they'd go and tell you.

I don't watch TV, I wasn't allowed TV until I was twelve, so I've never watched *Star Wars* or an episode by *EastEnders* or anything like that. I got into TV by accident. It wasn't something I ever thought of doing. […]

Would the factual television industry be better if it took more risks in its content creation?

XV

I think they're trying to do it now. A lot of people say, "oh this is a bit of a risk!" I fucking hate it when they say that. They'll say [Great British] *Bake Off* is a risky show as it's mixing genres. It's not mixing genres, and it's not that risky. *The Island* or *Real Marigold Hotel* are seen as a genre-mixing thing, and it sort of is, but it's not a lot. *Made in Chelsea* and *Essex* is a mix of genres, in a way. […] People are desperate for content and desperate for stories, but you can't carry on telling stories the same way, because people will get bored. I think, that the vast majority of our innovation is all based on genre. Because that is our most powerful way to tell a story differently and whether or not they realise it, that's what they're doing, but I think they should be doing more of it.

Obviously, for me, it's like speaking to an artistic family member or something like that. No one has these conversations. When I got your email I was similarly enthused because I sometimes think I'm the only person talking about this or thinking about this, and many times it's a massive uphill struggle to pitch to people or engage with them with this idea and I have to hide it different ways so we're not thinking we're talking about a genre… something they think actually "I don't give a shit about this" but genre is one of the most important things in terms of how they're going to tell the story.

Brian. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 10 Feb. 2017.

A5: Interview 'Mike' (Broadcaster Commissioning Editor)

How does genre function as part of commissioning?

Different broadcasters operate in different ways, certainly, it is my experience. There are blurred lines between genres and departments. A lot of commissioners depend on personal relationships, so if you've got a relationship with a production company or a producer and they bring you something that is on the periphery of your core output, that doesn't mean you'd dismiss it. From my perspective there are certain lines in the sand you wouldn't cross, so, for example, our department, factual entertainment, we're not going to do a scripted drama. We're not going to do a pure entertainment panel show... But that's the thing, you know, there's a huge kind of sway of output that comes out of various departments. If you look at [Channel], there are documentary series' that come out of features; that comes out of factual entertainment; that comes out of formats; that you know, I think [Channel] is slightly different than other broadcasters, in that there is not a kind of desire to be that rigorous in terms of the lines, it's more about finding a good idea. Also, within [Channel] anyway, there's quite a lot of cross-genre working, so commissions from separate departments working on the same project, or projects that move from one department to another where the commissioners have come and gone, so yeah I think the lines are blurred and that can be confusing for producers.

What's the personal relationship between commissioners and producers once a project is greenlit? Do you stay close to the projects?

So, I think it varies, some projects are more hands-on than others. It's horses for courses. If something is going awry for any reason and requires more attention, you devote more time to it. The idea is for the commissioner to commission the idea and let the producer go off and make it, and when you see the cut of it, you've only got minor changes. That's the deal, but it doesn't always happen, but that's the nature of the beast; it's not an exact science.

How important is genre to pitch negotiations?

Well, there's a strategy in terms of what you're looking for. In terms of ideas that may be slot-specific, they may be subject-specific. There may be a tender process if there's a particular idea. I think generally there are multiple pitches. We have regular pitch meetings with trusted suppliers, we have irregular ones with people who have an idea or ask for a meeting that we're interested

in. We also do brainstorm sessions with indies where multiple commissioners from a department will attend. So, I think it varies; there's no kind of hard and fast rule. Generally, the meat and the potatoes would be indies and producers coming into the channel and pitching in a room with a commissioner, but different commissioners work in different ways. I don't tend to do lunches or go-to drinks, other people do. I prefer to do it in a more formal setting, and that would be either our office or the Indies industry.

Is genre part of a language shared throughout the television production industry? How do you talk about creating content?

I suppose when you have a meeting with someone, you are assuming almost that they've got experience in television production, so they kind of know what sort of series … what is the programme they are pitching to you? So, I would guess they'd use words like "it's an ob-doc series", or "it's a formatted piece" or "it's immersive because it's presenter-led". So, that sort of terminology would be kind of commonplace between producers and commissioners.

Do they use hybridisation...? Like elevator pitches? Like 'Jaws in Space'?

I always think it's quite dangerous because it sounds like something that's been done before... so I think a more experienced producer shies away from that and talks about the integrity of the idea. You know, people do pitch it in that way, but I don't personally find that particularly helpful because as I say, it's harking back to other things, so it immediately feels derivative before you've picked it up.

So, what do different pitching styles tell you about the producers?

You know some indies produce like it is a market stall with a list of thirty things that they reel off […] The more successful pitch meetings are when someone comes in with, say, three of four ideas, that they've thought about properly, and have a point of view why they might be right for the channel, why they might feel contemporary, what question they may be asking... what sort of social relevance they may have. So again, different organisations work in different ways, but I think the least successful pitch meetings are when they come in with a list of wares and try and get you to buy something.

How do audience tastes impact genre commissioning?

XVIII

That's a question for the Directors of Programmes who have an overview of the channel. A Channel has a remit and you would expect a proportion to stick to that remit. So, they have a public service remit, and some of the programmes they'd commission and produce, others wouldn't. It's not a hard-fast "right, 72% of the output must tick that box...", it's not specifically like that, but that is very much in the back of a commissioner's mind. There will be some programmes that have mass appeal, and others will not, and you accordingly balance the books. I think this would happen: The director of programmes would indicate we need more output, so we would actively target that [type of content]. In a broadcaster like Channel 4, certain commissioning targets need to be met in the department - and that is key. But I think, you know, ultimately, it comes from on high - that cross-genre view. We're not required to have that: we just kind of respond.

How does a Director of Programmes express what they're after?

It could be either. It could be a tone; it could be a very specific subject area. It could be, for example, "right we've got enough gardening programmes, we won't be commissioning on gardening for a while", or it could be "we've got a lot of dark series investigative output on the channel, we need something lighter in tone that is more uplifting". It could be either of those or variations on, I think it depends.

Different channels have different agendas and different ways of working but generally, it's all the same. The system is the same, some things are different, but in terms of what you are expected to do and how you do it, ultimately, it's about independent producers coming to you with ideas and your commissioning. It's quite basic in that respect.

Mike. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 30 Jan. 2017.

A6: Interview 'Chrissie' (Managing Director, Independent Production Company)

How would you in the workforce deal with genre. What does it mean to you?

I think it becomes more interesting when you blur those boundaries, so they can often be quite restrictive; the notion of genre can be restrictive rather than a creative thing. I would say we don't get to think of it really as genre, but in a business sense when you're pitching an idea to certain departments that will be defined as documentary or specialist factual. The film you are making might be a mixture of all those things – genre is a useful definition to delineate different approaches, but the boundaries are very blurred.

When you're developing ideas for content - do you consider what sort of genre will be popular specific commissioners?

Yes, from the very beginning, but it is a mixture of what genre they commission, whether they're a documentary department or specialist factual department, or the education department. But then […] there are individuals within that department, with their tastes and sensibilities, so you have to begin to understand those too - and then which channel; so if you're pitching to Specialist Factual at the BBC or Specialist Factual at Channel 4, the same idea would require a radically different treatment for each of those broadcasters.

And would you do that? Would you remodel it for other commissioners?

Yes, sometimes, but not all the time, you have to keep re-thinking. Some ideas can be re-thought, some ideas can't so well.

So, genres can be blurred in development?

Totally, totally.

Are some genres more accessible to make than others?

Erm… we have a reputation for high-quality factual content. So, documentaries are sort of access-based. My colleague has a strong reputation in high-profile documentaries or history. So, you try and build on things you are known for and stretch it a bit.

XX

James McLean

So, we've just done a science series and we've never really done science before. They are really strong stories, strong case studies in each of those films. So it's using bits of expertise and experience, and constantly using it to do other things. Step sideways. I suppose what drives us when we develop things is the quality of the idea and who it is for. You can't just develop an idea without knowing who it is going to be pitched to.

If an idea becomes a successful product, would that shift your company's output of genre?

It would just enable us to think of other ideas for that broadcaster that are more science-based or kind of adventure-based or credible. We've done a science series but we don't want to get stuck in one genre. We don't want to be seen as only being able to deliver one thing. You want to be seen as someone who can deliver something very contemporary, something very fresh and new.

Your website reflects this flexibility, with content appearing in multiple categories.

We don't think of genre; we think of story.

Regarding commissioning editors, are you pitching on what they might know for its generic value or new ideas that might take their interest?

It's more about distilling the ideas so you can immediately see it as a piece of television rather than a subject. It might be presenter-led, or it might be we have access to an institution and we're going to cover it over a period of time. All of that we've got to think about.

When you come up with ideas, does the emphasis come from what's has been successful? For instance, on prior productions? Or what are you looking at what's currently working at a cultural level?

I think you take inspiration from a lot of things - it might be you've done something successfully before and you want to build on it. It might be that someone else has done something successful and you want to take it a step further - but what you can't do is repeat the same thing.

So, it's about taking bits from all those things and thinking about how your project might reflect on it or be better.

XXI

Then the other crucial thing is about timing. So, it's about what, you know, we made a [show name]. It was broadcast pre-Brexit, and it was about the given timing of that documentary that made it resonate so much. It spoke to a group of people at a particular time that hadn't been heard. We didn't come up with that as a pre-Brexit piece, we came up with it because it was a social anthropology piece - we didn't frame it as a Brexit thing.

Are there any changes in the commissioning field that you have to react to as a content producer, for instance, like the loss of BBC-3?

Yes, it changes all the time, it's like trying to hit a moving target.

Would genre devices be relevant to children's shows?

I don't know. I think kids won't be aware of those genres when they're watching it.

Audience responses: Do they affect your choices in what to develop?

No. I don't think they respond to genre. I think they respond to character and story. I don't think if you said, "oh that's not a documentary that was a history programme," the two can often be transferable. It can be a documentary, but it's also a history programme; it's a history programme but it's also a documentary.

Sub-genre of factual – are they industry lead/focused?

It is an industry thing - but it's not particularly a viewer thing. I mean, they might like history, so they'll watch something about history, and they might like a documentary; they might like the world of real people. It would depend on the subject that pushes them to watch it, not because it is defined as a documentary or not.

Is genre part of a language shared throughout the television production industry?

It's is helpful for us to define it like that. So it has an impact on everything from budget to schedule to the way we tell a story. But it's about a way of telling a story rather than a genre.

Chrissie. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 12 Nov. 2016.

XXII

James McLean

XXIII

A7: Interview 'Jim' (Independent Production Company, Creative Director)

What does genre mean to you as a producer?

I am amazed academics don't look at that part of the process, but I would say that development is a bigger and bigger part of the process of making. I've been making documentaries for twenty-five odd years and if you go back to when I first started it was a much simpler process. Twenty-five years ago it was the early days of independent production companies.

So, an awful lot of development at that time would have taken place within the BBC or ITV. It was a much simpler matter. You had a series, a couple of execs, and we've got to come up with something before 9 am on a Tuesday. Come up with a series idea and perhaps take it to the controller, and the controller would say "Yes, great!" and then some producers/researchers would come up with the original topics for those episodes. Now television is much more in the business, and it is an international business, so if you like, the process behind research and development is far, far greater, and far more competitive now. […] Genres are amorphous, and they change all the time, and you are constantly mashing up genres. But do we think about specific genres? Up to a point, yes, we do. What we tend to do though is focus more on specific broadcasters when we develop. So, if we are developing something for BBC-2, documentaries, we have a specific idea of the genre - documentary - but *also* what BBC-2 is looking for because we develop knowing what those commissioning editors are after, and in turn, are wanting to commission things that work for their audiences. So, if you develop something for BBC-2 documentaries it will probably be different from BBC-3 documentaries because the demographic is different. BBC-2 is older than BBC-3, so you differentiate between the two. That is not to say we wouldn't develop a documentary series that we could try across 3-4 different channels. But where we develop, we start - and many production companies will do this -we'll start from the needs of the particular broadcaster, and then you must work backward in terms of the genre.

Can formats transform into genres?

I would say yes, as purely commercial terms […] as a company, "own" that territory, not in any copyright sense, but you've got a success. A good example would be when people first started using fixed-rigged cameras, the major shift is driven by technology, and if you like the

idea that originally came from Big Brother, and what would happen if we tried that in the documentary setting. […] Well, we all constantly cannibalising each other.

You said earlier you pitch to specific broadcasters. Was this pitch one you felt would be well-received by the people you pitched to?

Completely. We knew at Channel 5 that they had a series that was very successful about bailiffs. So I knew Channel 5 was, a few years ago, in the market for shows about everyday concerns and involved conflict. It was the territory that ITV was interested in 15-20 years ago, but was no longer interested in. So, it was very much on Channel 5. You know we don't often have the chance to do lots and lots of work on something until we know there is real interest. I think that was one of eight ideas I took to a meeting and no more than that. At the first point we pitched it, the commissioning editor was interested in it and we worked it up to figure out how we'd do it and got some access. Every company works slightly differently, so we very seldom do huge amounts of work until there is real interest from the broadcaster.

Is this a paper pitch?

Not even that. It's probably three lines. That does tend to be the way. Drama works very differently, but it does tend to be the way we often pitch things. Sometimes we've worked something up further by the time we've taken it to the commissioner, but often in the UK all we do is have a couple of lines.

Do you find that approach works with all commissioners or do you need to operate differently with each you pitch to?

Good question. In Britain, it's okay, but in America, you need to do more work. American broadcasters expect to see a more finished pitch. You can't just say "how about doing X?" You need to work it up. We have various things we're pitching right now and we have access - so we cut a little red tape. Sometimes if we think there are several places that idea could be pitched and we think it's a good idea... well, it does depend on the amount of investment we'd need to make to get into a patchable state. If we've got to send a crew to you know, Europe, just for an idea, or Scotland. just for an idea, we probably wouldn't do that. If it means sending someone out into London for an afternoon, yes, we might do it.

XXV

How do you pitch?

Well, there's a sort of adage isn't there? With the commissioning editors, saying "give me something new, just like the old one" - you know, no one knows, you're both looking for something new.

Do audiences have much investment in factual genres?

I suppose we don't get too hung up on genre. I mean, we're using genres all the time, but we're not consciously thinking about them all the time. I think audiences are watching - that's the great test. Do audiences watch structured reality? Well, it turns out youngsters watch *TOWIE*, but not older viewers, so it's never really made it onto mainstream television, but in terms of a niche digital channel, structured reality has been incredibly successful. In America, those reality shows did huge business for a while across all the digital/cable networks, that's now sort of on the wane, but I think that audiences are always looking for something fresh, but not experimental for its own sake. No one in television could have predicted *Goggle Box* to be such a success. It's unique and other shows have tried to copy it and failed abysmally. People do study documentary because it seems more purist. Very little study television, when you think it's probably our biggest cultural industry in the UK and one of our biggest exporters. It is remarkable really, but maybe it's because universities are a little behind what's happening in the real world.

Jim. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 14 Nov. 2016.

A8: Interview 'Kerry' (Broadcaster Commissioning Editor)

I've only very recently started this job, so my knowledge of commissioning is much less than my knowledge as a programming maker: I've crossed over the line!

Is there a feeling of a line?

It's like looking at that picture and I'm looking at it from this side then looking at it from the other side. It's the same picture, but your perspective is completely different.

Does it change your professional relationships?

Yes. Massively. I think one's a buyer and one's a seller. You stop being a seller and you become a buyer. When you are selling, you are nudging shoulders, selling the same ideas, you're all reaching around for the same ideas, so there's a collegiate feeling to that, but when you become a buyer it is a very different relationship. But what I think is good about telly is that the lines between buyers and sellers change the whole time you know; people go across back and forth over the line a lot. So, a lot of sellers have been buyers and a lot of buyers will become sellers again. You don't just cross the line and stay over there.

Do you think that adds to the capital?

Massively, yes. I spent most of my career in rooms, like this, with people - commissioning editors, but also colleagues who *were* commissioning editors, and at some point in the meeting a commissioning editor will say to my colleague, "what would you have done?" and they can speak in a discussion from the other side which I think is massively helpful. […] I think ex-commissioners can do that in a more useful way.

Does space matter? The room or geography of pitching?

A lot of pitches happen in the broadcaster's building, but what I'm intending to do, and I think all commissioners try and do it, is to go to the production offices, because you get such a sense of 'team', by going to their offices rather than doing it here. And I think when you are buying something, you are buying the idea, but you also probably buying something more than the idea, as the idea always changes, you're buying the team, and the company, and unless you go to those companies... well, you get a sense of people, but if you go to the company itself you can get to

understand who they are, what shows they have on, what's their infrastructure like, who has the loudest voice in the room.

Do these companies have long-term relationships with [your broadcaster] or are you having to create your portfolio of contacts?

[…] I think we are pretty accessible. So, if anyone sends in an idea to the team, "What about this for a documentary?" we either answer it fully by email, but if there's anything to it, we'd meet them. So, I don't think you have to be a well-known company.

How do those ideas work with individuals being commissioned?

So, what would happen, we would speak to that person, the individual, and if it went somewhere, you'd probably talk to them about partnering them up.

So, what sort of language?

Personally, I think the titles of genres, in the last ten years, have been born out of awards ceremonies. I really do. RTS [Royal Television Society], or BAFTA. These slew of shows, we don't want to give one award to all the documentaries, so how can we differentiate them from each other? So, they become competitions. Whatever the different genres are, they are respectively differentiating programmes that have come out of that year, and then they stick.

[…] We don't talk about genres within our team. We talk a lot about tone, and so if you have one subject like, inequality in the UK, tonally there are many different iterations of how you deal with that subject. So, you could do it as a history programme about it, a current affairs programme about it, you could do a hard-hitting observational documentary about it, or you could do something tonally counter-intuitive, fun, easy to watch, or you could do a *Benefit Cheats*, that sort of format about it. I think that's how those classifications happen. But I think when we talk about it, we talk about it as in what we wanted to do and what else we have got in that subject. So, a broad subject like that needs looking at in 2017, you probably want a spread of all those tones throughout the schedule.

Do you as a commissioning editor go-to producers with ideas?

I think it's very rare that you'd take a fully formed idea and give it to a company, but you would go to a company that has delivered in that area before and say, "it's worth thinking about

XXVIII

this idea because there's a big gap", but no, I've never heard anyone being given a fully thought-out idea.

But you'd go with a simple idea?

You'd go with a need and a space, and you'd talk about things that have worked in that area before.

In Roger Thirkell's book on the production industry, he urges producers to defy the expectations of genre commissioners: do you agree?

There are only so many stories in the world. […] I think each genre has a set of rules about it, and I think observational docs... have a set of rules. You don't have a narration; you don't have a presenter... [you] interview people as they go along within the scene... there are rules attached. Specialist factual there are rules attached... history... formats obviously, you've got all their rules... and I guess the way to innovate the rules is to break them. So, if I think about what's on our slate at the moment, there are very few commissions that sit bang in the middle of documentary […] everything else is pushing at the edges and nicking rules from other genres. When a few are successful, then it becomes it's own.

What is Genre to you?

I think it's a shorthand for programme-makers and commissioners and what's expected in a programme, and I think it slightly depends on where that programme is coming into the schedules**.** […] Rules come from all sorts of places, then rules get broken and we breathe a sigh of relief- there's nothing more exciting when you don't know.

Kerry. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 13 Mar. 2017.

A9: Interview 'Kezia' (Independent Production Company, Creative Director and Founder)

Do you consider genre in your work?

I suppose I probably don't think about genre as much as you do, I just get on and do it. The first thing I'd say is, audiences don't think about genre. I don't think they do, I don't think they think "Oh, I want to watch factual entertainment tonight!" So when we categorise a show on the website, I have a query in my mind about whether or not it's even worth categorising on the website: it's just content. The way the world is moving now in terms of the different platforms we're dealing with … everyone comes back to content. People are still hungry for content. However they consume it, or however they categorise it, there is this great desire for great content. It's important to us that we are a broad company in terms of the other companies who define themselves by the genre they work in. Some companies are documentary companies - we're not. We're a very, very broad factual company (or a non-scripted company as they say in the States). We want to celebrate that and ensure anyone coming to our website (whether or not they are a viewer, or a distributor, or another company who might be checking out the competition, or a client, or a broadcaster). We want to make sure they realise we work across several categories […] So I suppose you just don't want to reduce it to any single genre.

Is Daytime a genre?

Daytime is a particular type of programming that has loads of genres within it. There are some quite contradictory things going on with genre. On the one hand, genre can be used to deflect commissions. If you take something to a department, and they're not sure about it, they'll say "It's not for us, that's docs or that's fact-ent." If they like it, they'll find a way to make it from their department regardless of genre. For example, I recently took something to a factual entertainment department and they suggested I take it to the documentary department, and we're now making it a live event, a live documentary, so that department ran with it. […] So actually, the way they evolve their genre, is by mashing it up with other genres - so this is seen as the most exciting thing, where you take two genre and create a new genre. So, like a live documentary in our case. So, on one hand, they can say "No thank you!" to an idea because it's not of their genre, but the flip of that, often they'll say "Wow, that's interesting! That doesn't feel like it should be in our department. We're excited you've brought that to us because it doesn't feel like it should be

XXX

for us and therefore we will be seen to be making something more exciting… that feels like it has been made in the wrong place by the wrong people!" So those two things are very contradictory but creative at the same time.

If you look at *Bake Off* it is an interesting one: how on earth could anyone call *Bake Off* a documentary because it was famously commissioned by the Documentary department? I think certain broadcasters are more flexible and get more brownie points by being seen to burst out of the confines of their genre; developing new ways of taking genre in a new direction, like Channel 4 owning the Rig in documentaries.

Does that flexibility come from their resources?

No, not really. If you look at Channel 5, as far as I know, you'll have to double-check this, their commissioners are just factual commissioners, and they do not have genre titles. I think similarly at ITV, but I think they may have a nod to it, at ITV there are far fewer commissioners than Channel 4 or BBC. There are no departments like that, you just got factual commissioners.

How do genres relate to formats?

How much could we keep genre consciously in mind? I think formats are a clearer cut one. Are we consciously developing formatted shows as opposed to non-formatted shows, and the answer is "yes", I would say? For a number of years, 'format' was a dirty word; nobody wanted a thing [text] that had a format about it - because they thought audiences had grown tired of formats […] This is maybe where we talk about the question of whether audiences are aware or aren't aware of genres - I think an audience wouldn't say "Oh I wouldn't like that show, because it's a format!", they just go "I don't like that show because it feels I'm being overtly manipulated", or 'I don't like that show because I'm too conscious of the structure of the show as a viewer - I know what's going to happen". There has been now a resurgence of a format and that makes a lot of sense commercially for us, where we not only benefit from the tape sales of our show but from the onward benefits of those shows being made around the world.

Are you focused on what has worked in the past, or what might be fresh?

If you based it on what's just been successful, you'll be eighteen months out of date. It's a bit of a classic trap you fall in - you can't look at what has been successful, as they always

XXXI

commission the things that they then felt were inspired and those things will be about to air now anyway. […] But I always think it's worth coming back to genre because there are certain familiar ways of telling stories we know audiences like so we may have this great idea but what might that feel like as a fact ent show? What might that feel like as a pure documentary? What might that feel like a constructed reality piece? You can take all of those things and they have the same bit of access and the same bit of idea: you can tweak them. You start with the same bits of research, and all the same anecdotes and stories and characters in your head, and you start thinking about how you might frame it differently, essentially to different clients. Genre is completely intuitive and not intellectual at all.

Do we constantly think "Can we create a new sub-genre?" That's always there - you do want to be the people who take a genre on. If you take the example of the rigged documentary (and that's borne a complete resurgence in documentary) and make documentary incredibly cool and popular where previously it may have been seen as a little bit more serious (certainly it makes documentaries popular for younger viewers): absolutely. We are always ready to catch and capitalise on those things, but they tend not to be created consciously.

So, let's go back to the idea where we take a very, very straightforward documentary access idea to a department, and we're now going to make an hour of live television. It's a transformational programme. In this hour we're going to see these things happen, which you might normally follow happening over a long period. In a very hands-on way, we're going to crunch it down into an hour of live television. That was a very interactive process. We kept talking about how are we going to make it more interesting for the viewer, not how do we make a new genre, just how do we make it more interesting. And you get to the end you've made it more interesting and more exciting, and more terrifying as well. […] It's interesting to talk about it as we don't get to talk about it often so having 45 minutes to talk about what we do is quite interesting.

Kezia. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 28 Oct. 2016.

XXXII

A10: Interview 'Gareth' (Independent Production Company, Head of Development)

What does genre mean to you as a producer?

In terms of my day-to-day work, I guess the thing I have to think about is the sub-genres of factual. The actual precise terms for them vary from channel to channel. I pitch mainly to the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5, and Sky. Those are the primary places I pitch to and they all have a similar understanding of what genres are, but precisely terminology does vary a little from channel to channel. You probably know all this, James?

(No, please tell me)

So, at the BBC in the realm of factual, there are many subcategories. In factual television, you have entertainment and comedy on the one hand and that tends to be dealt with by certain kinds of TV companies. Then you have other companies that deal with things like documentaries, specialist factual, natural history, that sort of things. Companies tend to focus on entertainment, or they tend to focus on stuff that is more documentary driven I suppose. We are a company that focuses on the more documentary side of the industry. So, when I say entertainment, I mean shiny floor studio shows, like *Saturday Night Take Away, The X-Factor, Let it Shine*, all that kind of stuff... and comedy and would be, you know, comedy panel shows. We don't tend to work in that world. We tend to focus on documentaries, specialist factual, and the genre is known as factual entertainment - that entire genre slips and slides around. Those are the areas we focus on. That's for all the channels: BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5.

What we tend to focus on are documentaries. So, all the channels have their different departments where groups of commissioners group together. And documentaries are big; they tend to commission quite a lot of stuff, BBC and Channel 4. What we precisely mean when we say documentary... is interesting. I'm not entirely sure I know entirely what it is! They are programmes that are fundamentally about real people and real things. This is incredibly vague but what that generally means is we're looking at access-driven shows, so we're currently making a series behind the scenes of IKEA. So, we're looking at how the world's biggest furniture retailer works behind the scenes; what it means to work at IKEA. So that's in documentaries, but then they may also do something like *Exodus,* which was a show about the Syrian refugee crisis,

following people from Syria to the UK. What those things have in common there... they're real-world experiences, real-world stories that require storytelling, plain interesting storytelling. They don't require too much art to set those programmes running. Documentaries will also commission something like the *Real Marigold Hotel* […] that's an idea that could come from factual entertainment or even science perhaps. So, the line between the genres is very, very blurred.

Why is that? Is there an intuitive thing occurring here?

There are two things. The genres are constantly evolving and merging. Also, in a basic way, the commissioners who work in those departments want to commission shows that excite and interest them. Often that will involve stealing a bit of grammar from a bit of a genre. And I think that's how it should be; these genres should be diluting and moving forwards, and so in a way, they are very blurred. Until very recently, the BBC was very keen to say that it commissioned across genre and that even if its commissioners were, say, documentary commissioners, they were still able to commission shows that had specialist factual content, or a factual entertainment heart (and vice versa). So, we would regularly see science commissioners that wanted what felt like documentaries and shows that felt like factual entertainment programmes. They wanted to borrow the grammar of the other genres to make their shows feel more exciting. But what that does mean is that the definition of the genre becomes quite elastic; often you are unsure where to pitch an idea because it's not necessarily obvious which department or which genre it belongs to.

I would say this is a cross-industry issue. I just think the line (the boundary) is thinning. It is very blurred and is increasingly blurred.

When it comes to pitching, who do you feel is in control? Do you alter a pitch to fit specific departments and institutions?

What we do is a matter of routine. As long as we have ideas that we like, or where we want to work, like, we've got access to a particular location or institution. If we're struggling to get it commissioned by a particular department, we will take it to several other departments to get it commissioned and that will involve giving the idea a bit of fresh spin. So for example, if we had access to an animal hospital […] we might start by taking that idea to the Special Factual department who tends to do science, natural history, medicine, and that kind of thing. And we'd

say "This is a really great idea for you guys as it's about animal relationships and advances in veterinary care, but it has an emotional heart", but if they said no, we might take it to the Documentaries department, and say "this might be a show about animals but ultimately a project about life, it's about how we relate to the natural world" or "So we've got all these human stories, let us make it more about people and the staff who work there, so a more an observational picture of a fascinating workplace!" Off the top of my head, that would be a way to give it an angle for a different genre, but fundamentally you're looking at the same show. You're just shifting the angle and coming at it from a slightly different approach.

Will a concept change much from that initial pitch to production?

Yes, it will change the product because when you pitch an idea, a commissioner will express an interest in it, and you'll write it up. You'll write a document that sells the idea, then you'll probably go away and shoot a taster tape or a sizzle. You'll be following the brief or the notes that are given by the commissioner, and they will be led by the dictates of the genre.

For example, if you made something about a wildlife hospital that is for the documentaries department, we'd probably have much less emphasis on the animals, and we would focus on the humans and their stories. If it makes a specialist factual you'd learn more about a hedgehog habitat and why hedgehogs get hit by cars so much when they never used to be, so editorially the content would shift. I think it is what generally happens. That tends to be how it works.

Is genre part of a language shared throughout the television production industry? Is it significant outside the industry?

No, nobody knows these, if I said "specialist factual", no one outside the industry would know what I'm talking about. I need to think about how I talk, I generally use industry terminology, that's my lingua franca, so let's say I'm pitching to a factual commissioner and we have access to Disneyland Paris. That is something we're either going to take to a documentary commissioner or a specialist factual commissioner. So, it's going to be an ob-doc behind the scenes of *Making the Magic: Disneyland Paris*. "The Truth Behind the Mouse", that sort of thing. But if I was pitching to a documentaries commissioner, I would talk about what it tells us about Europe right now and what it tells us about the impact of terrorism, like France's attitude to America, or the brands that permeates our childhood and that we have adults who are still

XXXV

obsessed with Disney. So I would talk about it in those terms. If I was pitching it to a specialist factual commissioner I would say "This is a really strong specialist factual story, because you have amazing technological stories here, in how they develop the rides and the logistics in keeping a place like Disney running, the ten million deals every day... the battle against the European weather, how the rain impacts on the park use..." The way I would talk about it would alter, so, therefore, the editorial content of the show would feel significantly different. Also, specialist factual tend to use presenters, documentaries are slightly more averse to using presenters, I guess.

How does the British television production industry use genre if it is not towards an end goal? Is it a process?

Channel 4 does have a public service remit — they are required to produce shows which are about art and history, and about religion, and science, and about all manner of things. That is literally part of their official remit. They are compelled to do that, so genres exist for practical reasons. They need to legally (and are required to) build and maintain what needs to be produced; documentaries about history or art [...] So it's not entirely arbitrary; there is a reason these genres exist. It needs to be used to help make those programmes as exciting as possible - so that is why a history commissioner will borrow some of the excitement of the documentary, or borrow from factual entertainment, or borrow presenters from other genres to bring their subject to life. So it is not entirely arbitrary, there is a reason these genres exist.

Are there industry events as in pitching grounds for broadcasters?

Do you mean like TV festivals? There are all sorts of festivals and talks. Discussions take place all the time. The big TV festivals I would go to would be things such as Edinburgh Television Festival, the Sheffield Doc/Fest Festival, and at those festivals, there are panel discussions, and lectures from industry figures. And in terms of how you promote the company, we have a visual presence there. I will turn up along with members of our team and chinwag with people and schmooze. Also, it's good if you are invited to speak on a panel; it raises your profile and raises your company's profile. You play the game in that sense**.**

Gareth. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 28 Oct. 2016.

James McLean

XXXVII

A11: Interview 'Connor' (Independent Production Company, Head of Development)

What does genre mean to you as a producer?

So, it's my job, I head the development team. We've got between six to ten people working in development, and it's essentially my job to come up with the new ideas to steer production. It's very, very varied as to what I'm doing at any one time or on any one day. Essentially, it's developing ideas, and developing those up, and getting rid of those which aren't of any use. Pitching to commissioners with our CEO, and our chief creator as well, and then, if we get any interest in any pitches, further developing them up, writing them up, treatments, research, casting, and if they go into paid development, keep on pushing them - hopefully - through to production.

Is Talent a factor early on?

There are different ways it works. Normally, we'll try to get an idea that could work with anyone and then have a conversation later on with the channel once they've bought into it as to who the talent could be. But certain people will help you sell an idea anyway and we've done deals in the past - development deals with talent - where we lock them in for three months or six months and work up ideas that we can take to the channel. We say that this is something we have that has exciting talent attached to and that will further help our sales.

How important is genre to pitch negotiations?

We have some commissioners coming over for a brainstorm today, and the other thing is it's very conversational the way that we work with commissioners. We start things off quite informally and just have a chat with people about what they're currently after. Then we say that we have this idea that ticks this box and this other idea that ticks that box. They might not necessarily realise just quite how much work we've probably done for an idea, and it's only further down the line it will become more formal […] but on the whole, it's not a formal process.

Do you consider how to perpetuate genres? How to keep the commercial benefits of a genre active and in-demand?

James McLean

[…] About five years ago we made [show name] for ITV2 which was a strong brand, and format, but then ITV was questioning whether it had run its course (what can we do to make it, you know, relevant?) The very simple twist was "let's keep the brand, and take it to Ibiza as that's the bigger, holiday destination for the ITV2-type viewer and has more to offer!" So that immediately gave it a nice kick up the arse and it is still running four to five years on under that umbrella which is a brand now.

Does genre as a language differ between broadcasters?

I think there is, you know. People have job titles in television: Head of Fact-Ent, Head of Entertainment, or Commissioner for Features… whatever it is, and I don't think that particularly matters as a viewer. I don't think you know you're watching a features programme when it's something at 8 pm on Channel 4 that tells you about property, or food, or health - I think you're just interested in that as a show. Scheduling-wise, it is the type of show that appears at eight, and then at 9 pm, when you're more likely to get the big-hitting fact-ent exciting format.

I also think that delineations are less and less clear. I think everyone just wants a hit - commissioner-wise, as well as producer. So, wherever we go, and whatever commissioner we're pitching to, we seem to be constantly asked for the same thing: "Just what's the next big 9 pm format?" No matter what that will be, it seems everyone just wants that, essentially.

Do different genres offer different values for genre commissioners? Ones they might gravitate towards for different reasons?

Definitely, yes, like I said, if it's for the 9 O'Clock fact-ent idea, everyone cites the big hitters, *The Island*, *Hunted*, *The Apprentice*, *Great British Bake-Off*. Those BBC ones didn't start as 9 pm main channel, they were kind of brewed and built (elsewhere) but they ticked a lot of boxes. Likewise, *Long Lost* [Family], *Who Do You Think You Are*? I just think that any commissioner can take that to their boss and explain why they should be allowed to commission it.

There are, obviously, exceptions - like quiz shows and daytime shows, I think they are quite rigid, in how those boxes are ticked, but it's very easy to excite people with something new, from our point of view, that could be something that feels like mixing two genres. For a viewer, that could be quite interesting if you could figure out how to get that right.

XXXIX

With television moving further to narrowcasting and streaming, does it affect you and your relationship to genre, on how things are categorised?

Yeah. Speaking personally, we are just waiting for the next big thing in terms of how television answers that. I don't think anyone has an answer at the moment. Boxsets and Netflix... It feels all the big hits are slightly old and in their middle age now. *X-Factor, The Voice, Strictly Come Dancing, Britain's Got Talent... Great British Bake Off...* those came from somewhere five years ago when television was happily trotting along thinking all was hunky-dory.

I think it's fascinating that within the industry, everyone was so excited about *Eden* on Channel 4. That was the one everyone was talking about, and all the commissioners were saying "We want our *Eden!*" When it came out, it got 1.1 million or whatever it was. I don't think viewers noticed it at all, and if you ask people it's quite often they won't know what you're talking about. […] I don't think viewers have the patience anymore to wait for a big reveal and I think we are at an interesting stage in the cycle where something probably unexpected will become a big hit and everyone else will jump on it.

What are your feelings on the competitive market for production companies within genre commissioning?

I think that all the briefs we get from all commissioners are very much the same, and I think those briefs go to most companies as well. You're not going to be able to produce a massive great hit that costs eight million pounds, so yeah, and that kind of goes back to the answer to the last question. If everyone is trying to chase the same goal they're going to be coming up with the same ideas and nothing new is going to come through.

I think we're all on the same page. From the messages that we get from channels, I think it's one of the good things about us [company name] is that we have good relationships. We're all, you know, all kind of working towards the same thing, with the same sort of language.

Connor. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 27 Jan. 2017.

A12: Interview 'Harrison' (Independent Production Company, Managing Director)

What does genre mean to you as a producer?

The way I think about it is this: in television, we work in the genre of current affairs, which is an important point to make. It has always been the case—as long as I have worked in television—that at the BBC there were departments that did certain types of television. I first started work in the science department at the BBC. Those departments have their core missions and those are reflected in their title. So, a science department will be very concerned that it gets serious science, while current affairs is getting the big topics of the day in some shape or form. But what inevitably happens though is life doesn't always conform to those institutional structures, and huge and important areas can fall between those different departments, and that's something that television has struggled with for quite a long time. It can only be dealt with when you have particularly imaginative, enthusiastic commissioners. Something which, for example— and let's talk about science—there are many scientific areas where you need to mix science with current affairs journalism if you like. Doing that type of thing can be quite tricky because the current affairs people say, "Oh, should be the science guys doing it!" and the Science people say, "Oh, should be the current affairs doing it!"

So if you want to—for example—pitch something on the genetics of IVF or genetic engineering, it can be quite problematic and you then have to carefully skew your pitch either right towards the science or right towards current affairs. If you have a sympathetic commissioner you can sidestep those types of things. So, when I left the BBC it was to do something for Channel 4. I worked for their science department on the ethics of IVF. We did it as a history, but it also had the science in, and it won science awards, but it was current affairs - but that's quite rare.

Getting back to the point, if you think that the industry tends to see this division that the way that the audience doesn't: I completely agree. The audience doesn't sit down and say, "Oh that's a science programme, or that's a history programme!" they just sit down and see it as a television programme, and when you get that—the practicalities of pitching ideas to particular departments—means you need to think about how the departments see the core mission. And even though over the years we've seen in-house departments shrink, and we see commissioners who are commissioning from indies such ourselves. Whether that is Channel 4 or the BBC or

elsewhere, they will still run into those sorts of issues. It can be slightly different in American television, but I'm going to talk about British television.

Now, you were talking about documentaries as a genre. You see, the way I talk to people here about documentaries is this: there are many different types of documentaries. At one end of the spectrum, you have the pure documentary. By that I mean you have a particular character; your stories are of no particular importance as they don't carry any great issues or anything. They are just very interesting stories and you follow that person because you are interested in their personal story […] it might be a documentary on a nature ramble, or it might be somebody with a particular hobby. There is no particular issue associated with it.

At the other end of the spectrum, and you see few of these now, are what I would call hard-nose current affairs documentaries where people are encountered merely as symbols of an issue. You encounter the victim, the old person, the sick person, the school pupil, and you ask them about their views on an issue, but you're not interested in them as people. You might ask the sick person about their experience in the NHS, but you're not going to talk to them about how many kids they've got, or their hopes in life, or their ambitions in life. So, you've got that spectrum and we try to position ourselves in the middle. What we want to do is make films that are very interesting characters at their heart, but those character stories naturally give rise to the issues. What I'm saying leads to rather powerful documentaries and I would argue it gives documentaries that engage people because they are interested in the characters but simultaneously it gives them issues so they don't think "I'm wasting my time with a bit of whimsy - but I'm getting to some key issues there!" Now, that has caused all sorts of issues for commissioners. […] Once you take that approach, you are suddenly into the business of what department might commission something.

Recently there has been a move away from the completely whimsical documentary. There has also been a move away from the one-hour genre (if you can call it a genre, certainly one-hour docs) and a move away from the hard-nosed current affairs ones. So, you have several documentaries that could be made by the documentary department or could be made by the current affairs department, and there have been some turf wars about that.

There is a fantastic BBC series called *Exodus* made by the documentary department of the BBC, but it was made by an independent company […] because they wanted to get inside the

XLII

lives of migrants … it is going to win BAFTAS and all sorts of things. They then actually had to call in some current affairs filmmakers to help out, because they were going to rather hostile parts of the world with issues and difficulties that current affairs people are more adept at dealing with. There's an example of something where there were heated arguments in the BBC of whether it should be a current affairs thing or a documentary thing. […] Because I'm not a commissioner, I want our films to inhabit that little area of the spectrum. It can be quite difficult for a documentary department or current affairs department because you always run the danger of the documentary department saying "Hmm, it's a bit current affairs, as you want these political things!" and the current affairs people saying "Hmm, the focus on the characters - it's all a bit luvvy!"

We tend to work through the current affairs department. I pitch all my stuff through current departments for better or worse. That is purely based on personal contacts and so forth, I made my journey from filmmaker to exec from doing those hard nose documentaries that were made in the nineties. I've made the journey to the middle ground. […] I can see quite a few docs people and commissioners are making that different journey from the whimsical documentary to the middle ground. […] One thing that's of great interest to us is the growing importance of feature docs, because of Netflix and so on. It is a market we're dipping our toe into. What is very striking there are the documentaries there are almost always invariably tick all the boxes I've talked about: they occupy that middle ground. If you look at Netflix or the big feature documentaries, of course, there will be some which are just the opposite.

What I'm saying to you is that British Broadcasters tend not to see documentaries as a genre, but a method of approaching a subject - and if you are, for example, the BBC and claim to have a business department, (they don't really and they don't do any business documentaries, but they do *The Apprentice*), and they say they're doing business, but they are using a television approach there, you know, which is a reality show or whatever you want to call it.

I guess the point I'm making is that the emerging future doc world sees the documentary as a genre, but the commissioners in British broadcasters would see the documentary as the way of getting a subject on air, and you might also consider whether you do a quiz show or something like that.

XLIII

James McLean

What are your thoughts on genre hybridisation or blurring?

We often talk about camouflaging something: you make something accessible and then give them something to chew on. An expression from PBS in the States: crunchiness! They want to draw an audience in and then give them something to crunch on. What has been interesting is the journey we're describing to this middle ground. If you took the PBS frontline strand that we do quite a bit for, they have a very low audience; a particular type of audience. They still do some on the more talking heads hard-nose current affairs I described (partly as a result of working with British filmmakers) and that has introduced them to a new audience. They want to maintain the crunchiness.

Would you shift a pitch to if selling to different broadcasters or a different genre department?

A lot of pitching - let's talk about television pitches - they are often - certainly for documentaries - not what people imagine. Not lots of PowerPoints or glossy brochures or anything like that. Most of the people pitching to a broadcaster know the commissioner and you would immediately say, "Well, everyone has to start somewhere!" The way you start is as an assistant producer, where you get to know particular commissioners because you're making films for them. Eventually you to a point where you pitch something yourself. So, the commissioner is thinking, "Can this person deliver the idea?" That's number one. They are assessing the idea and they are assessing whether the person can deliver it. If you take an idea, 50% of the idea is the idea itself and 50% is whether the idea is deliverable. If you then go back to the 50% that is the idea, quite a bit of it will be fixed as there is a particular narrative you want to follow; certain events you are going to film. Where you do change though, is the balance, I mean the flavour and approach the film will have. So if I was talking to a documentary person I would not make it more character-based, but more ob-doc. If I was talking to somebody who was a very hardnosed current affairs commissioner, I would say "Yes, we will do those things, but there are more issues here, and this is the way we would do it!" It is tonal. It's not a complete change because the central part of the pitch is essentially the same for the commissioner. but many of the tonal things might change. You would just give more emphasis—more space—to talking about the characters.

James McLean

Here's an interesting example, *Educating Essex* was done by the Documentaries department. That is a case that is a bit more down the documentary scale and raises very important issues. It's more character-based; it does not try and analyse why kids might be failing, it just enables you to watch them. If you were pitching something like that, the characters are hugely important, so people will make what they call sizzle tapes. So, they will have done some filming of characters so the commissioner can see they are very good characters. A lot of the work on a film like that is negotiating access to school; making sure the parents are happy and stuff. You can make a pitch for a film like that. It is very character-based; you are not going to be talking about government spending. Whereas if you were pitching a film to a current affairs person, they will want more on government policy and grammar schools. So, we try to position ourselves in the middle. Sometimes that leads to some difficult conversations, sometimes with ourselves! We might want to get some journalism in, but we also want to develop some characters.

If a concept is pitched in a particular way, will that pitch agreement remain fixed through into production?

If a commissioner commissions something on the understanding of there being a particular type of film, you do that. No one in this business will do something where someone heads off and makes a different film to what their backers expect. Frankly, in my experience of television, I suspect ninety-nine percent of movies as well. You just don't do that. There's a lot of thought about what the film should be and what the commissioner wants. The reason the commissioner wants something will be because there's a specific reason. Perhaps it's what their audiences are looking for, or because it fits the mix of the broadcaster's output (because there are other films of a certain type and so on). They pay enormous attention to that. […] The history department does prefer to do older history (you know I was talking about a documentary being an approach). History uses the dressing up approach; the reality tv approach. There's a lot of that. You get people to live as if they were in the 19th century. It is a very good way of exploring the topic. […] Or you have someone who knows what they're talking about standing in cathedrals. You can argue whether the illustrated lecture is a documentary (I don't think it is - it is just an effective way of doing things). Equally, if you've got a piece of contemporary history, such as the Iraq invasion or how Brexit happened, or how the Syrian war unfolded … the History people don't look at anything that happened in the last fifty years, so you give it to current affairs people.

XLV

Current affairs people will say "Well, that's history … we've got to be thinking about not how was Brexit decided, but what is Brexit going to look like, and how is it going to affect people?" So there is a swathe of stories that fall out of the mix. […] What I try and convince commissioners (sometimes I'll succeed, sometimes I don't) is if you go and do a piece of contemporary history you'll get amazing new finds.

Certain areas just aren't very well served. Not my world, but I know there are often debates between commissioners about what the function of an art commission is. The result is that the arts should be able to do all of them, but a lot of programmes fall between the joins because they don't quite resonate with commissioners who have a central mission statement in their minds and are less interested in the stuff that clusters around that.

In Roger Thirkell's book on the production industry, he urges producers to defy the expectations of genre commissioners: do you try to defy their expectations?

I think there are some genres in television where we are always trying to come up with ideas that defy expectations. But there are different ways you can do that though. One is just to come up with new ways of tackling a subject […] *24 Hours in A&E* which is done by rigging a hospital ward with hundreds of cameras - which was a new technique that was very successful […] that gives a very intimate documentary feel because there are cameras everywhere.

There are new fresh ways of doing things. I think though often in the areas that we are doing. We do a lot of foreign affairs where we are trying to surprise people: there are different ways. We will fundamentally use the documentary approach, but we're going to get to a place you don't think we're going to get to. We've just done a documentary in Iraq, and we got to go to places where western journalism cannot get to […] we were going to try and build characters, narrative, and actuality. And so, where we're surprising commissioners is by saying that we can do things they don't think we can do. That goes back to what I was talking about earlier that pitching is 50% about whether the person can deliver. […] It is quite rare for someone to go to somebody and say, "We have a whole new way of doing things!" Certain people, Studio Lambert, for example, are good at doing that. *GoggleBox,* for example, those people are immensely talented, but in our neck of the woods, we are fundamentally a current affairs company. I'm never interested in that. I find the world so interesting. I'm not interested in formats. I'm interested in getting cameras into amazing situations in different parts of the world.

An entertainment producer will have a different view of things, and they'll be looking very hard for formats, and so on and so forth - and they will be looking very hard for formats, and so forth - and they will be looking for new ways of doing things. […] The documentary didn't always exist but works very well, and we find it a tool that's very powerful for exploring all sorts of areas, so we surprise them by not changing the technique, but by getting to people and places that people think we can't get to.

Does (or can) a genre become part of a production company's identity?

I think we'd be very happy to branch out, but I think that several things can happen when you set up an indie. Not all indies, but a lot of production companies who make great stuff for the BBC and Channel 4 […] they are built around a relatively small number of people, and those people are likely to have shared passions, and those shared passions might be music, history, or science, or current affairs. So, they'll tend to gravitate to commissioners who share their interests. Now, I have a friend who was at *Broadcast* magazine […] he's now long since gone from that and makes movies now, and his profile stated how he stayed true to the documentary and never diversified or went into formats or entertainment. I bumped into him and said I enjoyed the profile and I loved how you said you stuck with documentaries. He said, "I spent my life trying to diversify into formats and all the rest of it!" So, he regarded that as a sort of failure […] in the end, you go to the people who want to commission from you, and if they like your work they'll have you back. […]

Having a niche in business terms is a bad idea, as any business consultant will tell you. It's much better to have a finger in many pies. However, if you are well-established in a niche, and that niche continues to deliver, it can work out very successfully. While it works, it works extremely well. […] I'd have been quite worried if Channel 4 had been bought and privatised; bought by an owner who didn't have an interest in current affairs and didn't see it [genre] as part of their job. That would be very problematic for us. The same happens to lots of Indies - lots get pigeon-holed, and it can be a problem if broadcasters take against a particular genre.

Harrison. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 12 Nov. 2016.

James McLean

XLVIII

A13: Interview 'Richard' (Independent Production Company, Managing Director)

What does genre mean to you as a producer?

I guess for us the big question in terms of genre might differ from people in the academic community. For us, the big core activity as a production company is generating ideas for TV programmes or films. Before we can make something, we must originate an idea and get it funded. To do that you've got to think quite hard about who that idea is for. In other words, who do you go to get the funding you need to make it? You have to think quite hard about what sort of product you're making and who might be interested in that. Whether that's a broadcaster or other funding body. The more focused you can be about that, the closer your chance of success. So, if I come up with an idea for a current affairs documentary. I want to identify the people who want that sort of material. If I pitch it to someone who specialises in comedy or drama then I'm not getting to be that successful, so at that level, we're always thinking where our ideas or products, if you like, sit in a marketplace. So that's what you're thinking about all the time. So, for example, my company, broadly speaking, specialise in programmes that sit in specialist factual, which for us, is a genre of programming that covers things like history programmes, art documentaries. There are particular people who we know commission that sort of material. If we were to take them to the BBC, the way they commission programmes, there will be individuals in that organisation who specialise in identifying, sourcing, and developing those sorts of projects. That's how we think of genre: what is our idea? How does it fit into the current marketplace which bit of the jigsaw does it belong to? And then from that, we can work out to who to approach; where to go to find the money.

Can genre be considered then as signposting?

It is. It's a way of basically making sense of things. There's a huge amount of people out there who are interested in funding or buying content, and to make that process efficient - and it is true of every company (and it is true of small companies) the more you understand about that marketplace—how its organised, how it's divided up—the more likely it is you can get to the person you need. You can get to them quickly and efficiently without sending your idea to one hundred people who are never going to look at your idea as it's not the area that they are interested in. So that's the way it works for us - that's how genre works for us.

How, in your experience, has the industry changed?

No, it's fluid to an extent. I think for us it involves changes. For example, one way that it changes, things go out of fashion and in phases, but I think currently—in the last two to three years—I've noticed that we go to briefing events where commissioning editors give us pointers as to what they're looking for and what interests them. But they tend to not be very specific - it's not very prescriptive in terms of "We want a film about this subject or that subject!" It's a slightly bigger picture thinking of the styles and types of work that have been successful with their audiences. I think one thing that people are interested in is what they might call cross-genre projects. In other words, projects that take some of the grammar, techniques, or production processes and apply them to another type of programming. So there has been a big rise in the popularity of the fixed rig programme. Those shows take an environment and fit them with cameras, and put the cameras into a position to cover the stuff that happens in that place. So, if you think of the history of the fixed rig, initially that was used primarily on entertainment shows—something like *Big Brother*. More recently the approach, that technique if you like, has been applied to subjects that have traditionally been covered in a fairly conventional documentary fashion by a single camera team going out to film stuff. For example, Channel 4 shows like *One Born Every Minute* or *Educating Essex*, *Educating Yorkshire* brand which takes an environment like a hospital or school—some institution that you're interested in—and put cameras in it. They shoot in those environments using some of the techniques from entertainment programming of the past. In other words, bringing in some other values or techniques. So there's a sense of some genres crossing and slightly blurring.

So, is there a strategy to navigate who and where you pitch?

It wouldn't necessarily change who you approach, but it might change what you take to them. So, for instance, if we have a history idea, there are people who specialise in that type of content. Whereas five years ago we might have come up with an idea for a fairly conventional documentary with a presenter going to investigate a particular historical story or subject. Nowadays we might think, "How can we bring that subject matter/story to life in an original or inventive way?" There again you think of examples out there at the moment.

L

Is it more about the relationship between the producer and the commissioning editor than it is between the producer and the commissioning department?

I think the relationship with the commissioning editors is very important because the TV industry works very much around personal connections. It's not exclusively the way it works, and of course, it is entirely possible to pitch an idea to someone you've never met with before and never had any dealings with, but in practice, those sorts of relationships can help because the decisions that commissioners make are partly going to be about the quality of the idea that you're bringing them. But it's also going to be about other factors that are based on your connection with that person. […] It doesn't mean you never take an idea to someone you've never worked with before. You are guided by the way they work - these broadcasters work in different ways. A large broadcaster like the BBC has a large commissioning team, and they are divided up in a variety of different ways, but it tends to be by genre. They will have a commissioner for current affairs, one of children's TV, one for what they called Documentaries which is a narrower definition perhaps than you might have in the academic world, as it would generally be contemporary documentaries - as historical documentaries would be for another commissioner to specialise in.

Do commissioning editors become part of the creative process?

I think they do. I think when it works well, they are part of that conversation. But I think it's difficult to generalise about this as I think it varies a lot again. Partly to do with your relationship with that commissioning editor. There could be a range of factors: a personal connection, or a pre-existing working relationship. It could be about the company you are representing and the size and scale of what they've done in the past. Certainly, at one end of the spectrum, you will get the situation where commissioning editors will meet with a company or a group of companies, and are quite proactive in trying to generate new projects. They might have identified a gap in their schedule they want to fill. They might not know precisely what it is they want to fill it with, but what they might know is they need a wide-scale project that can be talked about—something high profile, ambitious and innovative in some way.

Again, I can only talk about the areas I know best. Say I'm a history commissioning editor and my boss, my channel controller for Channel 4 says "We need a big, high profile history series

that will get us noticed and get good figures and will compete with stuff other channels are doing, so I want you as a commissioning editor to go out into the marketplace and find the suppliers you know and trust and try and kick-start a project of that sort!" As a channel controller, I might not know what I want, I'll just know I want something that is a history project that ticks those other boxes. I will say to my commissioning editor, "Go out and find that for me!" Some of that may be the commissioning editor going to the companies they know to make that sort of work, or have a track record of projects of that sort of scale and saying, "Hey, we need something, there's a gap here, come back to me with some ideas, and you know, let's meet and talk through the range of possibilities and see if something emerges from that!" Then you can go away and work on it. In that sense, they're not looking for something fully formed, they're prompting a conversation.

I think that happens more with the large companies that have that sort of scale and track record than it does for smaller companies, but it can happen for small companies as well. If the commissioning editor knows you and knows you're good at a particular thing, they may drop that sort of brief your way and prompt you to go think about a project that could work for them. So, in that sense, they'd be involved creatively, but in other instances, generally speaking, a production company aims to develop a project quite fully before they take it to a commissioning editor. We will have thought through in some detail, not just why that subject or story might be interesting, but how creatively we tackle it. […] If you think of it from the commissioning editor's point of view, they get bombarded by ideas daily, and there is a limited amount of time to reflect long and hard about every single one of those ideas.

So, the ones who are going to stand out are the ones who have spent the time and done the work, where they've shown not just that why the story is interesting, but how we'd make it into a TV programme … which is a different set of demands. So, at that point, a lot of the creative legwork is done by the independent company, and if you get that right, the commissioning editor might feel you're ninety-nine percent of the way there, but "here are a few other thoughts to add in!" That would add a creative layer to it, but the commissioning editor would not be originating the project, they'd be identifying a good one from the range of options being presented to them. They would then be creatively involved as the project developed—making it, filming it, and

packaging it up—they would be involved at each stage of that process to varying degrees and giving their creative guidance.

How important do you think genre is to audiences?

I think that probably varies quite a lot. I'm not sure they do. I don't know. I think some audiences are probably relatively loyal to a particular channel or a group of channels. With the current British linear TV, you get the diversity stuff served up to you across an evening's viewing, and for some people, they may stay loyal to that. […] There's probably a group of audiences who find the variety of what's on offer appeals to them. I think I'd find it hard to generalise, to be honest.

I think audiences are quite sophisticated in identifying trends and new approaches. They will quite quickly identify if you're doing something traditionally or conventionally and they don't like that, they'll look for something more imaginative or more innovative. But equally, some will gravitate towards programming that gives them a conventional fare that they've been used to. I think they'd be quite good at spotting those trends and seeing how something is borrowed from one form and brought into another form, and deciding whether they like that or not. But I'm not sure they would identify that in terms of genre.

Do you feel the growth of online streaming will affect the British factual television industry?

I would imagine it must do, but for example, we did some work for the History Channel two to three years ago, which as the name suggests, is a channel that's interested in history programming. And certainly, by the time we were making programmes for them, their definition of history was much, much broader. It lost people for the bit. […] So, I think VOD [Video on Demand] will inevitably lead to more specialised, narrower channels where people go to them, rather than for variety. It will be like, "I know if I go to this channel I'm going to get a concentrated serving of the stuff I like, and it won't be interspersed with stuff that's not relevant to me or stuff I'm not looking for!" I'm sure that will change those habits, but the evidence is linear TV is still very relatively healthy. The predictions of its imminent demise seem contrary to the fact it's hanging in there quite successfully as a major place people go to gain their entertainment.

LIII

Richard. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 3 May. 2017.

A14: Interview 'Stanley' (Independent Company, Commercial Director)

In your experience does genre work differently between different commissioning departments.

It inevitably does. We produce a whole range and we do practically everything except for children's programmes. We produce light entertainment, factual entertainment, factual programmes, drama, and a significant amount of sports programming and event coverage. About development and conceiving ideas, we try to generally do as much as we can. We currently have sixty-seven full-time employees and we attempt to generate new ideas and programme formats internally, whether they're documentaries or factual entertainment programmes. We then develop them internally. […] Generally, we will float ideas with broadcasters, and we'll measure the response from broadcasters and then, together with the broadcaster, we'll decide then whether we will together invest in further developments and it does differ from drama because obviously drama requires working with freelance writers generally. We often invest in treatments and in acquiring options over rights for books, plays, and so on. We will float our ideas with prospective funders and measure their initial response with the first piece of work we introduce to them. We will either work together with a broadcaster or invest in the development ourselves. So, it does differ from genre to genre. We undertake a risk analysis of cost and investment versus return. Certainly, some of our proposals for documentary series we can undertake ourselves because most of the research is here.

Occasionally we will go out and film certain sequences or interviews with key individuals, so we have got what we call a taster tape or sizzler, so we have some form of sample for the eventual programme so we can take to the broadcaster to entice their interest and gain a commission.

How do genres relate to formats? What are your feelings on formats?

There's a huge demand for successful entertainment formats, particularly factual entertainment formats because they are very sellable from a broadcaster's commissioner's perspective. They will be a measurement for the track record of the success of previous formats with the broadcasters. You take *Britain's Got Talent*, or you take *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*,

both have been immensely successful in the UK and then the rest of the world will buy them in those formats and will adopt them.

Are there cultural inhibitors for some television?

Yes, but a good set of stories works just as well in Germany as they do in the UK. A good story will work anywhere, as an example, the sales of *Morse* have been immense over the years. Those formats sell particularly well.

With having content relating to Wales, does that make a difference in the choice of genres and shows on a local level?

The key is we produce a significant volume in the Welsh language and the broadcaster. The […] the on-screen talent is not particularly well recognized outside of Wales. So the programming we do for the Welsh tends not to sell as well as our English language output, but we have created subsidiary companies. [company name] is our brand for working with UK network broadcasters and we've been quite successful with Channel 4 particularly. We're seen as one of the key suppliers from the nation's regions into Channel 4. […] We're developing dramas in the Welsh language for S4C, and we're developing dramas for English for Channel 4.

Do you have a particular way of pitching for a genre?

In terms of drama, there will be a discussion with the broadcasters. We may come forward with proposals of who we want to see. We may have spoken to agents and have acquired options over certain talent, but ultimately control lies with the broadcasters as they will tend to associate themselves with certain talent. Channel 4 is, by definition, one that is there to develop new talent, so we're always looking for the next successful television presenter/actor/and so on.

So, it does vary but certain projects are talent-driven and entire pitches are based on our ability to manage the talent to deliver the highest programming to broadcasters. I would say that you must look at it from a broadcaster's perspective, and clearly, we have five public service broadcasters. Their remit is very clearly defined and has to do with the government and Ofcom. Consequently, they do incorporate a mix of genres. There are individuals tasked with managing those as commissioning editors for factual, drama, and so on - and then budgets are allocated accordingly, so there is kind of a master plan before you start … the channels themselves are

defined by genre. […] Of course, with self-publishing and the Netflix model it is becoming more and more apparent the world is changing. Genre is not being led by broadcasters or ourselves (content producers), but by audiences.

How are you considering those changes?

Our approach has changed really. You have to consider the majority of funding comes from broadcasters for content creation, high-quality content creation at least. We must also be promoting something that attracts interest in that product that is then made available through social media, and YouTube, and so on, so you are engaging with a wider community than your simply television community. Certainly, younger people's viewing is less in analogue television than it was. They will find content and you need to be out there engaging. Facebook and Twitter are other means to attract them to your core project on television. So, we're approaching it with a wider dynamic than we have ever done before. I think digital will mean the funding model will change. We need to monetise the people who are consuming content through other means, so we will be selling and advertising through YouTube and other social media outlets to bring funding in to justify productions. Yes, it is certainly changing all the time.

With television moving further to narrowcasting and streaming, will audiences look to, and continue to use genre?

At various times in people's lives, they will delve into genre as they choose. I have children who are in their early twenties, and the way they consume content is completely different from the way I do. But they still watching new programmes, not necessarily the same new programmes as I. They are consuming dramas, boxsets of stuff before they're been released in certain cases. They're very innovative in how they consume their content and how they find it. So, I wouldn't say they are defined by any particular genre, they will find whatever there is of high quality and engaging to them at whichever stage of life.

Does that make it hard for you?

No, I think we're still in the world where BBC, ITV, S4C, Channel 5 are still investing billions of pounds into content commissioning that will remain for the foreseeable future. It is a real cross-section of content. The international market is also working similarly. We are increasingly under pressure to bring funding in from international markets. So, it is the way of

LVII

the world for the time being, but it's a question of how you bring audiences to your content, and we need to use new forms of media to extract that audience. If what we're producing is high quality and engaging, the audience will find it.

Stanley. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 10 Oct. 2016.

A15: Interview 'David' (Independent Production Company, Chief Operating Officer)

What does genre mean to you as a producer and developer?

In programme development, you may have great ideas, just not at the right time. In the many, many years that we have developed new shows, there are good ideas but there is no place for them. You hang on long enough, and someone sells the same idea two years later! You might pluck an idea out of the ether, but the network still brings it to life.

It's funny because we don't approach development in terms of genre - we're applying to mandates that channels release. So, as we mainly produce for America, American networks are very good at publishing briefs for what they're looking for. So, what we're doing is developing ideas that speak to that brief. […] We made a show for the Science Channel called [show name] which is a really simple idea, it's about strange things photographed by satellites, and then we go down onto the ground and to see what it is. There's no way to change that for a different network, it's not an adaptable idea: it's a show about mysteries. Well, you could maybe have turned it into a history show and made it a show about archeology … there's a lot of archeology stories in the show, but, it's not like something you can turn on its head, like turning an apple into an orange.

That was something we developed without a brief; it was the first show we made for National Geographic in America. Again, that's another mystery show; that's a history mixed with mystery. It's finding an alternative way of doing a history show. Every episode takes an artefact that historians can't explain or there's doubt about. Then it follows a live investigation of people trying to find out more about them. We made sixteen hours and that was developed in-house and pitched to Nat Geo. We know what kind of shows networks like … Nat Geo likes history and science. That was the first network we pitched to and they bought it. I think one thing interesting is changing, especially in American TV, the fact that networks in America - the science channel, the history channel, TLC - they were very genre-specific networks, and that's gone out of the window. Networks are now looking to find an audience.

[…] The thing about development - if you are going to develop a show, you're going to need to be able to pitch it to more than one network because there's a lot of work in creating an idea and developing it. The first pitch is quite simple, but once you start developing it up, and finding

characters, and writing briefs, structures, and formats, you want to be able to sell it to one network or you've done a lot of work for nothing.

[…] We do occasionally do singles for Channel 4 and we made shows for Channel 5 in the past, but all our efforts are on work in America.

Are there many who do this?

Quite a few, most British production companies now make shows for America. There are two markets a year run by *Reelscreen* magazine, one in Washington and one in LA. A lot of British companies fly out to meet buyers at those particular markets.

What is your pitching approach?

I think the elevator pitch is to sell your ideas ("*Wife Swap* - meets *Great British Bake Off*"). That's a shortcut that explains what the idea is. I'm sure that everybody does that. I'd question why that's a reference to genre rather than a reference to format. You could quite easily say it's picking a social experiment if you wanted to boil it down to the genre level: pitching ideas and using short-cuts by referencing other shows, it's much more about the tone than genre. I think it's an interesting area looking at genre and production companies. I wonder if anybody would say that genre is something that informs development because I hate to say it, I'm not sure it is. Because I think we, the production companies, are at their heart, businesses. A job of someone in development is to win work by delivering content or ideas to the network that they want to buy. […] You see the thing is about production companies is you do get known for making a particular type of programming […] People buy what they know, don't they?

At the moment our company has a good reputation for making good history shows, and [show name] at the moment is their highest-ranked show in the history of that network. We know it's an area we can mine successfully because we have a good track record. I have two pitches to go out today which are both mystery shows. They know there's an audience for these shows, so like other networks, they are looking for ideas that they have an audience for.

It's all led by the audience […] I think the kind of story you've heard about [Great British] *Bake Off* in the press … about how they are upset with the BBC making shows of a very similar format - that's because it's a successful show, and […] the BBC is trying to find different ways of

copying the success in different areas - but it is the same show but in a different outfit. So, it's the audience that decides really, and all we're doing is answering briefs given to us by networks. The network knows what people are watching, so it all starts with the viewer.

In Roger Thirkell's book on the production industry, he urges producers to defy the expectations of genre commissioners: do you try to defy their expectations?

I don't think you can build a business or development strategy that does not give people what they're asking for. It's a nice idea. The innovative, groundbreaking programmes that come out of that process—*Educating Essex*, camera rigged shows—are risks for commissioners to buy. Those shows come along once. It's not because producers don't have those brilliant ideas, it's because commissioning editors reasonably don't want to take the risk, because, especially in America, you are judged by the shows you commission. In the same way that production companies want hits, commissioners want hits too. So absolutely sounds brilliants that you would give commissioners what they don't want but it doesn't sound like a sound business strategy.

David. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 6 Oct. 2016.

A16: Interview 'Leonard' (Broadcasting Commissioning Editor)

Are there benefits to a smaller or larger commissioning team?

When you have too many people doing too few projects, they meddle from a remote distance, and that's not good. If I commission a wedding dress, I'm not going to say, "Stitch it like that!" I want a brilliant wedding dress designer to take my vision and achieve it. If I start going "Oh, choose that button there, and put that button there!", it will all become a bit of a dog's dinner!

Do you tender out pitches?

This is always about getting the right people. Where do they work? If they are companies I don't know … what have they made? […]

How many companies do you work with within that sort of relationship?

The supplier has a lot of power – particularly the bigger companies. Broadly that's how it is. The relationship on the personal level does not work like that, but in terms of the power shift […] the other broadcasters and other internationals are owning all the creative talents. They are snapping up everybody!

They will work for the schedule. So we need more 'upmarkets'; we need more 'youngs'. We need broader audiences and volume as well. So, where do we think those opportunities are. Daytime is, as any broadcaster will tell you, it's the Holy Grail as it can just keep your share up.

Most of it is a collaboration […] it's a creative discussion. Sometimes you […] say, "What would you do with this? I want to do teenage mums, what you can do about that?" and see what a couple of people come back with, but it's not as a tender.

We did a big series where we did a proper tender. It's quite a big investment for us as it was an important series. It was a way for us to see how three companies would approach the process, and it was really interesting as their approaches were completely different.

Is this becoming a common approach to tender?

I mean I've worked in development, you know, it does your head in. And it is a lot of thinking and a hell of a lot of work, and when you work for a commercial channel… it is not good to

LXII

waste those people's time. I think what makes us an attractive channel to work for is because we're quick and we don't waste people's time. We don't ask "Oh, could you adjust the treatment again?" You hear stories from some of the broadcasters that are just shocking! You think "That's some poor development producer who has been paid for three weeks to redo that!" […] so you know you've got to be careful. But there's the other thing! When a company came in to see me the other day, I was trying to think where are we going next? What kind of tone/texture programmes are we looking at? This company came in—that's experienced—and they brought nothing! It was just shit - and I was like "Come on guys, you know? Come on, guys!" It was like they couldn't be bothered!

Are there any shows that have been commissioned by other channels you wish you'd commissioned yourself?

I don't think there is anything that is on any of the other channels that I go "I should have that!" In rating form, yes, but in terms of anything new, I can't think of anything where I think "We've missed a trick there!" except *Real Marigold Hotel*. That's about the only thing you think "Oo, take that static travel! With a purpose!"

You think of the shows. Eight O'clock, we've got our Holy Grail, which is the returnable factual formats. It is the Holy Grail for the industry as it pays its rent. But for us, I don't want to do loads of one-offs.

Do commissioners shape television?

Bosses sometimes say: "I don't care about ratings; we want an award winner! Who do we ring up?" [Laughs] I think strategic pieces are good for us reputation-wise, but we are a commercial channel, so we need to have bums-on-seats.

So, are demographics that vital to the shaping of television content?

When I was at another channel it was, "Oh, those tacky people in advertising!" We quite liked to wind up the sales director by telling him we were going to do "The truth about campers!" Now every commercial you're chasing those valuable audiences.

So, are your classifications are based on demographics?

Yes, we have always had a strategy where you chase volume and then you'll deliver your targets for those particular demographics.

Do audiences think about genre?

I don't think it makes any difference to them. People want a good programme. Three golden rules: Tears, titters, and tantrums! Otherwise, what are you doing on the telly?

Is genre part of a language shared throughout the television production industry? Do you share language?

We do as an industry, but if you're going to be semantic about it, everything is a reality when you think about it, whether it's a heightened reality, or constructed reality, or real reality.

Would you use those terms to define them?

[…] I think you get strategic shows that deliver. We want those and keep them fresh. That's your Holy Grail. It's a Holy Grail for the supplier and a Holy Grail for a commissioner because I can then concentrate on the new.

Do you talk about cycles of shows?

Yes, we do as a channel, we need to look for gaps. There is nothing new. There is timing! There's a new wave of doing things! But they come along once a generation, that kind of shows. I think there's a mood. So we're looking at more positivity, more joyfulness. I think the way you're structuring programmes, people aren't sitting down to single narratives quite as much. They're thinking, "Oh right, I can have a broad subject area like goodies and baddies..." or "I quite like you, so I'll come back and see what happens to you, but I don't like that one, so I'll nip out!" So that kind of way of watching telly where you dip around.

Do you look for new more than old?

It's timing.

How do you approach pitch sessions as commissioners?

In this idea session: I've got all the *Cutting Edges*, all the *Modern Times*, all the *Forty Minutes*, and just looked at what the subjects were and what the ratings were. So you kind of go,

LXIV

all those originals ... they've all been done before, but is there a way you can bring them back with a fixed rig? You think, "fixed rig?" Channel 4 did that very cleverly! They took what would be traditionally a features type territories—like houses, like food—and did a slightly documentary approach to it.

I think when you are a commissioner with a broadcaster […] you'll have access to a huge amount of information, and you'll have to feel and touch what your channel's about. And I think that's hard for a producer because you're in your little factory at York thinking "Oh, we better go give them my ideas..." and I would say to companies when they come to me saying, "I didn't bring you this because it's 'BBC'" that I will tell you whether it is right … because I know that! And actually, there's a lot of content now that you can play on the BBC—you might have a different voice-over, you might have a different presenter—but it can play across any channel!

Leonard. Genre Practices within British Factual Television Industry Production. Interview by J McLean, 2 Feb. 2017

Appendix B:

James Mclean
School of Art, Media and American Studies
UEA

Research and Enterprise Services
East Office (Arts Building)

University of East Anglia
Norwich Research Park
Norwich NR4 7TJ
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 1603 591574
Email: researchandenterprise@uea.ac.uk
www.uea.ac.uk/researchandenterprise

22 June 2016

Dear James,

I am writing to you on behalf of Professor Peter Kitson, Chair of the General Research Ethics Committee, in response to your submission of an application for ethical approval for your study 'What value does genre offer within British television production: A case study in practical industry discourse'.

Having considered the information that you have provided in your correspondence Professor Kitson has asked me to tell you that your study has been approved on behalf of the Committee.

You should let us know if there are any significant changes to the proposal which raise any further ethical issues.

Please let us have a brief final report to confirm the research has been completed.

Yours sincerely

Tasha McGowan
Administrator
Research and Enterprise Services East Office
University of East Anglia
Norwich Research Park
Norwich NR4 7TJ
Email: GREC@uea.ac.uk

Bibliography

Adams, T.E. and Holman Jones, S., 2011. Telling Stories: Reflexivity, Queer Theory, and Autoethnography. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 11(2), pp.108–116. https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708611401329.

Adorno, T., 1975. Culture Industry Reconsidered. Translated by A. Rabinbach. *New German Critique*, (6), p.12. https://doi.org/10.2307/487650.

Adorno, T. and Horkheimer, M., 2004. The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception. Translated by J. Cumming. In: R.W. McCormick and Alison Guenther-Pal, eds. *German essays on film*. New York: Continuum.

Alacovska, A., 2016. From 'Poetics' to 'Production': Genres as Active Ingredients in Media Production. In: C. Paterson, D. Lee, A. Saha and A. Zoellner, eds. *Advancing Media Production Research*. [online] London: Palgrave Macmillan UK. pp.181–199. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137541949_12.

Alacovska, A., 2017. The gendering power of genres: How female Scandinavian crime fiction writers experience professional authorship. *Organization*, 24(3), pp.377–396. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508416687766.

Alba-Juez, L., 2009. *Perspectives on discourse analysis: theory and practice*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Pub.

Altman, R., 1999. *Film/genre*. London: BFI Publishing.

Anon, 1923. *Radio Times Issue 1*. [online] BBC. Available at: <https://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/page/d58cef702a6a4b26adb3e9df7195cbd4?page=18> [Accessed 12 Nov. 2019].

Archer, M., Bhaskar, R., Collier, A., Lawson, T. and Norrie, A. eds., 2013. *Critical Realism*. 0 ed. [online] Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315008592.

Aristotle., 1996. *Poetics*. Translated by M. Heath. London: Penguin.

AVC Immedia, 2021. *Presenter-led audio*. [online] Available at: <https://avcimmedia.com/services/presenter-radio/> [Accessed 26 Oct. 2021].

BAFTA, 2017. *Virgin Media British Academy Television Awards information*. [online] BAFTA. Available at: <https://www.bafta.org/television/tv-awards-information> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

BAFTA, 2021. *EE British Academy Film Awards Rules and Guidance 2021/2022*. [online] Available at: <http://awards.bafta.org/sites/default/files/images/ee_british_academy_film_awards_2022_-_rules_and_guidelines_-_feature_categories.pdf> [Accessed 21 Oct. 2021].

James McLean

Bakehouse Productions, 2018. *Presenter-led videos*. [Bakehouse Productions] Available at: <https://www.bakehouseproductions.co.uk/video-types/video-formats-presenter-led-videos/> [Accessed 26 Oct. 2021].

Bakhtin, M.M., Holquist, M. and Emerson, C., 1986. *Speech genres and other late essays*. 1st ed. University of Texas Press Slavic series. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Banks, M., 2007. *The politics of cultural work*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Banks, M., Conor, B. and Mayer, V., 2016. Preface. In: M.J. Banks, B. Conor and V. Mayer, eds. *Production studies, the sequel! cultural studies of global media industries*, 1. publ. New York: Routledge. pp. ix–xvi.

Barfe, L., 2008. *Turned out nice again: the story of British light entertainment*. London: Atlantic Books.

Barthes, R., 1977. *Image, music, text: essays*. 13. [Dr.] ed. Translated by S. Heath. London: Fontana.

Bawarshi, A., 2000. The Genre Function. *College English*, 62(3), p.335. https://doi.org/10.2307/378935.

Bawarshi, A.S., 2003. *Genre and the invention of the writer: reconsidering the place of invention in composition*. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press.

Bayo-Moriones, A., Etayo, C. and Sánchez-Tabernero, A., 2015. Political orientation and perceived quality of television channels. *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, 25(6), pp.813–835. https://doi.org/10.1108/JSTP-09-2014-0217.

BBC, 2002. *BBC - Press Office - Entertainment Creative Heads*. [online] BBC. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2002/11_november/22/entertainment_refocus.shtml> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

BBC, 2015. *Head of Development | Jobs and careers with BBC*. [online] Available at: <https://careerssearch.bbc.co.uk/jobs/job/Head-of-Development/13520> [Accessed 26 Oct. 2021].

BBC, 2018. *BBC - TV Commissioning - Commissioning*. [online] BBC. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20180109195900/https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

BBC, 2019. *Public Purposes*. [online] BBC. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190106175110/http://www.bbc.co.uk/corporate2/insidethebbc/whoweare/publicpurposes> [Accessed 21 Oct. 2021].

BBC, 2020. *Welcome to BBC commissioning*. [online] BBC. Available at: < https://web.archive.org/web/20200116052617/https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/tv /> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

BBC, 2021a. *BBC One - Bargain Hunt*. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006nb9z> [Accessed 21 Oct. 2021].

BBC, 2021b. *Daytime and early peak*. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/daytime/bbc.com/commissioning/daytime/> [Accessed 21 Oct. 2021].

Beard, L., Scarles, C. and Tribe, J., 2016. Mess and method: Using ANT in tourism research. Annals of Tourism Research, 60, pp.97–110. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2016.06.005.

Bell, M., 2015. *How fixed-rig has transformed factual. [online] Royal Television Society*. Available at: <https://rts.org.uk/article/how-fixed-rig-has-transformed-factual> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Benoit, M., 2017. Commissioner Question Time - Factual Entertainment for all Platforms. Sheffield Doc/Fest 2017. Sheffield.

Benoit, W., 2009. Rhetorical criticism: perspectives in action. In: J.A. Kuypers, ed. *Rhetorical criticism: perspectives in action*, Lexington studies in political communication. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books. pp.77–96.

Berger, A., 1998. *Media Research Techniques*. [online] Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. Available at: <http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=997016> [Accessed 26 Oct. 2021].

Bhaskar, R., 1975. *A realist theory of science*. York: Books.

Bignell, J., 2013. *An introduction to television studies*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge.

Bignell, J., Orlebar, J. and Holland, P., 2005. *The television handbook*. 3rd ed. London; New York: Routledge.

Biltereyst, D. and Soberon, L., 2016. Formatting reality: on reality television as a genre, a meta-genre and a larger tendency in contemporary television culture. In: K. Aveyard, P.M. Jensen and A. Moran, eds. *New patterns in global television formats*. Bristol, UK; Chicago, USA: Intellect. pp.47–62.

Blum, R.A., 1995. *Television and screen writing: from concept to contract*. 3rd ed. Boston: Focal Press.

Bogdewic, S., 1999. Participant Observation. In: B.F. Crabtree and W.L. Miller, eds. *Doing qualitative research*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications. pp.47–70.

Bonner, F., 2015. Popular Entertainment: Ordinary Television. In: G. Creeber, ed. *Television Genre Book*. [online] Palgrave Macmillan. pp.204–205. Available at: <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=977273> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Bourdieu, P., 1993. *Sociology in question*. Theory, culture & society. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

Bourdieu, P., 2010. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. 1. publ ed. Routledge classics. London: Routledge.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V., 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp.77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

Brown, L. and Duthie, L., 2016. *The TV studio production handbook*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris.

Bruun, H., 2010. Genre and interpretation in production: a theoretical approach. *Media, Culture & Society*, 32(5), pp.723–737. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443710373950.

Burton, G., 2010. *Media and society: critical perspectives*. 2. ed., 1. publ ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Buscombe, E., 1970. The Idea of Genre in the American Cinema. *Screen*, 11(2), pp.33–45. https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/11.2.33.

Butler, J.G., 2012. *Television: critical methods and applications*. 4th ed. Routledge communication series. New York: Routledge.

Caldwell, J., 2011. Cultures of Production Studying Industry's Deep Texts, Reflexive Rituals, and Managed Self-Disclosures. In: J. Holt and A. Perren, eds. *Media Industries: History, Theory, and Method*. [online] Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons. pp.546–579. Available at: <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1102009> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Caldwell, J., Malcolm, P., Hill, E. and Henderson, F., 2009. 'Both Sides of the Fence': Blurred Distinctions in Scholarship and Production (A Portfolio of Interviews). In: V. Mayer, M.J. Banks and J.T. Caldwell, eds. *Production studies: cultural studies of media industries*. New York: Routledge. pp.214–229.

Caldwell, J.T., 2008. *Production culture: industrial reflexivity and critical practice in film and television*. Console-ing Passions. Durham, N.C: Duke University Press.

Caldwell, J.T., 2013. Para-Industry: Researching Hollywood's Blackwaters. *Cinema Journal*, 52(3), pp.157–165. https://doi.org/10.1353/cj.2013.0014.

Caldwell, J.T., 2014. Para-Industry, Shadow Academy. *Cultural Studies*, 28(4), pp.720–740. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2014.888922.

Caves, R.E., 2000. *Creative industries: contracts between art and commerce*. Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press.

Caves, R.E., 2003. Contracts Between Art and Commerce. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 17(2), pp.73–83. https://doi.org/10.1257/089533003765888430.

Caves, R.E. and Guo, K., 2005. *Switching channels: organization and change in TV broadcasting*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Chalaby, J.K., 2016. Drama without Drama: The Late Rise of Scripted TV Formats. *Television & New Media*, 17(1), pp.3–20. https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476414561089.

Channel 4, n.d. *A publisher-broadcaster | Channel 4*. [online] Available at: <https://www.channel4.com/corporate/about-4/how-we-do-it/publisher-broadcaster> [Accessed 18 Oct. 2021].

Channel 4, 2018. *Channel 4 Television Report and Financial Statements 2017*. [online] Channel 4. Available at:

<https://www.channel4.com/media/documents/press/news/180605_Channel_4_2017_Annual_Report_FINAL.pdf> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Channel 4, 2018. *4Producers*. [online] Channel 4. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20181127002328/https://www.channel4.com/commissioning/4producers > [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Channel 4, 2020. *4Producers | Channel 4*. [online] Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20200815083710/https://www.channel4.com/commissioning/4producers > [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Channel 5, 2018. *Commissions - Channel 5*. [online] Channel 5. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20180125091231/http://www.channel5.com/commissions/> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Channel 5, 2020. *Commissions - Channel 5*. [online] Channel 5. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20200701012048/http://www.channel5.com/commissions/> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Chapman, J., 2013. *Film and history*. Theory and history. Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York, N.Y: Palgrave Macmillan.

Clark, H. and Carlson, T., 1981. Context for Comprehension. In: J. Long, ed. *Attention and performance IX: proceedings of the 9th International Symposium on Attention and Performance, Cambridge, July 13 - 18, 1980*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum. pp.313–330.

Collie, C., 2007. *The Business of TV Production*. [online] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511816710> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Collins, D., 2000. *Management fads and buzzwords: critical-practical perspectives*. London; New York: Routledge.

Collinson, D.L., 2003. Identities and Insecurities: Selves at Work. *Organization*, 10(3), pp.527–547. https://doi.org/10.1177/13505084030103010.

Condry, I., 2013. *The Soul of Anime: Collaborative Creativity and Japan's Media Success Story*. [online] Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822397557.

Conden , A. and Sainsbury, R., 2006. *Using Verbatim Quotations in Reporting Qualitative Social Research: Researchers' Views*. [online] Social Policy Research Unit: University of York. Available at: <https://www.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/pubs/pdf/verbusers.pdf> [Accessed 11 Nov. 2021].

Cornea, C., 2018. *Genre and performance: film and television*. [online] Baltimore, Maryland: Project Muse. Available at: <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/63305/> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Corner, J., 2015. Documentary: Form and Content in Documentary Study. In: G. Creeber, ed. *Television Genre Book*. [online] Palgrave Macmillan. pp.147–148. Available at: <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=977273> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

James McLean

Corner, J., 1999. Documentary: The Transformation of a Social Aesthetic. In: J. Gripsrud, ed. *Television and common knowledge*, Comedia series. London; New York: Routledge. pp.173–184.

Corner, J. and Roscoe, J., 2016. Outside and inside television: a dialogue on 'value'. *Journal of Media Practice*, 17(2–3), pp.157–167. https://doi.org/10.1080/14682753.2016.1249207.

Cornwall, A., 2007. Buzzwords and fuzzwords: deconstructing development discourse. *Development in Practice*, 17(4–5), pp.471–484. https://doi.org/10.1080/09614520701469302.

Cottle, S., 2003. *Media organisation and production*. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Creeber, G., 2015a. Introduction: Genre Theory. In: G. Creeber, ed. *Television Genre Book*. [online] Palgrave Macmillan. pp.1–2. Available at: <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=977273> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Creeber, G., 2015b. Introduction: What is Genre?; Genre and Format. In: G. Creeber, ed. *Television Genre Book*. [online] Palgrave Macmillan. pp.11–12. Available at: <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=977273> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Creeber, G., 2015c. Reality Tv: The Osbournes. In: G. Creeber, ed. *Television Genre Book*. [online] Palgrave Macmillan. pp.165–166. Available at: <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=977273> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Crisell, A., 2002. *An introductory history of British broadcasting*. 2nd ed. London; New York: Routledge.

Dahlberg, H. and Dahlberg, K., 2019. The question of meaning—a momentous issue for qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 14(1), p.1598723. https://doi.org/10.1080/17482631.2019.1598723.

Dams, 2017. The fixed rig gets adventurous. *Televisual*. Available at: <https://www.televisual.com/news/the-fixed-rig-gets-adventurous_bid-961/> [Accessed 18 Oct. 2021].

Davis, H. and Scase, R., 2000. *Managing creativity: the dynamics of work and organization*. Managing work and organizations. Buckingham: Open Univ. Press.

Dawson, J. and Jöns, H., 2018. Unravelling legacy: a triadic actor-network theory approach to understanding the outcomes of mega events. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 22(1), pp.43–65. https://doi.org/10.1080/14775085.2018.1432409.

De Beaugrande, R. and Dressler, W.U., 1981. *Introduction to text linguistics*. Longman linguistics library. London; New York: Longman.

Deakin, H. and Wakefield, K., 2014. Skype interviewing: Reflections of two PhD researchers. *Qualitative Research*, 14(5), pp.603–616. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794113488126.

Derrida, J., 1980. The Law of Genre. Translated by A. Ronell. *Critical Inquiry*, 7(1), pp.55–81. https://doi.org/10.1086/448088.

James McLean

Dibbs, M., 2019. *Radio Fun and the BBC Variety Department, 1922-67: Comedy and Popular Music on Air*. 1st ed. 2019 ed. Palgrave Studies in the History of the Media. Cham: Springer International Publishing: Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dovey, J., 2015. Reality tv: Introduction. In: G. Creeber, ed. *Television Genre Book*. [online] Palgrave Macmillan. pp.159–160. Available at: <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=977273> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Doyle, G., 2013. *Understanding media economics*. Second edition ed. Los Angeles, California; London: SAGE.

van der Duim, R., 2007. Tourismscapes an actor-network perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 34(4), pp.961–976. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2007.05.008.

Duranti, A. and Goodwin, C. eds., 1992. *Rethinking context: Language as an interactive phenomenon*. Studies in the social and cultural foundations of language. Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Eames, T., 2017. BBC moves Big Family Cooking Showdown's TV slot after 'cynical' Bake Off launch date from Channel 4. *Digital Spy*. Available at: <http://www.digitalspy.com/tv/reality-tv/a835742/big-family-cooking-showdown-great-british-bake-off-start-date/> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Elder-Vass, D., 2008. Searching for realism, structure and agency in Actor Network Theory: Searching for realism, structure and agency in Actor Network Theory. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 59(3), pp.455–473. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2008.00203.x.

Elder-Vass, D., 2015. Disassembling Actor-network Theory. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 45(1), pp.100–121. https://doi.org/10.1177/0048393114525858.

Ellis, J., n,d. *Fixed Rig Television Production | How television used to be made*. [online] Available at: <https://www.adapttvhistory.org.uk/assets/stories/fixed-rig/fixed-rig.html> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Ellis, J., 2000. *Seeing things: television in the age of uncertainty*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris.

Ellis-Petersen, H., Conlan, T. and Martinson, J., 2016. *Great British Bake Off moves to Channel 4 as BBC negotiations collapse over fee*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2016/sep/12/bbc-loses-great-british-bake-off> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

Elsaesser, T., 2017. Writing for the medium television in Literature after Television: Author, Authority, Authenticity transition. In: T. Elsaesser, J. Simons and L. Bronk, eds. *Writing for the medium television in transition*. [online] pp.137–148. Available at: <http://www.vlebooks.com/vleweb/product/openreader?id=none&isbn=9789048503490> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Elsbach, K.D. & Kramer, R.M. (2003) Assessing Creativity in Hollywood Pitch Meetings: Evidence for a Dual-process model of Creativity Judgments. *Academy of Management Journal*. [Online] 46 (3), 283–301. Available from: doi:10.2307/30040623.

James McLean

Fanthome, C., 2006. Selling and Television: Commissioning Television Programmes. In: D. Gomery, ed. *Television industries*, 1. publ. London: British Film Inst. pp.86–88.

Ferdinand, N. and Williams, N.L., 2018. The making of the London Notting Hill Carnival festivalscape: Politics and power and the Notting Hill Carnival. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 27, pp.33–46. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2018.04.004.

Feuer, J., 2005. *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled: Television and Contemporary Criticism.* 2nd ed. [online] Available at: <http://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=254107> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

Fiske, J., 2011. *Television culture*. [online] London; New York: Routledge. Available at: <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10433347> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

Flew, T., 2012. *The creative industries culture and policy*. Los Angeles, [Calif.]; London: SAGE.

Flichy, P., 1991. *Les industries de l'imaginaire pour une analyse économique des médias*. 2e éd ed. Grenoble: Presses Univ. de Grenoble.

FORTAYmedia, n.d. The Importance of Presenter-Led video for your Business | FORTAYmedia. Available at: <https://www.fortaymedia.co.uk/the-importance-of-presenter-led-video-for-your-business/> [Accessed 26 Oct. 2021].

Foucault, M., 1978. *The history of sexuality*. 1st American ed. New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M., 1979. Authorship: What is an Author? *Screen*, 20(1), pp.13–34. https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/20.1.13.

Foucault, M., 1995. *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*. 2nd Vintage Books ed. New York: Vintage Books.

Fowler, A., 1982. *Kinds of literature: an introduction to the theory of genres and modes*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Freeman, M., 2016. *Industrial approaches to media: a methodological gateway to industry studies*. London: Palgrave Macmillan imprint published by Springer Nature.

Frith, S., 2000. The black box: the value of television and the future of television research. *Screen*, 41(1), pp.33–50. https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/41.1.33.

Galletta, A., 2013. *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond: from research design to analysis and publication*. Qualitative studies in psychology. New York: New York University Press.

Garrison, L.H., 2011. Defining Television Excellence 'On Its Own Terms': The Peabody Awards and Negotiating Discourses of Quality. *Cinema Journal*, 50(2), pp.160–165. https://doi.org/10.1353/cj.2011.0014.

Gee, J.P., 2014. *An introduction to discourse analysis 4th edition: theory and method*. [online] Available at: <http://suss.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=1613825> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

James McLean

Geertz, C., 1994. Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cockfight. In: A. Dundes, ed. *Cockfight A Casebook*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. pp.94–132.

Geraghty, C. and Lusted, D. eds., 2010. *The television studies book*. London: Arnold.

Giddens, A., 1984. *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. and Sutton, P.W., 2009. *Sociology*. 6. ed. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gitlin, T., 1979. Prime Time Ideology: The Hegemonic Process in Television Entertainment. *Social Problems*, 26(3), pp.251–266. https://doi.org/10.2307/800451.

Goffman, E., 1956. *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh.

Goffman, E., 2005. *Interaction ritual: essays in face-to-face behavior*. New Brunswick, N.J: Aldine Transaction.

Gomery, D., 2006. Television as Business: TV Moguls and Executives. In: D. Gomery, ed. *Television industries*, 1. publ. London: British Film Inst.

Gotham, K.F., 2005. Theorizing urban spectacles. *City*, 9(2), pp.225–246. https://doi.org/10.1080/13604810500197020.

Gov.uk, 2021. *Broadcasting Act 1990*. [Text] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/42/contents> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2021].

Gratton, C. and Preuss, H., 2008. Maximizing Olympic Impacts by Building Up Legacies. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 25(14), pp.1922–1938. https://doi.org/10.1080/09523360802439023.

Gripsrud, J., 2010. Television, Broadcasting, Flow: Key Metaphors in TV Theory. In: C. Geraghty and D. Lusted, eds. *The television studies book*. London; New York: New York: Arnold; Distributed exclusively in the USA by St. Martin's Press. pp.17–32.

Gullién, C., 1970. Poetics as System. *Comparative Literature*, 22(3), p.193. https://doi.org/10.2307/1769913.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P., 2007. *Ethnography: principles in practice*. 3rd ed. London; New York: Routledge.

Heritage, S., 2017. *Bland, awkward and awful – the BBC's disastrous attempt to recreate Bake Off*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2017/aug/16/the-big-family-cooking-showdown-the-bbc-disastrous-attempt-to-recreate-great-british-bake-off> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

Hesmondhalgh, D., 2018. *The cultural industries*. 4th edition ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Hesmondhalgh, D. and Baker, S., 2011. *Creative labour: media work in three cultural industries*. Culture, economy and the social. London; New York: Routledge.

Hill, A., 2004. *Reality TV factual entertainment and television audiences*. [online] Available at: <http://www.tandfebooks.com/isbn/9780203337158> [Accessed 26 Oct. 2021]..

Hill, A., 2007. *Restyling factual TV: audiences and news, documentary and reality genres*. London; New York: Routledge.

Hill, A., 2015. Reality TV: 'Studying Reality TV'. In: G. Creeber, ed. *Television Genre Book*. [online] Palgrave Macmillan. pp.161–162. Available at: <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=977273> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

Hill, A., Weibull, L. and Nilsson, Å., 2007. Public and Popular: British and Swedish Audience Trends in Factual and Reality Television. Cultural Trends, 16(1), pp.17–41. https://doi.org/10.1080/09548960601106920.

Hilmes, M., 2011. Nailing Mercury: The Problem of Media Industry Historiography. In: J. Holt and A. Perren, eds. *Media Industries: History, Theory, and Method*. [online] Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons. pp.77–112. Available at: <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1102009> [Accessed 11 Nov. 2021].

Hirsch, E.D., 1979. *Validity in interpretation*. 9. print ed. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.

Hoerschelmann, O., 2006. *Rules of the game: quiz shows and American culture*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Hogan, M., 2017. The Big Family Cooking Showdown struck a formulaic, if occasionally absorbing, note - review. *The Telegraph*. [online] 16 Aug. Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/tv/0/big-family-cooking-showdown-review-struck-formulaic-occasionally/> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

Höijer, B., 1992. Reception of television narration as a socio-cognitive process: A schema-theoretical outline. *Poetics*, 21(4), pp.283–304. https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-422X(92)90010-Z.

Holmes, S., 2008a. 'A Term Rather Too General to be Helpful': Struggling with Genre in Reality TV. In: L. Geraghty and M. Jancovich, eds. *The shifting definitions of genre: essays on labeling films, television shows and media*. Jefferson, N.C: McFarland. pp.21–39.

Holmes, S., 2008b. *Entertaining television: the BBC and popular television culture in the 1950s*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Holmes, S., 2008c. *The quiz show*. TV genres. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Hurley, P., 2017. Welcome to the Doc/Fest's Marketplace 2017. In: *Decision Maker's Guide*. Sheffield: Sheffield Doc/Fest.p.1.

Hurley, P. and Liden, K., 2017. Marketplace & Talent. In: *Industry Catalogue*. Sheffield: Sheffield Doc/Fest. pp.195–206.

Hurrell, S., 2014. Critical Realism and Mixed Methods Research. In: P.K. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney and S. Vincent, eds. *Studying Organizations Using Critical Realism*. [online] Oxford University Press. pp.241–263. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199665525.003.0013.

Irvine, A., 2011. Duration, Dominance and Depth in Telephone and Face-to-Face Interviews: A Comparative Exploration. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 10(3), pp.202–220. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691101000302.

Irvine, A., Drew, P. and Sainsbury, R., 2013. 'Am I not answering your questions properly?' Clarification, adequacy and responsiveness in semi-structured telephone and face-to-face interviews. *Qualitative Research*, 13(1), pp.87–106. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112439086.

ITV, 2018. *Commissioning*. [online] ITV. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20180112110108/https://www.itv.com/commissioning/> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

ITV, 2020. *Commissioning*. [online] ITV. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20200401214117/https://www.itv.com/commissioning/> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

ITVplc, n.d. *What we do*. [online] Available at: <https://www.itvplc.com/about/what-we-do> [Accessed 18 Oct. 2021].

Jaimangal-Jones, D., 2014. Utilising ethnography and participant observation in festival and event research. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 5(1), pp.39–55. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEFM-09-2012-0030.

James, S., 2006. To Cook or Not to Cook: Participant Observation as a Data Collection Technique. In: *Studies in Educational Ethnography*. [online] Bingley: Emerald (MCB UP). pp.35–50. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1529-210X(06)12003-3.

Jancovich, M., 2008. Pale Shadows: Narrative Hierarchies in the Histography of 1940s Horror. In: L. Geraghty and M. Jancovich, eds. *The shifting definitions of genre: essays on labeling films, television shows and media*. Jefferson, N.C: McFarland. pp.15–32.

Janghorban, R., Roudsari, R.L. and Taghipour, A., 2014. Skype interviewing: The new generation of online synchronous interview in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 9(1), p.24152. https://doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v9.24152.

Jeffrey, B. and Troman, G., 2004. Time for Ethnography. *British Educational Research Journal*, 30(4), pp.535–548.

Jenkins, J.J., 1974. Remember that old theory of memory? Well, forget it. *American Psychologist*, 29(11), pp.785–795. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0037399.

Jenner, M., 2018. *Netflix and the re-invention of television*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Johnson, A., 2019. Gender on the box: Self-reflexivity as a starting point. *Communication Teacher*, 33(3), pp.228–233. https://doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2018.1467565.

Johnson, C., 2012. *Branding television*. Comedia. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge.

Johnson, C. and Turnock, R., 2007. *ITV Cultures: Independent Television Over Fifty Years.* [online] Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill International (UK) Ltd. Available at:

<https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=290378> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2021].

Jones, D., 2015. *My life as a Creative Director | Worklife - Jobsite*. [online] Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20180203144202/http://www.jobsite.co.uk/worklife/life-creative-director-19870/> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2021].

Kavka, M. and West, A., 2004. Temporalities of the real: Conceptualising time in Reality TV. In: S. Holmes and D. Jermyn, eds. *Understanding reality television*. London; New York: Routledge. pp.136–153.

Kilborn , R., 2006. 'Mixing and Matching': The Hybridising Impulse in Today's Factual Television Programming. In: G. Dowd, L. Stevenson and J. Strong, eds. *Genre Matters: Essays in Theory and Criticism*. [online] Bristol: Intellect. pp.109–122. Available at: <http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=283058> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2021].

Latour, B., 2007. *Reassembling the social an introduction to actor-network-theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Law, J., 1992. Notes on the theory of the actor-network: Ordering, strategy, and heterogeneity. *Systems Practice*, 5(4), pp.379–393. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01059830.

Law, J., 2002. Objects and Spaces. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 19(5–6), pp.91–105. https://doi.org/10.1177/026327602761899165.

Lawrence, T.B. and Phillips, N., 2002. Understanding Cultural Industries. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 11(4), pp.430–441. https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492602238852.

Lees, N., 2010. *Greenlit: developing factual/reality TV ideas from concept to pitch*. Professional media practice. London: Methuen Drama.

Leuthesser, L., Kohli, C.S. and Harich, K.R., 1995. Brand equity: the halo effect measure. *European Journal of Marketing*, 29(4), pp.57–66. https://doi.org/10.1108/03090569510086657.

Littleboy, H., 2013. Rigged: Ethics, authenticity and documentary's new Big Brother. *Journal of Media Practice*, 14(2), pp.129–146. https://doi.org/10.1386/jmpr.14.2.129_1.

Lomborg, S., 2014. *Social media, social genres: making sense of the ordinary*. Routledge studies in new media and cyberculture. New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Lune, H. and Berg, B.L., 2017. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences, Global Edition*. [online] Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education Canada. Available at: <https://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=5833139> [Accessed 9 Oct. 2021].

Majumdar, K., 2017. Commissioner Question Time: Factual Entertainment for All Platforms. Sheffield Doc/Fest 2017. Sheffield.

Mangan, L., 2017. *The Big Family Cooking Showdown review: like Bake Off … with gravy*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2017/aug/16/big-family-cooking-showdown-review-bake-off-with-gravy> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2021].

Mayer, V., Banks, M. and Caldwell, J., 2009. Introduction: Production Studies: Roots and Routes. In: V. Mayer, M.J. Banks and J.T. Caldwell, eds. *Production studies: cultural studies of media industries*. New York: Routledge. pp.1–12.

McDonald, P., n.d. *Industrial Approaches to Media - The University of Nottingham*. [online] Available at: <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/groups/isir/isir-old/projects/industrial-approaches-to-media/index.aspx> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2021].

McKinlay, A., and Smith, C., 2009. Creative Labour: Content, Contract and Control. In: A. McKinlay and C. Smith, eds. *Creative labour: working in the creative industries*, Critical perspectives on work and employment. Basingstoke [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan. pp.29–50.

McIntyre, L., 2017a. Introduction. In: *Festival Programme*. Sheffield: Sheffield Doc/Fest. p.1.

McIntyre, L., 2017b. Welcome from the Festival Director. In: *Sheffield Doc/Fest Industry Catalogue 2017*. Sheffield: Sheffield Doc/Fest. p.3.

McLean, J., 2019. Crossing the Stream(s): Transitions to Digital for British Factual Television Production. In: *Continuity and Change - Media, Communications and Politics*. MeCCSA 2019. University of Sterling.

Medhurst, J., 2017. What a Hullabaloo! Launching BBC Television in 1936 and BBC2 in 1964. *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 14(3), pp.264–282. https://doi.org/10.3366/jbctv.2017.0373.

Miège, B., 1987. The logics at work in the new cultural industries. *Media, Culture & Society*, 9(3), pp.273–289. https://doi.org/10.1177/016344387009003002.

Miller, C.R., 1984. Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70(2), pp.151–167. https://doi.org/10.1080/00335638409383686.

Mills, B., 2008. After the Interview. *Cinema Journal*, 47(2), pp.148–153. https://doi.org/10.1353/cj.2008.0009.

Mills, B., 2009. *The sitcom*. TV genres. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press.

MIPCOM, 2018. *Discover MIP Entertainment Content Markets 2018*. [online] MIPCOM. Available at: <https://www.mipcom.com/content/dam/sitebuilder/rm/mipcom/2020/pdf/landing-pages/mip-markets-brochure-2018.pdf> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2021].

Mittell, J., 2003. Audiences Talking Genre: Television Talk Shows and Cultural Hierarchies. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 31(1), pp.36–46. https://doi.org/10.1080/01956050309602867.

Mittell, J., 2004. *Genre and television: from cop shows to cartoons in American culture*. New York: Routledge.

Moran, A. and Aveyard, K., 2014. The place of television programme formats. *Continuum*, 28(1), pp.18–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2014.870869.

Moran, A. and Malbon, J., 2006. *Understanding the global TV format*. Bristol, UK; Portland, OR: Intellect Books.

James McLean

Morley, E. and Silver, A., 1977. A Film Director's Approach to Managing Creativity. *Harvard Business Review*. [online] 1 Mar. Available at: <https://hbr.org/1977/03/a-film-directors-approach-to-managing-creativity> [Accessed 18 Oct. 2021].

Mould, O., 2009. Lights, Camera, but Where's the Action? Actor-Network Theory and the Production of Robert Connolly's Three Dollars. In: V. Mayer, M.J. Banks and J.T. Caldwell, eds. *Production studies: cultural studies of media industries*. New York: Routledge. pp.203–213.

Naremore, J., 2008. *More than night: film noir in its contexts*. Updated and expanded ed. Berkeley: University of California Pr.

Neale, S., 1980. *Genre*. London: BFI Books.

Neale, S., 2000. *Genre and Hollywood*. Sightlines. London; New York: Routledge.

Neale, S., 2015. Introduction: What is Genre? Studying Genre; Television and Genre. In: G. Creeber, ed. *The television genre book*. pp.3–6.

Ofcom, 2017. *The Ofcom Broadcasting Code 2017*. [online] Ofcom. Available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/100103/broadcast-code-april-2017.pdf> [Accessed 11 Oct. 2021].

O'Mahoney, J., O'Mahoney, H. and Al-Amoudi, I., 2017. How can the loggerhead sea-turtle survive? Exploring the journeys of the *Caretta caretta* using ANT and critical realism. *Organization*, 24(6), pp.781–799. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508416672738.

Ongstad, S., 2002. Genres: From Static, Closed, Extrinsic, Verbal Dyads to Dynamic, Open, Intrinsic, Semiotic Triads. In: R.M. Coe, L. Lingard and T. Teslenko, eds. *The rhetoric and ideology of genre: strategies for stability and change*, Research and teaching in rhetoric and composition. Cresskill, N.J: Hampton Press. pp.297–320.

Ortner, S., 2009. Studying Sideways: Ethnographic Access in Hollywood. In: V. Mayer, M.J. Banks and J.T. Caldwell, eds. *Production studies: cultural studies of media industries*. New York: Routledge. pp.175–188.

Ortner, S.B., 2010. Access: Reflections on studying up in Hollywood. *Ethnography*, 11(2), pp.211–233. https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138110362006.

Paget, D., 2011. *No other way to tell it: docudrama on film and television*. 2nd ed. Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press.

Paltridge, B., 2012. *Discourse analysis: an introduction*. 2nd ed. Continuum discourse series. New York: Continuum.

Preuss, H., 2015. A framework for identifying the legacies of a mega sport event. *Leisure Studies*, 34(6), pp.643–664. https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2014.994552.

Rees, C. and Gatenby, M., 2014. Critical Realism and Ethnography. In: P.K. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney and S. Vincent, eds. *Studying Organizations Using Critical Realism*. [online] Oxford University Press. pp.132–147. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199665525.003.0007.

James McLean

Reigada, C., Martín-Utrilla, S., Pérez-Ros, P., Centeno, C., Sandgren, A. and Gómez-Baceiredo, B., 2019. Understanding illnesses through a film festival: An observational study. *Heliyon*, 5(8), p.e02196. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2019.e02196.

Royal Television Society, 2021. *Awards*. [online] Royal Television Society. Available at: <https://rts.org.uk/awards> [Accessed 11 Oct. 2021].

Ryan, B., 1992. *Making capital from culture: the corporate form of capitalist cultural production*. De Gruyter studies in organization. Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter.

Said, E.W., 1975. The Text, the World, the Critic. *The Bulletin of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, 8(2), p.1. https://doi.org/10.2307/1314778.

Sandon, E., 2010. *Variety and Music*. [online] BBC. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/historyofthebbc/100-voices/pioneering-women/bbc.com/historyofthebbc/100-voices/pioneering-women/variety-and-music/> [Accessed 11 Oct. 2021].

Sayer, R.A., 2000. *Realism and social science*. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

Schatz, T., 1981. *Hollywood genres: formulas, filmmaking, and the studio system*. 1. ed., [26. Nachdr.] ed. Boston, Mass.: McGraw-Hill.

Schrøder, K., 2017. Cultural quality: search for a phantom? A reception perspective on judgements of cultural value. In: M. Skovmand and K. Schrøder, eds. *Media cultures: reappraising transnational media*. pp.199–219.

Schwarzer, M., 2017. The Conceptual Roots of Infrastructure. In: T. Tierney, ed. *Intelligent infrastructure: zip cars, invisible networks, and urban transformation*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.pp.39–62.

Sedgwick, J., 2006. Television as Business: The Economics of Television. In: D. Gomery, ed. *Television industries*, 1. publ. London: British Film Inst. pp.1–4.

Sedgwick, M. and Spiers, J., 2009. The Use of Videoconferencing as a Medium for the Qualitative Interview. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), pp.1–11. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800101.

Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017a. *Decision Maker's Guide*. Sheffield: Sheffield Doc/Fest.

Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017b. *Doc/Fest Industry Catalogue*. Sheffield: Sheffield Doc/Fest.

Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017c. *Sheffield Doc/Fest Festival Report 2017*. [online] Sheffield Doc/Fest. Available at: <https://issuu.com/sheffdocfest/docs/sdf_festival_report_2017_low_res> [Accessed 13 Oct. 2021].

Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2017d. *Sheffield Doc/Fest: Sheffield International Documentary Festival*. [online] Sheffield Doc/Fest. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20170611114453/https://sheffdocfest.com/view/aboutdocfest> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Sheffield Doc/Fest, 2019. *About Doc/Fest*. [online] Sheffield Doc/Fest. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190328195012/https://sheffdocfest.com/view/aboutdocfest> [Accessed 8 Oct. 2021].

Shore, B., 1996. *Culture in mind: cognition, culture, and the problem of meaning*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sky, 2020. *Sky Studios | Commissioning*. [online] Available at: < https://web.archive.org/web/20200113201446/https://www.skygroup.sky/skystudios/commissioning > [Accessed 11 Oct. 2021].

Smith, C., Elger, T., 2014. Critical Realism and Interviewing Subjects. In: P.K. Edwards, J. O'Mahoney and S. Vincent, eds. *Studying Organizations Using Critical Realism*. [online] Oxford University Press. pp.109–131. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199665525.003.0006.

Spradley, J.P., 1980. *Participant observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Stevens, Q. and Shin, H., 2014. Urban Festivals and Local Social Space. *Planning Practice & Research*, 29(1), pp.1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2012.699923.

Stradling, L., 2010. *Production Management for TV and Film: The Professional's Guide*. [online] Taylor & Francis Group, an informal business. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781501376184.

SYFY, 2019. *Scifi.com | SYFY*. [online] SYFY. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190901011458/https://www.syfy.com/scifi> [Accessed 12 Oct. 2021].

Teckman, K., 2017. Commissioner Question Time: Factual Entertainment for all Platforms. In: *Sheffield Doc/Fest*. Sheffield Doc/Fest. Sheffield.

the Guardian, 2016. *Great British Bake Off will 'stay the same' on Channel 4, says Paul Hollywood*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2016/dec/08/the-great-british-bake-off-will-stay-the-same-on-channel-4-says-paul-hollywood> [Accessed 11 Oct. 2021].

Thirkell, R., 2010. *C.O.N.F.L.I.C.T: an insiders' guide to storytelling in factual/reality TV and film*. Professional media practice. London: Methuen Drama.

Thompson, J.B., 2013. *Media and modernity: a social theory of the media.* [online] Hoboken: Wiley. Available at: <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=604478> [Accessed 26 Oct. 2021].

Thorne, S., 2020. On the use and abuse of verbatim quotations in qualitative research reports. *Nurse Author & Editor*, 30(3), pp.4–6. https://doi.org/10.1111/nae2.2.

Threadgold, T., 1989. Talking about genre: Ideologies and incompatible discourses. *Cultural Studies*, 3(1), pp.101–127. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502388900490071.

Todorov, T., 1975. *The fantastic: a structural approach to a literary genre*. Cornell paperbacks. Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press.

Todorov, T. and Berrong, R.M., 1976. The Origin of Genres. *New Literary History*, 8(1), p.159. https://doi.org/10.2307/468619.

Townley, B. and Beech, N., 2010. The discipline of creativity. In: B. Townley and N. Beech, eds. *Managing creativity: exploring the paradox*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press. pp.3–21.

Toynbee, J., 2008. Media making and social reality. In: D. Hesmondhalgh and J. Toynbee, eds. *The media and social theory*, Culture, Economy and the Social. New York: Routledge. pp.265–279.

Tummons, J., 2017. Institutional Ethnography, Theory, Methodology, and Research: Some Concerns and Some Comments. In: J. Reid and L. Russell, eds. *Studies in Qualitative Methodology*. [online] Emerald Publishing Limited. pp.147–162. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1042-319220170000015003.

Tunstall, J., 2003. *Television producers*. [online] London; New York: Routledge. Available at: <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=97839> [Accessed 11 Oct. 2021].

Turner, G., 2015. Introduction: The Use and Limitations of Genre. In: G. Creeber, ed. *Television Genre Book*. [online] Palgrave Macmillan. pp.7–8. Available at: <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=977273> [Accessed 12 Oct. 2021].

Turner, G., 2018. Netflix and the Reconfiguration of the Australian Television Market. *Media Industries Journal*, [online] 5(2). https://doi.org/10.3998/mij.15031809.0005.208.

Ursell, G., 2003. Creating Value and Valuing Creation in Contemporary UK Television: or 'dumbing down' the workforce. *Journalism Studies*, 4(1), pp.31–46. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700306501.

Webb-Lamb, K., 2017. Commissioner Question Time: Factual Entertainment for all Platforms. Sheffield Doc/Fest 2017. Sheffield.

Weger, H., Castle, G.R. and Emmett, M.C., 2010. Active Listening in Peer Interviews: The Influence of Message Paraphrasing on Perceptions of Listening Skill. *International Journal of Listening*, [online] 24(1), pp.34–49. https://doi.org/10.1080/10904010903466311.

Wengraf, T., 2001. *Qualitative research interviewing: biographic narrative and semi-structured methods*. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE.

Williams, A., 1984. Is a radical genre criticism possible? *Quarterly Review of Film Studies*, 9(2), pp.121–125. https://doi.org/10.1080/10509208409361197.

Wickham, P., 2007. *Understanding Television texts*. Understanding the moving image. London: BFI.

Williams, R., 1974. *Television: technology and cultural form*. London: Fontana.

James McLean