

ETHICAL COVERAGE OF TERROR ATTACKS



THE ETHICS OF IMAGES: MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE REINA NIGHTCLUB,
WESTMINSTER AND NICE TERROR ATTACKS

A Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment
Of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in TV Management and Production.

By
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Department of Media Studies
Notre Dame University – Louaize
Lebanon

Fall, 2017



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DEDICATION

To my children Joy and Nicolas

And to my nephews Antoine and Thomas.

Hold on to your dreams.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication.....	IV
Acknowledgments	VII
Abstract.....	X
I- Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the Study.....	6
II- Literature Review	7
A- Case 1: Saigon Execution.....	15
B- Case 2: “The Napalm Girl,” Kim Phuc	16
C- Case 3: Bhopal Disaster	18
D- Case 4: Omayra Sanchez.....	19
E- Case 5: Tank Man	20
F- Case 6: The Vulture and the Little Girl	21
G- Case 7: Firefighter	22
H- Case 8: Victoria Snelgrove.....	23
I- Sensitive Cases of War Photographs.....	25
J- U.S. Soldiers Killed in Iraq	28
K- Torture by U.S. Soldiers and Members of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).....	29
L- Photograph of Aylan Kurdi	31
M- ISIS beheading James Foley.....	32
III- Theoretical Framework	35
A- The Categorical Imperative, I. Kant	36
B- Philosophy of Utilitarianism, J. Bentham and J. S. Mill	37
C- Philosophy of Hedonism, Aristippus of Cyrene	38
D- The Veil of Ignorance, J. Rawls	39
E- The Golden Rule, a Christian Approach	40
F- Philosophy of the Golden Mean, Aristotle	41
IV- Research Questions	44
V- Research Methodology	45
A- Data Collection and Analysis	51

B- Findings and Recommendations	77
C- Conclusion.....	81
VI- References	86
Appendix A.....	94
Focus Group and One-on one Interviews.....	94
Appendix B.....	95
Background about Focus Group Participants and Interviewees	95
Appendix C.....	97
Focus group data grouping.....	97
Appendix D.....	137
Links: images of the cases (Literature Review)	137
Appendix E	140
Penalty on France 2	140
Appendix F	141
BBC Code of Conduct	141

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, terrorist attacks have become more widespread and spectacular. Thus, traditional news media must find a balance between ethics and the truth to better inform and protect the public from the harm that both sensationalist media coverage and terrorism might cause. But in reporting the destructive effects of terrorism, journalists should be careful not to appeal to emotions and not to present terrorists as heroes.

This research shows that it is possible for the media to use codes of ethics to report the truth in the coverage of terror acts. It studies the coverage of three sensational terror attacks, the Reina nightclub in Istanbul, the Westminster in London, and the *Promenade des Anglais* attack in Nice, France, and shows how television networks in Lebanon, the U.K. and France utilized, or failed to utilize codes of ethics in their coverages.

Six schools of thoughts were used to analyze the coverage of the networks. Aristotle's Golden Mean proved to be the most adequate to guide a responsible and accurate coverage of terror attacks. The research was conducted qualitatively. Two foreign and four local journalists participated in a focus group session. Then, in-depth interviews were conducted with the minister of information, three editors-in chief, one correspondent and a lawyer. Analysis of the discussions showed differences in the coverages of terror attacks under study. Lebanese media lack serious codes of ethics and media practice should be monitored by officials to guarantee that values and ethics are respected and applied. United Kingdom media, proved to be more

committed to codes of ethics. French media institutions practice according to charters and codes of ethics, but when they break the rules, they are sanctioned.

Keywords: Ethics in journalism, terrorism, graphic images, media coverage, invasion of privacy, balance and fairness.

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism, wars and other acts of violence have been plaguing societies throughout history, causing death, fear and anger among various populations. Although many countries are collaborating in their fight against terrorism, it appears that terrorist acts will continue to threaten peace and stability for an undetermined amount of time.

The media, which are on the front lines of the coverage of terror attacks, especially with the rise of transnational terrorism in the twentieth-first century, face now serious challenges and have greater responsibilities. Despite its important role, media continue to publish and use outrageous footage and photographs in their coverages of terrorist related violence. Hence, media professionals, media critics and scholars have been questioning whether upsetting images have in fact caused any positive changes and raised awareness or simply sown fear among the public.

Certainly the main job of media is to inform the public. But media need to do their job and at the same time protect viewers from sensationalism not spread fear among the public or contribute to broadcasting the mission of terrorists. This, however, is not often the case, and, in reality, the practice of many journalists contradicts the definition of journalism that is characterized as an honorable profession, because the duty of journalists is to circulate news, so that societies may rely on informed citizens and be fully democratic (Belsey & Chadwick, 1992).

Paul Martin Lester who teaches two courses titled “Visual Communication,” and “Mass Media Ethics,” says that when he mentions the courses he teaches to people, he gets the same inevitable bad joke as reply, “isn’t ‘visual ethics’ a sort of oxymoron”? His usual and only reply is, “well, I always have work” (Meyers, 2010, p. 351). Obviously, it is hard to apply ethics to

visuals and images in journalism. It is indeed harder to determine how ethics should be used in the coverage of terror attacks, even when the intention of practitioners is to be ethical in his or her coverage. But intention is a “luxury” that journalists do not always have, and practitioners “need a brief introduction to the nature of ethics and a good method for working out tough problems,” (Meyers, 2010, p. 4).

Those who lived through the Lebanese Civil War of 1975, remember how newspapers helped to promote the logic of sectarian discourse by publishing shocking and horrid images that conveyed the massacres committed by the various factions at war. But responsible journalism and photojournalism require engagement with the rules and respect for the standards of ethics. In addition, as some studies note, it may be said that photojournalism is one of the hardest professions in terms of ethical decisions (Brown & Black, 2001). For example, war reporters and photojournalists are expected to produce images that reflect the violent effects of war, and showing upsetting and realistic rushes is part of their job. But images of war are often shocking and may not be suitable to be published, not to mention the dangerous effects of violence in the news on viewers, which put professionals at risk as well.

A recent, first-ever study concentrates on 116 journalists working in three international newsrooms who are repeatedly exposed to images of graphic violence via social media, much of it considered too shocking to be shown to audiences, (Feinstein, Wanga & Owen, 2015). The study conducted by the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Center in Toronto, concludes, as summarized by the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma, that the vulnerability of those professionals who viewed repetitive and frequent violence was extended to a psychological injury, including anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Whenever an ethical issue arises, practitioners should ask themselves a series of queries about the nature of the coverage they wish to adopt. Some such questions include, who might get hurt and who might be helped by their work? What alternatives they have to do their job properly? Can a practitioner who ignores ethical issues look him or herself in the mirror again? Can he or she justify his or her choices to the public or other professionals? What values can practitioners apply?

The reporters who covered the Vietnam War felt the pressure from their editors who demanded strict objectivity from them and told them to report the information they received from U.S. officials who wanted the public to believe that things were going well. Seymour Hersh, one of the war reporters, refused to be dictated by his editors and quit his job. He continued to cover the war as a freelance reporter and earned the Pulitzer Prize in 1970 for his stories that uncovered the My Lai massacre of hundreds of civilians by American soldiers (Goodwin & Smith, 1994). Hersh's decision shows how U.S. officials manipulated the truth about the war for political and selfish interests.

Addressing the ethical aspects of the media, the Hutchins Commission refers to the "public dangers" the press may cause and says that its messages are not simply "private vagaries." The Commission's view thus confirms that the rights of the press are conditioned by its acceptance of public accountability (Meyers, 2010).

The role of a responsible journalist, who is aware of his or her duty and the power of the media, is to put the truth back on track. However, in his study, T. Peterson is conscious that the absolute truth is hard to be achieved and suggests that the media should discover "a number of lesser truths, tentative truths, working truths," (as cited in Goodwin & Smith, 1994, p. 17).

Journalists strongly believe, as they learnt it at the school of journalism, that the truth is reachable when their story include all the sides and angles concerned. If, for instance, a politician attacks a colleague about a specific issue, the reporter should get the reaction of the politician attacked and look for other perspectives related to the matter. Otherwise his story would be considered incomplete, and he would be considered biased. But can this balanced approach be applied to cover terror attacks and their actors? Can journalists interview terrorists to get their side of the story? Do terrorists have a cause that deserves to be published? The United Nations (UN) is clear about the position journalists should take in this case. It says that there are no justifications for criminal acts that are meant to incite a state of terror in the public, regardless of any political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other nature that may be raised to justify their actions (United Nations [UN], 1994).

Thus, reporting the truth in the case of terror attacks should be a function of the consciousness of the practitioner and should be based on codes of ethics. But ethical frameworks evolve over time. They are influenced by different factors such as technological capability, digital media and community values. And those ethical frameworks do not always function as a whole; sometimes they are only partially implemented.

Moreover, moral and ethics risk failure when journalists are not aware of their duties and rights. Hence, only responsible journalists tend to consider what should be the most relevant decision to make when an ethical issue arises.

The media world, which is now composed of traditional and digital media, is growing quickly. Today, reputable journalists face more ethical pressures because the decision to publish or not to publish has to be made more often and more quickly. But values and ethics in the media are still a concern to every responsible journalist. Hence, it is very important and timely to ask

whether there is a convenient formula to create a balance between following ethical principles and telling the truth.

One of the research questions this study will try to answer refers to the issue above mentioned, that is, how can a journalist find a balance between codes of ethics and the truth. Another question this study will attempt to answer is whether there is a right ethical judgment or policy that a publication should use when shocking visuals are the main story.

By examining the coverage of the events related to three terror attacks, the *Promenade des Anglais* attack in Nice, France on July 14, 2016, the attack on the Reina nightclub in Istanbul that took place on January 1, 2017 and the London Westminster attack of March 22, 2017; this study will attempt to analyze the news content and images used by European and Arab televisions in their coverage and broadcasting of those three spectacular attacks. This thesis will rely on a focus group of journalists and one-on-one interviews with media professionals who have dealt with similar situations, have covered similar events, and may face them again in the near future. The central question this research will pose to them is what they think should be the right and ethical choice media professionals should make when they are required to cover extreme events such as terror attacks, under difficult circumstances.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The decision to publish or not to publish a story or an image, and the decision about what to publish and how to publish it will be discussed further in this thesis by examining three recent acts of terror, the *Promenade des Anglais*, in Nice, France; the Reina nightclub in Istanbul, Turkey and the London Westminster attack. The timing of the Nice and Istanbul attacks was significant and impactful. The first attack happened on France's Independence Day, and the second on New Year's Eve. Both dates are obviously times of celebrations that create happy memories, but instead, these dates were transformed into times of grief and sad memories, and this change of meaning compels journalists to be more responsible in their coverage of the events.

This study analyzes the different coverage that these three spectacular attacks have received by a selected sample of Western and Eastern media practitioners, outlets and publications.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Issues related to ethics and privacy in the media have been extensively debated, particularly since the emergence of the 24-hour cable news channels and electronic media at the beginning of the 21st century. A turning point in the media coverage of disasters and human tragedy was the famous speech of the U.S. president Georges Bush a few hours after the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001. In it, he declared a global “war on terrorism,” which he described as a “struggle of good versus evil.” He, however, was not addressing only his nation, his speech was intended for a worldwide audience (Kavoori & Fraley, 2006). After his address, Katherine E. Finkelstein (2001), who had covered the September 11 events for the *New York Times*, seem to have predicted the impact and consequences of Bush’s tit-for-tat policy when she said that “the terrible story had just begun,” (p. 4). Her words anticipate the beginning of a cycle of wars without end and are reflected in French President François Hollande’s speech after the Paris attacks of 13 November 2015 in which he repeated Bush’s position and declared a “war against terrorism,” (Marthose, 2017).

Covering wars is one of the most difficult missions for responsible and conscientious journalists and photojournalists because it is extremely hard to make ethical decisions amidst the atrocities of war, as well as during or in the aftermath of brutal terror attacks. Their dilemma is to find a delicate balance between “the right to die with dignity,” “the privacy of the victims and their families,” “the public’s right to know,” and the public who do not want to know (Belsey & Chadwick, 1992), and the role of the journalist to inform and tell the truth.

Covering war and terror attacks is not the only ethical challenge for journalists. Other challenges may include the coverage of natural disasters, airplane crashes, hunger in less fortunate countries, etc. Throughout history, shocking images of destruction and its victims and shocking stories of their tragedies have been recorded in and circulated through different kinds of media and other forms of communication. Ethics, however, was not seen as an obstacle to the release of dreadful images. Many crude images won prizes and became icons and symbols despite the fact that the pain these images convey continues to shock the public.

In this regard, Meyers (2010) argues that “professionals sometimes cause harm that is justified,”(p. 18) and gives as an example a surgeon who at times finds himself obliged to remove the leg of a patient to save his life, an action that is justified. Thus, Meyers says that the doctor’s analogy could also apply to a journalist who publishes disturbing news or news that expose the private lives of others causing harm in order to deliver a valuable message to the public. For him, the decision to release this type of news is based on the idea of sacrificing the privacy and intimacy of individuals for the sake of the community.

Day (2006), on the other hand, seems to minimize the harm caused by journalists as he states that “as citizens, journalists might enter the profession with a deep appreciation of the value of privacy, but their professional obligations frequently require painful intrusions upon the personal solitude of others, sometimes resulting in harm to innocent third parties,” (p. 17). However, his views help to question the practice of journalists; is it to be considered ethical or unethical? In *Media Ethics Issues and Cases*, Patterson and Wilkins (2008), note that it is important that journalists be able to explain their ethical choices. For example, when an angry viewer questions the broadcasting of the name of a rape victim and the journalist gives an

embarrassing and unsatisfactory explanation such as: “it seemed like the right thing to do at the time,” his or her response contradicts the meaning of ethics, which is the ability to make a rational choice between what is good and what is bad, between what is morally justifiable and what is not.

But “can ethics be taught?” This question was asked by Day (2006), in his book *Ethics in Media Communications*. In it, he discusses two approaches concerning this issue, the cynical and the skeptical. Cynics believe that ethics cannot be taught because although it involves asking questions, it cannot give proper answers. In addition, cynics believe that knowing the ethical codes and values does not make a person more moral. Skeptics, on the other hand, believe that the moral development of a child is usually completed before school age and, therefore, it is worthless teaching children lessons on ethics.

Challenges related to the ethics of publishing events are first presented to the photographer in the field who simply has no choice but filming, since the event itself is the reason why the photographer is at the scene to take photos and capture the most impressive and expressive images. And, if his or her pictures remain unpublished he or she may feel guilty because his or her promise has not been respected. Ritchin (2014), a professor and co-director of photography at New York University, believes that unpublished photos will create a “trauma of witnessing [such] devastation and the powerlessness that may accompany it can be more difficult to resolve if one is prevented from sharing what one has seen with others,” (p. 192).

The aspect of trauma that Ritchin examines is an important one. But is his logic applicable to every kind of news? For example, shocking stories and images of wars or any other violent event-create a complex problem that should be treated carefully. Hence, the dilemma is to

either present credible and truthful news, including the accompanying shocking and graphic images, or simply presents the news in an informative manner while making it safe to the viewer by including less disturbing parts. This problem is similar to ethical decisions we are often faced with in our daily lives. For instance, Day (2006) poses a series of questions about actions related to ethics and moral decisions we sometimes need to make such as, should someone accept a music CD from a classmate who has downloaded it illegally from the internet? Doing so implies that his or her unethical behavior is acceptable. Or if someone witnesses a crime, is he or she obliged to report it? And, finally, can a TV crew hide a camera to film a person without his or her knowledge and publish the rushes without his or her permission? The examples are numerous. To complicate matters, numerous disturbing images have been published in various parts of world, won prizes, and came to replace the event itself.

Ethics is neither limited to a few codes of conduct (plus or minus sanctions), or a set of rules to be followed. Ethics concerns principles that differentiate the right and wrong actions of humans. Such principles are based on theories that are applied objectively and impartially. Jonathan Glover suggests that authorities cannot dictate ethical principles; they must be understood through human reasoning and experience (Belsey & Chadwick 1992).

“The goal”, says Day (2006), “is not to make ethical decisions on which everyone agrees, but to increase our ability to defend our critical judgments on some rational basis,” (p. 20). Thus, he believes that the four influential sources that affect the formation of values and attitudes to increase rational judgment are the family, peer groups, role models and societal institutions. Patterson and Wilkins (2008), on the other hand, suggest a list of ethical news values that includes: accuracy, confirmation, or the discipline of confirmation, tenacity to know when a

story is important enough to require effort, dignity, reciprocity to treat others as one wishes to be treated, sufficiency to get adequate resources, equity, community and diversity. If respected, these values might reflect the tensions inherent to the profession and indicate a commitment to the truth.

The code of ethics is one of the basic elements of the profession, explains Brown (2011) in his book *Journalism Ethics*, since it can function as the consciousness of the journalist. One example is the code written by The Society of Professional Journalists (S.P.J.) in 1926, which was amended several times and had its last version revised in September 6, 2014. This version is based on four guiding principles: professionals should seek the truth and report it, that is, always ask questions about the accuracy of the information, check the sources, avoid misleading etc.; they should minimize harm, that is, treat people in their stories, or anyone else, as human beings who deserve respect; in addition, they should remain independent, i.e., have one concern and one target, which is to fulfil the public's right to know; and finally, journalists and media professionals should hold themselves publicly accountable (Brown, 2011).

However, the real challenge is to actualize and implement an ethical code. To begin with, most cases are different since journalists do not have the same cultural background and behaviour. Thus, what is ethical for some might not be seen as ethical for others since values and ethics differ from one place to another. For instance, mothers are generally cherished and respected, whereas women tend not to receive the same type of treatment. Consequently, according to Ward (2013), a code that applies to global media ethics is still a work in progress. In addition, most proposals to create exemplar values to a universal code of ethics in journalism have found its way into Western cultures but are poorly applied in non-Western ones.

Saleh Nagm, the assistant general manager of the TV channel Al-Arabiya, which is a part of the Saudi-owned MBC group, says that: “in theory, the principles of media ethics are universal. Practice, however, depends on other factors, including local politics, economics and culture.” (Ward, 2013, p. 101) Thus, the handbook for journalists worldwide published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, insists on the necessity to show great respect for victims and their friends and families, especially since most victims and witnesses do not know how the media works (Marthose, 2017).

“To prepare for peace, we must prepare for war,” (Ward, 2013, p. 146) said an American media trainer during a workshop held in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, in June 2011. The workshop was meant to prepare Liberian journalists to report and act professionally and responsibly after the country’s fourteen-year civil war. As he put it, a good reporter must have the same ethical thinking and the same values in peace, in war and in all types of journalistic coverage.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the handbook for journalists addresses in detail the specific case of the coverage of terrorist attacks. It explains that the real target of perpetrators of violent or terrorist acts is to turn people against each other by increasing repression, discrimination and discord. Terrorists do not intend to simply frighten men and women, they want to prove their ideas of widespread persecution correct, and attract new followers to their violent cause. Their purpose is to create a mood of defeatism in the face of attacks and provoke polarized reactions in the population (Marthose, 2017).

Thus, when media practitioners praise terrorists and their acts, they clearly contribute to promote their radical goals. UNESCO warns journalists against glorifying terrorists, “because the media face laws that penalize the glorification of terrorism,” (Marthose, 2017, p. 21). In addition, the UN recommends that “the media must learn to measure their tone,” not to feed the “noise machine” to avoid making terrorism or terrorists look better than they really are, and be careful not to spread anxiety or increase anger in the public, “the public expects the media to be its anchors and save it from being sucked into the whirlwinds of news,” (Marthose, 2017, p. 49).

Likewise, in a program broadcasted by the U.S. station, National Public Radio, (NPR) in 2017, the reporter questioned whether terrorists are actually being portrayed as stars, especially since the way in which the media portray terrorists and interprets their ideas might unconsciously indicate or elicit a sort of esteem. When the media speak of the “mastermind” behind an attack, or of “sophisticated” attacks, it indirectly glorifies killers who are presented as exceptional individuals. How then should the media treat the messages and videos sent by terrorists, especially since it is known that they are propaganda materials which are intended to cause serious impact, such as recruit activists, fuel fear or cause political repercussions in the target country? Although these materials are often newsworthy, practitioners should evaluate the utility and the objective of their messages because the media may be accused of complicity (Marthose, 2017).

While traditional journalists continue to argue about the right decisions to take regarding the coverage of terror attacks and are still developing an appropriate code of ethics, the new media or digital media have been rapidly replacing traditional media. News and information are being published arbitrarily without any control or scrutiny by professional journalists or regular

Internet users. In light of these recent developments, Ward (2010) asks two important questions: first, how can newsrooms validate the news published by citizens, and second, how can ethics, accuracy, credibility and truth be checked and evaluated when everyone can be a publisher. As he sees it, new standards of ethics should be provided to guide recognizable professional journalists, and journalists who rely exclusively on electronic media.

Thus, one main question remains, how can the ethical concerns discussed above be applied to the process of deciding what to publish and what not to publish, especially in the case of shocking or private images that expose the intimacy of individuals? The press is considered a fourth estate, and is important in a functioning democracy. This notion, referenced by the Scottish philosopher Thomas Carlyle (2008), is attributed to Edmund Burke (1729-1797), a British politician.

But what are the social consequences of the abuse of power of the media? An English-language idiom, which is said to derive from an ancient Chinese proverb, states that a picture is worth a thousand words. Perhaps some pictures are indeed worth a thousand words, but a few of them are worth more than a thousand words. Despite the efforts of media professionals to make the right ethical decisions before publishing their stories and despite the codes of ethics that exist locally and internationally, shocking images and news stories are still being published.

Before beginning to analyze the cases which are the subject of this thesis, the terror attacks on the Reina nightclub in Istanbul, the Westminster in London and the *Promenade des Anglais* in Nice, France, it is useful to examine how the media has reported terror attacks, fatal accidents and disasters in the recent past and review what has been published about those events.

Although there are many examples, a few cases were chosen and are listed below in chronological order.

CASE 1: SAIGON EXECUTION



Adams, E. (Photographer). (1968). *Saigon execution*. [Digital image].

Event – Vietnam War

E. Adams photographed General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, a South Vietnamese police chief, shooting at point-blank and killing Viet Cong guerrilla suspect Nguyen Van Lem.

He photographed the scene while working as a professional Associated Press (AP) war photographer. His disturbing photograph was widely distributed and published, and gained him

the Pulitzer Prize a year later. But in 1998 Adams wrote in *Time Magazine* that he regretted having taken the photo, “two people died in that photograph, the general killed the Viet Cong; and I killed the general with my camera.” And Adams continued, “I am not saying what he did was right, but you have to put yourself in his position”. Years after taking the photo, Adams also apologized to General Nguyen and his family for the irreparable damage he had caused them because of his photograph. The General’s reaction was surprising, He never blamed him, he just told Adams, “If you had not taken this photo, other photographer would (Ruane, 2018).

CASE 2: “THE NAPALM GIRL,” KIM PHUC



Ut, N. (Photographer). (1972, June 8). *The Napalm Girl*. [Digital image].

Event - Vietnam War

The “Napalm Girl,” by H. Cong, “Nick” Ut (born Huynh Cong Ut known professionally AS Nick Ut), is the most famous photograph of the Vietnam War. It is a black-and-white photograph, which was distributed and published throughout the world. It captures the image of terrified children running away after an aerial napalm bombardment, and includes a naked and horrified nine-year-old Kim Phuc. In the image, the children are running from the scene of an aerial napalm attack on suspected Viet.Cong guerrillas hiding places. After taking the photo, Ut helped the burned little girl and took her to the hospital in the AP van. At the hospital he had to show his “press pass” to be admitted and had to force the doctors to take care of the little injured girl (Rogers, 2017).

The picture’s editor was shocked by the image and asked the photographer why he took pictures of a naked girl?” He did not know what to say. But when he heard the story of the Napalm girl, he started printing the photographs. Other editors were also shocked and said that the picture could not be used in their papers. But Ut's boss had a different opinion and chose to publish the “Napalm Girl.” The picture ended up in the cover of numerous magazines, front pages of papers and television newscast. For that, the newspaper congratulated the photographer, “Nicky, good job, good picture,” (Beaujon, 2014).

CASE 3: BHOPAL DISASTER

Bartholomew, P. & Rai, R. (Photographers). (1984, December 2). *Bhopal disaster* [Digital image].

Event - Gas leak at the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL)

Although the Bhopal gas leak disaster left 558,125 people injured and caused the death of 15,000 one picture was enough to summarize the whole tragedy. This environmental and human disaster was caused by the lack of basic safety measures and maintenance procedures at the plant of the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL). The photograph of the face of a dead buried child with her eyes open taken by two Indian photographers suggests that the child is the witness of the disaster (Taylor, 2014).

CASE 4: Omayra Sanchez



Fournier, F. (Photographer). (1985, Novembre 16). *Omayra Sánchez* [Digital image].

Event - The volcano of Nevada del Ruiz

Hundreds of millions of people around the world watched live on television the death of little Omayra Sanchez who was trapped in the mud for three days. Her photograph was taken by a few hours before her death.

Sanchez died of hypothermia and gangrene after the eruption of the Nevada del Ruiz volcano in Colombia in 1985 which killed 25,000 people. Her tragic death showed the inability of the authorities to protect and save the lives of the victims of one of the world's worst natural disasters (BBC News, 2005).

CASE 5: TANK MAN



Widener, J. (Photographer). (1989, June 5). *Tank Man* [Digital image].

Event - Tiananmen Square Protest, Beijing

The yet to be identified protestor in the image, who came to be known as, the “Tank Man,” became a symbol of defiance in the face of oppression. At least five photographers captured the event. C. Cole, who was working for *Newsweek* at the time, won a World Press Photo Award for his version of the image (Makinen, 2014).

CASE 6: THE VULTURE AND THE LITTLE GIRL

Carter, K. (Photographer). (1993, March). *The vulture and the little girl* [Digital image].

Event - Hunger in Sudan

K. Carter, the freelance photographer author of this iconic photograph that symbolizes hunger in Sub-Saharan Africa and other less fortunate places, committed suicide after his photograph was published. He was shocked by the lack of humanity, brutality and cruelty he saw in people during that time and added, “this is my most successful image after ten years of taking pictures, but I do not hang it on my wall, I hate it”. The photograph was taken in 1993, when a UN food distributor airplane landed in Sudan. With his picture Carter meant to push the world to initiate an international dialogue on hunger (McCabe, 2014). The photograph was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1994, a year after Carter’s suicide.

CASE 7: FIREFIGHTER

Porter, C.H. IV. (Photographer). (1995, April 19). *The firefighter* [Digital image].

Event - Oklahoma City attack, US

At first sight, this image might not look as shocking as it is. It is about a firefighter holding a child that he must have saved from a fire. The smile on his face, gives the impression that this child had been injured but was still alive. But the truth behind this image is shocking and caused great controversy. In April 19, 1995 Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols attacked the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. 168 people, including 15 children, were killed in the attack. The name of the little girl in the photograph is Baylee Almon; she was one-year and one-day old at the time. The firefighter who was holding her is Chris Fields.

Porter took the photo for the local newspaper but was not sure that it would be published. He was surprised to see his photo widely published around the world and to hear that people were discussing it. Because of the image, many made donations that were distributed to the

victims. But others reacted differently, one woman, for example said on television, "Aren [the mother] is not the only one who lost a child in the bombing. Why should Aren get all the publicity and most of the donations?" Her unsympathetic comment shows that the privacy of the victim's family was no longer an ethical issue for the public. Although Porter won a Pulitzer Prize for the image, he never responded to a request for an interview (Feinstein, 2016).

CASE 8: VICTORIA SNELGROVE



Bersak, D. (Photographer). (2004, October 21). *Victoria Snelgrove on the cover of the Boston Herald* [Digital image].

Event - American League championship series, Boston

Victoria Snelgrove (1982–2004) was a journalism student at the Emerson College in Boston. On October 21, 2004, after the Boston Red Sox defeated the New York Yankees in the 2004 American League Championship Series, Boston police officer Rochefort Milien shot

Snelgrove with an FN 303 blunt trauma / pepper spray projectile. This "crowd-control" bullet hit her eye, causing her to bleed excessively and die twelve hours later. Bersak, a photojournalist working at Sipa Press at the time, took a set of images of Snelgrove while she was lying on her back. Although his images caused him an ethical dilemma, Bersak edited, captioned, and transmitted his photos before he even found out the name of the victim or the extent of her injuries.

Later, when her death was announced, Sipa Press, Bersak's agency, sold his photographs to various news organizations and publications. The *Boston Herald* was one of the media outlets that used the imagery. The paper bought two photographs, one in color for the front page, and one in black and white for inside.

The photographs published by the *Boston Herald* were highly controversial and Bersak received emails and telephone death threats. He was accused of being unethical and lacking sensibility because, instead of helping the victim, he decided to film her for the readers and his colleagues.

Bersak felt confused and guilty, yet he had to explain himself and said that he chose to take the pictures because it was his job to do so. Not having taken them would have been unprofessional. He explained that paid professional rescuers had a duty to help Snelgrove and noted that two of these professionals appear on the photograph with their backs against her. He added that police officers are first responders who are required to practice first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). It would have been as unprofessional of them to neglect their position, as it would have been for Bersak to neglect his (Bersak, 2006).

Despite the dire situations and the tragedy of seeing the death of a human being in accidents and disasters, the real challenge for media professionals remains the coverage of war and terrorism. News and footage have a more critical impact, and conveying the right message becomes more complicated. There are multiple examples of such situations but this study will address only a few more recent ones that represent sensitive cases.

SENSITIVE CASES OF WAR PHOTOGRAPHS



Jacobson, J. (Photographer). (2009, September 4). *Cpl. Joshua Bernard* [Digital image].

Joshua Bernard's Death in Afghanistan

It is a scene from which many would naturally recoil, or at least avert their eyes, a grievously injured young man, fallen on a rough patch of earth; his open-mouthed and unseeing stare registering horror or fear or shock; being tended desperately by two companions in what are the first moments of the last hours of his life. Despite the objections of the young man's father,

John Bernard, a retired Marine first sergeant who, after he was shown the picture, told AP that distributing the photograph would be dishonorable to the memory of his son (Dunlap, 2009). But AP released the image. Thus, the death of Corporal Joshua Bernard was widely reported despite his father's objections.

According to Maj. Shawn Turner, a Pentagon spokesman, even the U.S. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates intervened personally and contacted Tom Curley, the AP's president, to ask the agency to "honor the family's request not to have the photo published, out of respect for their son." Gates was surprised at the organization's decision to purposefully defy the family's wishes knowing fully well that it would cause them yet more anguish. Bernard's father believed that AP's lack of compassion and common sense in choosing to print the image of their maimed and stricken child on the front page of multiple American newspapers was appalling. The issue in this case was not law, policy or constitutional right, but judgment and common decency (Dunlap, 2009).

Meanwhile, AP had already sent out the pictures to member newspapers, assuming that the value of that image was to show the complexity, the sacrifice and the brutality of the war, said John Daniszewski, a senior managing editor (Charen, 2009).

Bernard's disheartening photo was published worldwide because it is generally believed that death is as much a part of life as war is and that journalists are there to inform and to describe what they see. Kenneth Jarecke, author of an excruciating photograph of a horribly burned Iraqi soldier during the first Persian Gulf War that went largely unpublished, posed a similar question in *American Photo Magazine* in 1991, "if we're big enough to fight a war, we should be big enough to look at it". But considering that most people do not want to fight a war,

why should they have to look at its horrible effects? Here lies the opposition between the decision to publish or not to publish shocking photographs.

Concerned individuals might prefer not to publish such images, but most journalists would prefer to do so. The former would prefer to preserve the good image of the young soldier, but the latter would consider important to highlight the atrocities of war. Those who think the images should not be published think that the soldier should be remembered the way he was, the ones who insist the images should be published think that it is more important to remember what war is like. What then is the right position to take? Which seems to be more ethical? Should every shocking story be addressed from an ethical perspective (Miranda, 2014)?

Journalists, when delving into the private lives of others, often justify their decision to publish embarrassing revelations on the grounds of “the people’s right to know” (Meyers, 2010). This principle should be the main concern of journalists when they face threats and dangers. This point is demonstrated in an article written by E. Jaspen and M. Johnson about the criminal histories of Rhode Island’s school bus drivers. When ex-convicts are working as school bus drivers and are consistently interacting with children of the neighborhood, the public has the right to know the information about their background because it concerns the safety of their children. Otherwise, the “right to know” is debatable and should be evaluated by a code of ethics (Meyers, 2010).

Sensitive Images of Terrorism**U.S. SOLDIERS KILLED IN IRAQ**

AP Composite Photo. (2003, March). *Image Iraqi TV via APTN* [Digital image].

Event - The Iraq War

Six soldiers of a U.S. unit were captured in Iraq and nine others were killed. Their bodies were filmed in an inappropriate way that exposed their injuries. An Iraqi official said the soldiers had been killed in a “barbaric” way, and an Islamist website of the al-Qaida in Iraq claimed responsibility for their killings, suggesting that the soldiers had been beheaded (Gamel, 2006).

Patterson and Wilkins explain how differently the media and the officials dealt with the crude footage showing the soldiers’ bodies. Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) News briefly broadcasted rushes of an Al-Jazeera tape but stopped the broadcasting after the Pentagon asked officially that CBS discontinued using the footage. At the same time, Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) News decided that nothing would be published until the families of the victims had been informed. However, even after that, the network decided not to run the footage. Most U.S. newspapers also decided not to publish the soldiers’ names. The *Washington Post*

(2008) told its readers that some of the names had not been published because they had not yet been delivered to the Pentagon.

TORTURE BY U.S. SOLDIERS AND MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (CIA)



US military. (2004, April). *Abu Ghraib prison* [Digital image]. Retrieved from

Event - The Iraq War

Words could not convey the images and footage taken at the Abu Ghraib's jail and distributed to the media. The images did what a written report could not do and proved what

human rights groups had been repeating for months, that prisoners were being abused by U.S. troops.

Ethics and privacy issues were intensely discussed. The American soldiers had not only tortured and humiliated the prisoners; they had also filmed their actions. Many magazines and newspapers chose to print the photos in one form or another and writer and critic Susan Sontag explained that the ends justified the means since the story of U.S. torture in Iraq's prisons became newsworthy thanks to the photographs. In 2004, in an article for *The New York Times Magazine*, Sontag wrote:

the reports of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and reports written by journalists and Non-Governmental Organizations about the inhumane punishments imposed on the 'suspected terrorists' in Abu Ghraib's prisons led by the American military, first in Afghanistan and later in Iraq, have been circulating for more than a year. Those reports were not read by President Bush or Vice President Dick Cheney or Condoleezza Rice or Rumsfeld. Ironically, it took the horrible photographs to get their attention, when it became clear they could not be suppressed; only the photographs made what was happening in Abu Ghraib 'real' to Bush and his associates (Sontag, 2004).

Ethical barriers became outdated due to the newsworthiness of the Abu Ghraib images. While this may sound like the ends justifying the means no matter the cost as Sontag points out, the pictures themselves were the story. If those images had not been published, the abuse might have continued. The publication of the Abu Ghraib photos is a perfect example of the role of a free press in a functional democracy. The press is responsible for informing the public as to the actions and decisions of its representatives (Sontag, 2014).

Sensitive Case: Syrian Refugee Crisis**PHOTOGRAPH OF AYLAN KURDI**

Reuters Pictures. (2005, September 2). *A Turkish police officer stands next to the body of the young boy* [Digital image].

Event - Syrian Civil War

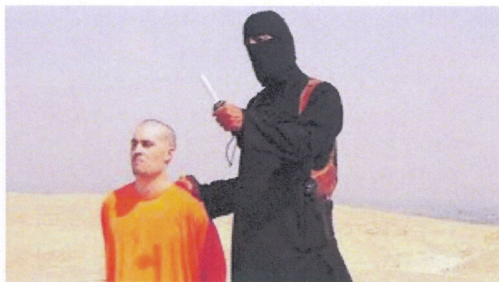
“We did not rush to publish Aylan’s photograph”, explains Paul Johnson, the deputy editor at *The Guardian*’s, after he received the photo of the little Aylan Kurdi, a three-year-old Syrian boy who drowned along with his mother and brother during his family attempt to escape from Syria (Fahey, 2015).

A journalist main duty is to verify the accuracy of the facts and wait until the full news story is completed before publishing it. Although Aylan’s photograph was impactful, and although it might have been a tipping point in terms of coverage, causing a shock should not be always the target. Instead, avoiding a shocking effect is sometimes a smarter decision. In the end, *The Guardian* published the image, unlike *Vox*, which understood that running the photo was a

way to raise awareness and attention to the Syrian refugee crisis. As Mackey (*Vox's* Max Fisher), explained, in an email message that was cited by Hare in her article, “I decided against running it because the child in that photo cannot consent to becoming a symbol” (Hare, 2015).

A Highly Sensitive Case: ISIS Execution of James Foley

ISIS BEHEADING JAMES FOLEY



Still from a video posted by ISIS. (2014, August 19). *James Foley beheaded by ISIS* [Digital image].

Event - Syrian Civil War

The coverage of the crude and brutal beheading of freelance journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff, as well as aid worker David Haines by Isis has generated strong denunciation of some type of media that uses stills and images from videos in their reports. Some of those images

showed the victims just moments before their executions on the front pages of news outlets worldwide.

One of the victims, James Foley, was an American journalist and video reporter. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) reportedly beheaded him in August 2014 in Syria as retaliation against US airstrikes in Iraq. Foley was working as a freelance war covering the Syrian Civil War. He became the first American citizen executed by ISIS. The terror group media staff filmed the live execution of Foley and made the intensely disturbing video available online.

The image of Foley about to be beheaded was on the cover of many newspapers, the photograph provoked a strong reaction from iMediaEthics, an organization whose priority is to protect children and other vulnerable people from seeing the photographs published on the front-page of newspapers without any warning to the readers (iMediaEthics, 2014). CNN response, for example, was to report on the video and describe it as “too horrific to show,” although it did include some screenshots from the video in its broadcast (Carter, 2014). And the CEO of Global Post, the news outlet for which Foley was working, did not rush to publish the image, the organization decided to take time to evaluate the video.

Journalists faced an important ethical issue when presented with the images produced by ISIS. Despite their desire to tell the true story without omitting its details, they had a commitment to do no harm and to prove their humanity and compassion to the victims. In addition, choosing to publish the face of the victim the last seconds before the assassination would have been extremely disturbing for viewers. Besides, by showing stills from these very well-produced films, the media might have contributed to the terrorists’ mission and added to their propaganda machine.

“We have never been prouder of our son Jim,” stated Diane, Foley’s mother on the “Free James Foley” Facebook page. Her son gave his life trying to tell the world about the suffering of the Syrian people. His death should not have been in vain. In her post, she implores the kidnappers to spare the lives of the remaining hostages because, like her son, they too are innocent. They have no control over the American government policies in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. She says that Jim was a source of joy for his family. He was an extraordinary son, brother, journalist and person. After his death, his mother asked the world to respect the family’s privacy so they might be able to mourn and cherish Jim in peace (Carter, 2014).

It is practically impossible for a professional in the field to make a judgment and the correct ethical decision in real life. Ideally, the photographer should film, and the operator edit. Afterward, if an image is judged too upsetting or inadequate, then the editors’ role is to make the right ethical judgment about whether to publish or not to publish an image.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“Ethics is not primarily concerned with getting people to do what they believe to be right, but rather with helping them to decide what is right,” (Jones, Sontag, Beckner, & Fogelin, 1969, p. 8). What is right ethically is not viewed the same way by different people. A journalist might consider the content of a piece of news ethical and suitable for publishing, whereas a reader might conceive it as unethical, or vice-versa. Thus, a journalist needs to find a suitable middle ground and a proper formula to balance the public’s values and his or her own values.

Lester (1999) proposes six principal ethical philosophies that help to analyze and evaluate cases of unethical publications whenever there is a need to do so. The philosophies he lists are: Categorical Imperative, Utilitarianism, Hedonism, Golden Mean, Veil of Ignorance and Golden Rule. For Lester, photographers, editors and journalists generally use one or more of these philosophical principles to justify clearly unethical publications.

Following Lester’s idea, this study will be based on the “Golden Mean” by Aristotle to analyze the media coverage of three major terror attacks: The London Westminster attack on March 22, 2017, the Reina nightclub in Istanbul on January 1, 2017, and the Nice attack on July 14, 2016. Using the philosophy of Aristotle, this study will attempt to show what would be the appropriate coverage of these three horrific attacks or of any other similar attacks. Before doing so, it is important to understand the foundations of important schools of thought that are related to ethical decisions in the media.

THE CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE, I. KANT

For Kant (1785) what is “right for one is right for all” (p. 34). He calls this concept Categorical Imperative. If Kant’s principle is used, for example, to guide an editor who is confused and is trying to decide whether to publish the image of a young woman trying to escape a fire with no cloth on, the editor has to put himself in the place of the young woman (or of that of a male, an elderly or obese person, etc.), and then decide if the image in question can be published or not. Kant’s principle, the Categorical Imperative, which suggests that what is applicable for one should be applicable for everyone (Lester, 1999), states that being honest is a clear moral responsibility. Kant explains that “imperative” is what a person must do when he or she needs to do something, for example, when someone is thirsty, the *imperative* of drinking is a necessity. The philosopher also states that an imperative is “categorical,” when it is applicable in every situation and at all times (Lester, 1999).

Fieser (2001) says that Kant’s Categorical Imperative could be seen as the most important contribution to moral philosophy ever if it is proved to be a true test of moral conduct. If proved valid, all problems and decisions related to morals would be solved and no one could argue about moral commitments. But, according to other philosophers, Kant’s philosophy did not pass the test. For example, Schopenhauer (1788-1860) considers that Kant’s categorical imperative diminishes the egoistic belief that “I should not do to others what I do not want done to myself” (Fieser, 2001, p. 181). And the German philosopher Hegel (1770-1831) argues that Kant’s principle does not provide a specific moral guideline that most individuals can follow. In addition, the main issue is that the Categorical Imperative functions well as an abstract concept, but when it is applied to concrete facts it makes it hard to perceive the contradictions that everyone knows are already contradictory (Fieser, 2001). Consequently, this principle is not

adequate to guide this study and to be applied to analyze important and critical topics and the news.

PHILOSOPHY OF UTILITARIANISM, J. BENTHAM AND J. S. MILL

Meyers believes that harm is sometimes justified, as an example he mentions the news outlets that publish information and names of politicians involved in corruption, Meyers says that this harm is justified, and therefore this should also be the case of a journalist who publishes shocking or private news that causes harm to other people in order to deliver a valuable message to the mass. Meyers views is part the philosophy of Utilitarianism, an ethical theory that states that “the best action is the one that maximizes utility.” Utilitarianism is considered a version of consequentialism, which deliberates that the right and wrong criteria are based on the consequences of the action and, therefore contributes to “the greatest happiness for the greatest number” (Mill, 1971, p. 313). This philosophy introduced by the British thinkers Bentham and Mill, is often used by reporters and photographers to justify their decision to publish shocking scenes of accidents and other disasters.

For example, if gruesome photos of a car crash offend the victims’ families but shock the community and thus make people drive safely, then, according to Utilitarianism, the taking and publication of those photos is deemed to be ethical (Lester, 1999). But Utilitarianism has been subject to debates and disagreement over the years for different reasons. Philosophers (Rosen, 2003), have asked different questions about its basis, such as: Should the action of “utility” be chosen based on the results, or what they call the utilitarian act, which might mean ignoring

justice, and judging one innocent person for the happiness of a greater number? Should it be the rules that maximize utility? Should it be the total or the average?

Besides philosophers, religious leaders, such as Pope John Paul II also offer a critique of Utilitarianism. Pope John Paul writes that “Utilitarianism is a civilization of production and of use, a civilization of things and not of persons, a civilization in which persons are used in the same way as things are used” (Epps, 2012, p. 114).

PHILOSOPHY OF HEDONISM, ARISTIPPUS OF CYRENE

Hedonism is the ethics of pleasure and is the principle that guides the philosophy of Nihilism and the concept of narcissism. For hedonists, one should do whatever conveys the greatest gratification. Hedonism was founded by Aristippus, (435 BCE – 356 BCE), a student of Socrates (Lester, 1999). In the media, hedonism is used to help sell newspapers or to serve the agenda of media outlets and promote their names. An unambiguous footage is used for instance only because its images are titillating and provocative, shocking pieces of news and images might be published to help sell the publication, these are decisions based on hedonism. And this is why it is difficult to link this philosophy to ethics because the idea is to use subjects to serve the interests of publications. Thus, the possibility of harming people, which is extremely high, is not even considered.

THE VEIL OF IGNORANCE, J. RAWLS

In his book, *A Theory of Justice* (1971), the American philosopher, Rawls explains his ethical philosophy the “Veil of Ignorance,” a philosophy of justice that considers all people equal. For example, if one imagines each member of a community wearing a veil, the age, gender, ethnicity, social position, etc. of each person would be undetermined, which means that no one would have any kind of advantage over the other. In addition, having an attitude of respect for someone in any situation is not linked to the position that person has in society. The common expression that summarizes the ideas of the “Veil of Ignorance” is that one should “walk a mile in someone’s shoes” (Rawls, 1971).

In the media, a photojournalist or a journalist is asked to put himself in the shoes of their subject and ask him or herself what they would feel if they were in the place of that person. If the idea of being in the place of a subject makes a media professional feel uncomfortable, then he or she should make decisions accordingly. Lloyd (2016) examines this philosophy and explains that Rawls main point focuses on his attempt to “maximize fairness” by proposing an imaginary “original position,” or what he calls the “Veil of Ignorance,” where no one knows the social status or any other characteristics of the other. But since members of society are not living in a fictional world, these theories might be treated as a type of fantasy, like “Pegasus” or “Unicorns” (Lloyd, 2016).

THE GOLDEN RULE, A CHRISTIAN APPROACH

The “Golden Rule” is one of the commands of Jesus of Nazareth who said, “do to others what you want them to do to you. This is the meaning of the law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets” (Mathew 7:12 NCV, see also Luke 6:31).

It is essentially based on a Christian principle and teaches people to “love one’s neighbor as oneself,” thus encouraging people to act as humans as much as possible. In media terms, it means to put people’s feelings before the news. In photography and journalism, it aims to protect people from harm. As an ethical principle, it means that a photographer would have to do to the person he is filming what he would do to himself. Jay Mather, winner of the Pulitzer prize in 1979, for example, endorses this principle and has said that “human kindness has always been an effective and impartial editor (cited in Sherer, 1986, p. 25).

Lester (1999) explains that people agree or disagree on how to use an image or piece of news because the decisions each person makes one often based on a different type of philosophy. Those who follow the principles of the Categorical Imperative, Utilitarianism or Hedonism will disagree with those who believe in the Veil of Ignorance or the Golden Rule. Hence, the main concern of media professionals is to decide on which principle to use whenever there is a critical image or a news item to be published. The type of philosophy adopted determines the kind of message journalists want to deliver.

The example of a father crying and holding his son who died in a car accident can have different philosophical interpretations. For the news, it makes a solid argument for the Categorical Imperative. From a Utilitarian objective, it pushes people to be more cautious on the roads. The image can be seen as a means to win a prize, which is the perspective of Hedonism. And since every father can put himself in the shoes of this sad father, the principles of the Veil of

Ignorance are also visible. In light of the Golden Rule philosophy, if the image is published it will make the father in the picture suffer more. And according to the Golden Mean, publishing the image inside the newspaper would be the most appropriate solution.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE GOLDEN MEAN, ARISTOTLE

The Golden Mean is Aristotle's philosophy about finding a convenient moral solution by finding a middle ground between two extreme ideas. One such example would be to use a photo that gives the same information and tells the same story, but is less disturbing, aggressive, and dreadful, to replace a horrible one. This philosophy was created around the fourth century BC in Greece, by Aristotle who was born in 384 BC and was a pupil of Plato for twenty years (Lloyd, 1968).

As Lloyd puts it, the mean is neither about too much or too little. It is about using the right things, the right quantity, at the right time, toward the right people, for the right reason, with the right method (Lloyd, 1968).

In Aristotle's philosophy, moral behavior is achieved when one finds the moral decision between two extreme points of view. If at one side there is excess, and at the other deficiency, the action taken in-between these two extreme points is a moral action (Lester, 1999). To achieve the goals of Aristotle's philosophy, three pillars have to work together, explains Geoffrey Lloyd (1968) in his book, *Aristotle: The Growth and Structure of his Thought*.

The first pillar is seen when a good person has some kind of eternal balance, similar to the body temperature of humans, which is supposed to be moderate, not too high or too low. In

ethics, behaviors, attitudes and decisions should remain restrained, in control and balanced and not reach any extreme, “equilibrium is the right feeling at the right time about the right thing, towards the right people, for the right end, and in the right way” (Wong, 2013, p. 256).

The second pillar is how to find the right mean that is relative to a specific situation, since there is no one intermediate for every object. For example, watering a tree with one gallon of water is not enough as it is very little for a tree, but too much water for a small plant. Thus, Aristotle proposes to find the appropriate mean for each specific individual or object.

The third pillar is linked to the virtue of each individual. Since each virtue falls between two vices, on one end excess, and on the other deficiency, virtue is in the middle, similarly to the mean. Hence, if someone’s character is closer to virtue or is at an intermediate stage, he or she is lucky and will receive admiration, but if he or she is closer to one of the ends, he or she will encounter guilt (Lloyd, 1968).

Daedalus, a famous artisan in Greek mythology, was the first to interpret the idea of the mean. Daedalus built feathered wings for both his son and himself to be able to escape the cruel rule of King Minos. To do so, he told his son, Icarus, not to fly too high nor too low but to stay in the middle course, but Icarus flew up and up without taking his father’s warning into consideration. As a result, he fell and died because the sun melted the wax that his wings were made off (Hamilton, 1953).

In this thesis, the philosophical principle of the Mean will be applied to analyze the three cases of terrorist attacks and the media reports on the shocking events. It will be used to answer a series of questions, such as: What type of the equilibrium media professionals should find to cover these horrible attacks? Can journalists balance their feelings towards the right people at the right time? What would be the right end to their means, and what would be the right way to do

their jobs? How can media professionals respect the privacy of grieving people in pain? This study will attempt to discuss these questions in detail in its various subsequent sec

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As discussed in the literature review, media practitioners have experienced and will continue to face critical situations when trying to balance their coverage of terror attacks with the ethical decisions they should make to convey reliable and responsible information to the public. To better understand and analyze how media should handle and cover these critical situations, the qualitative research that will be conducted in this thesis will discuss the following research questions which are based on the sample of cases chosen:

RQ1. What is the right ethical judgment a publication should make when a terror attack is its main story?

RQ2. How can a journalist find a balance between ethics and truth when confronted with shocking visuals and news?

RQ3. What are the main differences in the coverage of the three cases under study? In which case the Golden Mean of Aristotle is valid?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This thesis analyzes three of the most horrifying and recent terror attacks in Europe and Turkey, the *Promenade des Anglais* in Nice (2016, July 14), the Reina nightclub in Istanbul (2017, January 1) and the Westminster attacks in London (2017, March 23). In both the Nice and Istanbul attacks, ample graphic images and very disturbing footage was used by the media, unlike in the coverage of the London attacks where appropriate footage was used.

In the first two events, journalists interviewed the families of the victims or the victims themselves. They invaded both the victims' and their families' privacy and went to the hospitals to see the people who had been injured. But in London, media professionals were more measured in their coverage of the terror attack. The different coverage those three attacks were given by the media will be analyzed in the following sections of this thesis to try to show how leading TV stations, in particular France 2, MTV and BBC respectively dealt with those tragic events.

Another aspect of the tragedy that is discussed is the situation of the Lebanese citizens who were at the scene of the attack on the Reina nightclub in Istanbul. Those who had been injured were taken back to Lebanon in a private airplane a couple of days after the attack. At the airport, the ambulances along with the cameras of local TV stations surrounded the airplane where the injured were lying down waiting for the medical staff. Those who were watching television on January 2, 2017 saw how the victims had turned their heads to avoid the cameras, hide their faces and preserve their dignity and privacy. Yet the live coverage was not interrupted. The details about this aggressive visual coverage is discussed and explained at a later point in this thesis.

Case 1: *Promenade des Anglais* in Nice, France

On July 14, 2016 in France, a truck plowed through a Bastille Day celebration in the city of Nice killing 86 people and injuring 434 persons (Fisher, 2016). The graphic images of the aftermath of this terror attack and the moment the truck mowed down the people at the *Avenue de la Promenade* were published by the French traditional and digital media.

Case 2: The Reina Nightclub in Istanbul

On January 1, 2017 at 1:15, in Istanbul inside the Reina Club a terrorist murdered 39 people and injured 70 civilians (British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), 2017). Hundreds of shocking and disturbing images circulated through the Lebanese television networks and newspapers. Traditional media professionals and social media platforms users invaded the private lives of the injured and of the relatives and friends of the victims.

Case 3: Westminster Bridge, London

On March 22, 2017, in London, 52-year-old Khalid Masood drove his car into pedestrians at the Westminster Bridge before running into the grounds of the Palace of Westminster armed with two knives. He stabbed a police officer that was standing in front of the Parliament. Masood died from a single gunshot at the scene.

He killed four people and injured more than 50 persons. Almost immediately after the incident occurred, Scotland Yard declared it a terrorist attack (Metro News, 2017). The coverage of this attack did not include any disturbing footage or offensive language. Only *The Daily*

Telegraph used the word “evil” to describe the attacker, the same term that was used after the 9/11 attacks in New York. The absence of shocking language and disturbing visuals in the coverage of this incident is also discussed in the second part of this study.

These three brutal cases are used to explain from an ethical perspective, how visuals should have been used by the media and what kind of images should have been published.

Both the traditional and digital media covered those three terror attacks in different ways. Some footage was found with two versions, blurred and net and some of the coverage did not include any disturbing footage. However, codes of ethics were not the concern of a number of Arab and French Journalists who opted to use shocking visuals in their coverage. Hence, pictures of the victims and of the injured were distributed and the privacy of relatives and friends of the victims was invaded with no respect for their grief or anger.

What were the differences and similarities in the coverage of those three attacks? Was the footage essential to create awareness? Did it serve the objectives of the terrorists? To answer these questions a qualitative research method was used. It is based on a focus group formed by six practitioners (see Appendix A for dates), news reporters, cameraman and anchors who covered the attacks under study or other similar attacks like the Boston Marathon attack in April 15, 2013; or the Bataclan terror attack that took place in November 13, 2015; or the explosion at Burj Brajneh in November 12, 2015; or Hariri explosion in February 14, 2005. They are also experienced practitioners who have made ethical decisions throughout their careers (see Appendix B for biographies).

Finally, to complete the discussion of the focus group, in-depth interviews were conducted with three editors-in-chief, Lebanon’s Minister of Information, a reporter and a

lawyer, to look into the different points related to the ethical attitude that should be taken by the media in its coverage of terror attacks, and the relation between traditional and social media (see Appendix B for biographies).

Focus Group

A qualitative research seeks to explore, explain and understand the behavior of a certain person in a certain case. In the cases under study in this thesis, the media practitioners behaved different ways. Some chose to use disturbing footage and did not mind invading the privacy of the people involved in the events, others chose to behave ethically and respect the concerned victims, the public and the viewers. To better understand the differences, a qualitative research based on one focus group and six in-depth interviews were conducted.

A focus group is a form of research which uses discussions among a group of 6 to 12 people, about a specific issue or a product. Its aim is to find out what each one of the participants thinks and feels about the issue under study and then to register their opinions and behaviors regarding the topic under discussion (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006).

The main concern in a research that uses a focus group is to find suitable subjects who are familiar with the topic, have experienced it in the past and can share their opinions and attitudes based on their own experiences. The advantage of a focus group is that it is centered on the attendees' ability to share ideas and opinions among themselves. This sharing of ideas makes the discussion flexible and helps the attendees and researchers ask more questions, thus raising more issues that lead to more valuable results (Berger, 1998).

The disadvantage of focus group technique is the generalizability of results. The participants of a focus group session may not be representative of the sample needed for the topic under-study, as it is formed of a small group of 6 to 12 people.

Some participants might be shy while others tend to monopolize the conversation, the role of the moderator is to find an appropriate way to help the shy person feel more comfortable and to restraint the one who is dominating.

The people contacted to participate in a focus group session must know that the session will be tape-recorded or video-recorded, and must be requested to sign releases for the taping (Berger, 1998).

The focus group in this study is formed of photojournalists, journalists, reporters and anchors who have an extensive experience in news coverage and have dealt, at least once, with the coverage of a terror attack. They showed a big interest in the topic under discussion and shared their opinions and personal experiences and gave insights on the points related to ethics and the use of shocking and disturbing visuals, and they commented extensively on the cases selected in this thesis.

The participants are:

Mayssaloun Nassar anchor and reporter for France 24; Larissa Aoun, news reporter and producer for Sky News; Alain Dargham, news reporter for MTV; Layal Saad, news reporter for Al-Jadeed TV; Pierre Youssef, news cameraman for LBCI; and Mario Abboud, news anchor for LBCI.

In-Depth Interviews

The importance of a discussion lies in the interaction between the participants. Sometimes they agree but sometimes they have different perspectives, and this difference in opinions makes the debate more vivid and leads to more comprehensive results. A focus group is used to find out the different opinions a number of people has about a specific issue. Therefore, the results of the discussions in focus groups show candid beliefs about the subject matter.

An in-depth interview, on the other hand, is a way to look into important details, uncover hidden beliefs, and give participants more time to discuss some major ideas sometimes mentioned only briefly in the focus group (Berger, 1998). In-depth interviews help to complete the focus group and allow participants to answer questions that were not sufficiently covered during the debate; they also help participants to discuss specific points that were not part of the main discussion in the focus group.

In this thesis, one-on-one interviews were conducted with Melhem Riachi, Lebanon's Minister of Information; Nada Saliba Choueiry, news editor-in-chief at Tele Liban; Nabil Bou Monsef, deputy editor-in-chief at An Nahar; Amjad Skandar, former editor-in-chief at MTV; Georges Eid, reporter at MTV; Charbel El Kareh, president of Information and Communication Technology Committee of Beirut Bar Association (BBA), member of the Lebanese Parliament IT committee, and president of the Internet Society Governance Committee.

The challenge of an in-depth interview is to find the right respondents and to have enough time to ask questions to them. However, the best aspect of an interview is that they allow the interviewer to get the answers he or she needs from the interviewee, even if the time is limited (Berger, 1998).

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The coverage of terrorism is still a sensitive issue yet, for journalists who follow and respect very specific and clear ethical guidelines, terror attacks are no longer such a complicated matter. Thus, it can be said that the best way to cover terror attacks is by making moral decisions and using the proper ethical judgment. To do so, journalists can rely on codes of ethics to help them deal with the challenges they find at the scene of an attack.

As previously stated, the three terror attacks discussed in this thesis, the *Promenade des Anglais* in Nice (2016, July 14), the Reina nightclub in Istanbul (2017, January 1) and the Westminster attacks in London (2017, March 23), received different coverages in three different countries, especially in the way these countries used ethical codes.

In France and England, television networks have strict internal guidelines regarding their coverage of events and concerned officials monitor the behavior of media outlets and media practitioners and take the necessary measures in case they break the rules. However, in Lebanon the networks' codes of conduct are not clearly stated and are rarely taken seriously. Consequently, the role of monitoring officials is ambiguous.

Code of conduct at BBC

At BBC, every employee must read and agree to follow the corporation's editorial standards. The employees work is judged according to the following guidelines:

The BBC is committed to accuracy and impartiality. BBC strives to avoid misleading its audiences and to be honest and open about what their media professionals do not know, thus avoiding unfounded speculation. BBC's decisions are not influenced by outside interests,

political or commercial pressures, or any personal interests. BBC is sensitive to the expectations of its audience about the content, particularly in relation to protecting children. It respects privacy and do not infringe it without good reasons, regardless of in which part of the world they are operating. The private behavior of individuals, private information, correspondence and conversations will not be brought into the public domain unless there is a public interest that outweighs the expectation of privacy. In addition, the BBC provides the necessary training to its staff, so employees can understand its policies and put them into practice in their day-to-day work (BBC, 2018).

Code of conduct at France 2

France 2, as part of the public France Television Group, is committed to follow and respect the internal regulations of this institution that require journalists to respect the channel Charter of France televisions and its professional principles, and the legislative and regulatory provisions concerning the production and distribution of content.

France 2 employees should contribute to respecting ethics and ethical commitments in terms of content, and be particularly vigilant about the honesty of information and the rigor of its treatment, the diversity of points of view, the respect for human rights, in particular human dignity and the fight against discrimination. Finally, the network should take advice from internal experts in case of questions or doubt about which decisions to make (France Televisions, 2018).

Hence, coverage by both the British and French networks should adhere to internal and public regulations. The BBC, for example, followed strictly its code of conduct in its coverage of the Westminster terror attack. In following its code, BBC found the proper balance between

ethics and the truth. BBC's coverage was responsible and objective, and presented the news and the truth according to the framework of its values.

France 2, on the contrary, changed its usual behavior and broke some rules of the Group's code of conduct. During its coverage of the Nice attack, it made the editorial decision of running the scene of the truck moaning the people who were at the *Promenade des Anglais*, to emphasize the lack of proper security measures that should be in place to protect the area. It did so to make the police and the security officers are aware of the problem. France 2 also broadcasted an interview with a man whose wife was lying dead next to him. This interview was rejected and condemned by French society.

The "*Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel*," High Audiovisual Council (CSA), whose job is to monitor the media and make sure that the code of ethics is respected and applied, mainly in sensitive cases such as the coverage of terrorism, penalized France 2 for its unethical behavior and demanded that it broadcasted an apology.

Following the decision of the CSA, France 2 apologized to viewers for publishing graphic images of the scene of the Nice attack. "The presenter of the news of France 2 will have, within eight days following the notification of the sanction (except weekends), to read a press release on the air, during the first 15 minutes of his 20-hour bulletin" (CSA Decision 2017-300, 2017, June 14).

On the other hand, the coverage of the attack on the Reina nightclub in Istanbul by Lebanese networks presented various ethical problems. After the attack, Lebanese televisions sent their Satellite News Gathering (SNG) to the houses of the families of the victims in Lebanon for a live coverage. One of the families allowed journalists and reporters in their house but during their visit, the family received the confirmation of the death of their son. The tragic

reaction of the family and their visible trauma was transmitted live on local TV channels.

In addition, news crews escorted and filmed the wounded during their return trip from Istanbul to Beirut against their will. Al-Jadeed television broadcasted the rushes showing the victims of the attack inside the nightclub. At the funeral of Elie Wardini, his body was filmed from his coffin.

To answer the research questions, this study relies on qualitative research methods based on one focus group and five in-depth interviews.

Terror Attacks in the Frame of International Codes of Ethics

During the focus group discussion and the in-depth interviews, the attendees agreed that terror attacks should be treated carefully and that ethics should precede the need to tell the truth. The participants also agreed that Arab networks consistently invade people's privacy and publish graphic images with the purpose of attracting more viewers, while the French and British networks abide by the code of ethics. Below are some of their comments, insights and suggestions.

During the interview with Bou Monsef, he emphasized that the need to watch the news increases after a terror attack because people become more anxious and insecure and want to hear comforting and reassuring news. Keeping the public informed in these situations makes the job of practitioners more challenging and demands responsibility. But this is not what happens in Lebanon.

Both the participants in the focus group and the interviewees agreed on what causes the sensationalist coverage of the Lebanese media, but they disagreed on what should be done about

it. Some participants believe that there is always a way to find the balance between telling the truth and respecting other values such as privacy, the right to die with dignity and the culture of different countries.

Aristotle explained the importance to find this middle ground solution, a convenient moral solution in-between two extreme ideas, in his theory of the Golden Mean (Lloyd, 1968). At Sky News, however, no such middle ground solution exists. Without exception, disturbing footage are not allowed and privacy is sacred, explained Aoun. In France, television crews do not enter the houses of the families of victims to ask questions about their dead relatives.

In his interview, Skandar confirmed that Lebanese journalists are aware of ethical guidelines but do not follow them because there are no penalties or sanctions applied to them if a rule of conduct is broken. Because ethical guidelines are not enforced in Lebanon, the country's media behave differently from the media in other countries such as England where every professional, including journalists, must respect the rules because they are aware of the consequences of breaking them.

But regardless of codes of ethics, Day (2006) reminds journalists that "society imposes moral duties on individuals as a condition of membership in that society" (p. 50). These duties can either be applied to all members of society, those are general obligations, or applied inside a group, an occupation or a profession, those are particularistic obligations. But the competition between different media outlets also encourages media professionals to break rules. As Abboud mentioned, "if we do not publish the dead child other networks will."

Ratings are taking over ethics Saliba repeated several times during her interview. For her, the media do not really care about delivering the truth. Thus, there is no longer a dilemma between deciding to present credible and truthful news, including shocking and graphic images,

or presenting informative, but safe news using less shocking footage or information (Day, 2006).

Dargham made an interesting point when he recalled the unforgettable scenes at the site of the assassination of the Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, in 2005, in which the burned bodies of the victims were filmed. Although it is hard to find a balance between maintaining ethics and covering atrocities, this is the job of a responsible journalist (Belsey & Chadwick 1992).

Ethics should not be a choice, stated Saliba. For her, ethics is a major part of the profession's practice. On her part, Nassar agrees with the tradition of self-censorship French practitioners follow. For her, this practice guides journalists in different kind of situations. Devillard, Ma Lafosse, Leteinturier and Rieffel explain that in France, journalists and editors practice self-censorship by ritual; they have long been self-policing in the area of ethics (2001). In this context, Nassar explains that after the attack at Charlie Hebdo, France 24 replaced the term "Daesh" by "terrorists" and stopped publishing footage or the names of terrorists who perpetrated the attacks.

But, if a journalist cannot use a proper judgment and practice an objective type of self-censorship, he or she needs to be controlled by someone else, states Brown (2011). For him, the code of ethics is one of the basic tools of the profession, as it can act as "the consciousness" of a journalist. The Minister of Information, Riachi, confirmed during the interview with him, "that media institutions need an urgent code of ethics and that journalists need to be reminded of the values of their professions and start being responsible."

For Riachi, reporters should stop following the mothers of victims to film them crying, ask about their children's last words, or ask about how they feel. He sees the profession in danger of losing credibility.

The job of the media is to inform the public but also to protect their sources and their viewers. Therefore, journalists should choose their words carefully, check their information, respect the dead, the injured and their families and pay attention to the images they display (Marthose, 2017).

International standards were created to remind journalists of their responsibility and to protect the people from the excesses of the media. In France “the punishments were lessened by the law of June 15, 2000, and the right to free expression protects journalists in most cases. However, it is forbidden to publish the picture of a handcuffed person without the person's approval,” (Devillard, Ma Lafosse, Leteinturier & Rieffel, 2001, p. 15).

Lebanese media organizations neither refer to any code of ethics in their coverage of terror attacks, nor apply the basic ethic guidelines to its professionals. However, the need for codes of ethics in the coverage of terror attacks is central and practitioners should be reminded of standards and ethics.

But according to Day (2006), the fact that a person knows the ethical codes and values does not mean that he or she becomes more moral. Thus, it is not enough to simply know the ethics or the code of ethics of the profession, the challenge is to find the right way to make practitioners apply these codes and respect them at all times.

The Impact of Cultural Differences on Media Coverage

The media system in any country is a reflection of the culture of its society. In Lebanon, says Abboud, after continuously experiencing war and terror attacks, people got used to seeing death, unlike in France or elsewhere. As seen in the literature review, cases (Ward, 2013) are not

the same and journalists do not have the same cultural and behavioural backgrounds, what is ethical for some professionals might not seem ethical for others. This is what Skandar and Eid noted in their interviews when they said that, “most of the times, people call us to share their pain or to talk about the people they lost,” and added, “it is not always the reporter who runs after the victims or their families here in Lebanon.”

Nagm, explains that “in theory, the principles of media ethics are universal. Practice, however, depends on other factors, including local politics, economics and culture” (Ward, 2013, p.101). Dargham agrees with Nagm’s views and notices that “people need to talk in the Arab countries, and media have to offer them this platform to share their pain.” According to Ward (2013), this view might be true; Arabs are more emotional and curious than Europeans.

Nassar, on the other hand, is convinced that the viewer is smart and thinks that “he takes what we, media persons, give him.” And she continues, “at the Pompidou Hospital, after the “Bataclan” attack, I had the choice to interview a father who lost his child, and I chose to respect his pain and privacy. I do not have to film the father of a victim, or interview him to know and show how much he is suffering. After this coverage, I received plenty of messages of solidarity from people who feel uncomfortable with the coverage of the Arab networks.”

Abboud considers that ethics, as well as morals, are related to people’s environment and culture. In some cultures, he elaborates, people eat insects, and in others they are afraid of them. In Europe they do not have what is called in Eastern societies “crime of honor.” So, for him, the law is set based on environment and culture. But, according to Aoun, who is culturally Lebanese, but is now working for a British network and following its cultural rules, “we can adapt,” especially since she knows that if she did not do so she would be sent home.

Thus, journalists can adapt when necessary and when the continuity of their job is at risk.

They can respect the codes and rules of the institutions in the countries they work even if they are different from the ones in their own countries and cultures. In such situations, the network becomes responsible for setting rules and for asking their staff to respect them. And although it is easy to blame the culture, the people, the weak laws or the specific situation for inappropriate or incorrect decisions, the challenge for any professional practitioner is exactly to be able to remain ethical when facing the most critical situations.

A Coverage That Accredits the Terrorist

The media can have much power. As noted previously, Carlyle (2008) recognized this when he called the media “the fourth estate.” But media can also mislead or harm people.

Terrorists understand the power of the media, and use it to spread fear and to publish their ideas and messages. “Terrorism’s objective is not just to kill but ‘to create power where there is none, through the publicity generated by their violence.’ As ISIS has shown, publicity is terror’s ‘second wave’. It is the megaphone. Without publicity, terrorism is just dead bodies” (Jenkins, 2016). Therefore, terrorists produce crude videos, such as the one of the execution of James Foley, an American journalist and video reporter who was reportedly beheaded by the ISIS, which also distributed the video of the execution (CNN, 2014).

A year later, the terrorist group produced a video of the brutal execution of Moaz Al-Kassasbeh, a Royal Jordanian Air Force pilot. He was captured and burned to death by the militant jihadist group after his F-16 fighter aircraft crashed over Syria (BBC News, 2015). In both cases, ISIS used social and traditional media to deliver its message and to spread its brutal propaganda. Nassar is aware of this problem, for her, “we need to practice according to a new

approach because we are offering a free propaganda to terrorists. We are promoting their actions and admiring the terrorist. And this is putting the viewers, mainly the youth, at risk of getting used to violent scenes and of becoming violent.”

Similarly, Skandar believes that most terror attacks are made for publicity and propaganda. As an example, he cites the (September 11, 2001) 9/11 attacks, in which the planes hijacked by Islamic terrorist group “Al-Qaeda”, crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City. For him, “this was a show for Bin Laden, the founder of Al-Qaeda. It is creative and unexpected to make the planes cross into buildings. The media contributed to this show. They are helping the enemy. If for the next two years, the media change the coverage of terror attacks, they will definitely decrease.”

Dargham agrees that unintentionally, the media are accrediting terrorists. As he says, “they are killers but very powerful, strong and unstoppable. They attack anywhere and at any time, leaving big numbers of victims. The media are offering terrorists the coverage they are seeking.”

Dargham’s views coincide with the position of the UNESCO presented previously. The organization insists that the media must learn to measure their “tone” and not to feed the “noise machine,” in addition the UNESCO warns journalists against glorifying terrorists, making terrorism and its actors look greater than they really are, and reminds journalist to be careful not to spread anxiety or increase the public’s anger (Marthose, 2017).

Bou Monsef is also critical of media coverages of terror attacks and notes that “the media are supposed to create awareness,” he adds that “instead media professionals are spreading fear and transforming the terrorist into a star.” His views reflect the ones of Marthose (2017), discussed in a previous section, who notes that when the media speaks of the “mastermind”

behind attacks, or of “sophisticated” attacks, it shows a kind of glorification of the killers who are presented as exceptional beings.

Curiously, all participants in this study agreed that unethical and inaccurate coverage of terror attacks might be serving the agenda and the target of terrorism. In his interview, Eid said that the Lebanese media overdo its coverage and exaggerate most of the time and this tendency to exaggerate makes it unintentionally contribute to the terrorist’s mission of spreading fear.

Thus, terrorists are using the media to promote their violent tactics and spreading fear, especially since the main concern of most media is to increase their ratings or to advance their own agendas. In doing so, the media reflect the philosophy of Hedonism where subjects are used to serve the interests of the organizations. The possibility of harming people is not considered, although it is extremely high. Shocking news and images might be published to help sell publications. And this is why it is difficult to link this philosophy to ethics (Lester, 1999).

The Trap of the Live Coverage

Media organizations start live coverage as soon as a terror attack happens. It is normal that the media should give attention to this kind of information, but the coverage must be handled objectively. For example, in some countries live broadcasting of attacks has been banned to facilitate security procedures and to protect people in the scene.

But it is important to notice that it is difficult to control the footage and the information in a live transmission, and very difficult to respect the rules and codes of ethics in such critical times. Moreover, because professionals can forget ethical codes and fall into the trap of their emotions during a live coverage, the credibility of the media is at risk. Thus, all of the

participants agreed that a live coverage is certainly a trap for the reporter who is subject to errors and repetition.

Saad recalled when she was covering the arrest of a suicide bomber, who was wearing an explosive bomb belt, in Hamra Street. The terrorist was detained right after entering a coffee shop. Her station, Al-Jadeed was the only television channel present at the scene. But after an excellent stand up; Saad decided to end the live broadcasting. Karma Khayat, the deputy director of Al-Jadeed, became furious, and demanded that Saad resumed broadcasting live and kept covering the event, even if she had to repeat the same information continuously.

Youssef explained that he is more responsible than when doing a live coverage. He tries to find the balance between his job to inform the viewers and his decision to protect them from seeing potential unethical footage. Youssef's attitude shows the dilemma journalists face when they need to decide between presenting credible and truthful news by including shocking and graphic images, or making the news informative but safe to the viewer, by including less awful parts as stated by Day (2006) in the literature review section.

All of the participants also agree that competition is driving the media to break the rules and the ethics of the profession in Lebanon. When one television channel starts a live coverage, all others rush to do the same. This was not the case of Al-Jadeed. Karma Khayat decided that the live coverage of the Hamra event should continue although there was no other television channel at the scene transmitting live, the security had closed the street and Al-Jadeed beat the competition.

Saliba's position is opposed to that of Khayat, she says that at Tele Liban "we set our own rules in all kinds of coverage," and that "we are no part of the on-going competition, we transfer the news objectively with full respect for the ethics and the people."

Reporters and cameramen are the first to arrive at the scene of an attack. They have to report live and must use any information they might have. This information might be wrong, inaccurate or unethical, and in these situations codes of ethics are urgently needed. Two serious initiatives to implement codes of ethics have been proposed by private institutions in Lebanon, one by the Lebanese American University (LAU) in 2001, and the other by the UNESCO in Beirut in 2008. In 2009 the then Minister of Information, Tarek Mitri, invited the country's media organizations to discuss a code of ethics. But no one responded to his initiative, as it did not include journalists and was introduced by a government body (Awad, 2011).

However, the lack of professional rules of conduct and the nonexistence of a code of ethics also threatens journalists and their freedom of expression. To guarantee an objective and professional practice of journalism, a code of ethics should be implemented and approved in a participatory way including journalists and media institutions (Awad, 2011).

Photojournalism Apart from Editorial Decisions

“I am a cameraman,” said Youssef, “my job is to shoot and keep rolling in any situation. During the war and the explosions period in Lebanon, I used to drive with my camera rolling and ready to film any explosion or attack when it happened, at the moment it happened. It is my job to catch the moment.” He thus shows that to be at the scene and capture each image is the reason why the photographer is there in the first place. Youssef words also reflect the views of Lester who believes that a photojournalist is hired for the specific purpose of providing footage, otherwise he is violating the contract with the news organization (Meyers, 2010, p. 354) “When

the ambassador of Russia was assassinated,” continued Youssef, “they cruelly judged the cameraman who left his camera rolling. This is exactly what he should do and what I do. The mission of the terrorist is to kill; my job is to film him doing that.”

Youssef’s argument is the same of Bersack who was toughly judged for being unethical and lacking sensibility when he filmed the young journalist student, Snelgrove, after a “crowd-control” bullet hit her eye and caused her death days later. Bersak said that he took the pictures of the scene because that was his job to do so.

Youssef’s comments coincide with the ones of the South Vietnamese police chief, General Nguyen Ngoc Loan. Although he was filmed shooting the Viet Cong suspect Nguyen Van Lenn, he said that he understood the position of the photographer Eddie Adams, who had exposed his war crime. And this is the ugly reality of the photographer profession, because he or she is someone who should register violent and disturbing events. One of these events pushed the photographer K. Carter to commit suicide. After he took and published the iconic photo “the vulture and the little girl,” he admitted he hated his “most successful image after ten years of taking pictures,” and that he regretted having taken it.

However, the photographer has a limited role. His or her specific job is to film everything, regardless of the results he or she gets or the codes of ethics that guide media professionals. He or she knows that the final decision on publishing is made by the editor. Youssef’s comments also reflect the observations of Lester that after images are captured, “the ethical dilemma is lifted from the photojournalist and given to the editor, who must decide whether to publish the picture or not” (Meyers, 2010, p. 355). But it is also expected that a

photographer be more responsible during a live coverage where he should remember the ethics and the values of the profession, and be careful not to manipulate or harm the public.

The Choice of Footage

Sometimes ethics is broken on purpose, particularly when shocking visuals become icons. In the literature review section, many examples illustrating this point were given, such as the visuals showing the Abou Ghraib Jail in Iraq where the U.S. troops were abusing the prisoners while filming their activities and publishing them, thus making the story newsworthy (Sontag, 2004). Another famous photo is that of Aylan Kurdi, the Syrian boy whose drowned body washed up on the coast of Greece (Reuters, 2015).

For focus group participant Aoun, although these images could be seen as unethical they are exceptions, and exceptions are made depending on the case. But at Sky News, where she works, there should be no exceptions, because nothing comes before ethics. Abboud, on the other hand, repeats the famous saying that, “a photo replaces a thousand words.” For him, although the photos of the Abu Ghraib jail are very violent and inhuman, they forced the American leaders to act.

Abboud and Saad agreed that the photograph of Aylan was not used to cause harm to children but to invite the world to look at the situation of the Syrian children. For Abboud, the photo “is not very shocking, the little boy looks asleep,” “but it is still a dead child,” reacted Nassar, “and his photo was used. This is unethical; we can deliver the message in another way.” She thus confirms the views of Hugh Pinney (Laurent, 2015), who stated that a “picture of a dead child is one of the golden rules of what you never publish”, and Aylan Kurdi’s was no exception.

Commenting on the shocking visuals of the assassination of Georges el-Reef, who was stabbed 15 times by Tarek Yateem in Ashrafieh, Saad said that the images had created awareness and that Yateem received the death penalty because of the footage. For Dargham, crude visuals also should be published to expose someone who is trying to hide his crime. Their views confirm the principles of Utilitarianism as explained by Meyers (2010), because if a journalist publishes shocking or private news that causes harm to someone in order to educate the public, his or her acts are justified.

Gebran Tueini, the owner and editor in chief of An-Nahar newspaper, was assassinated by a car bomb in December 12, 2005 (Mansour, 2008). “The day he was killed was a nightmare and a big challenge for the editors of the newspaper including me. It is a terror attack, and we need to think carefully of what to publish and how. What would be fair to Gebran?” says Bou Monsef, as he recalled the assassination of his boss, during his interview. “This is the real test and challenge for a responsible and professional journalist, and this is our ethical responsibility regarding Gebran himself,” he continued.

As discussed by Ward (2013) in a previous section, a good reporter must have the same ethical thinking and the same values in times of peace and times of war, that is, in regular or extreme cases of journalistic coverage. And this is what Bou Monsef noted, “That day, he continued, “An Nahar was released with the same standards of values, with full respect for our readers and an homage to Tueini.”

However, the crude image of the body of the U.S. soldier Joshua Bernard who was killed in Iraq was published despite the request of his father. Much earlier, in 1991, the photographer Kenneth Jarecke said that those who fight wars should be brave enough to look at war. His comments suggest that the violence of wars, and perhaps terror attacks, cannot be ignored,

especially by those who are in some way part of the events.

His controversial point illustrates the main questions of this research. Should the media report all the details of every violent event as it is, or does the media have a responsibility toward the public and is expected to maintain it and work wisely? Since terrorist attacks and the fight against terrorism have become widespread and since the media is on its front lines, covering terror attacks as seen in Marthose (2017), is a challenge that demands even greater responsibility.

Curiously, in her interview, Saliba confirmed Marthose's view by saying that she is convinced that today, with the escalation of terrorism in the world, responsible journalists are a necessity. Her position is especially helpful to discuss how journalists should deal with images. In fact, graphic images may cause more harm to people than they might benefit them. Saliba added that the photo of Aylan Kurdi, for example, made Europe accessible for all refugees including terrorists. During the Oklahoma City attack in 1995, Porter took the photo of a firefighter holding a little child, similar to Aylan's. The one-year and one-day baby girl did not look dead, but she was dead and her photo was published worldwide. Donations were made to the victims because of this photo and Porter won a Pulitzer Prize, but the other victims' families resented that the girl's family received all the money (Feinstein, 2016).

Relativity of Perspectives

Lebanese local televisions started transmitting live from the home of the Wardini family a few hours after the attack on the Reina nightclub in Istanbul. Three sisters and a brother were worried and nervous about the fate of their youngest brother who was missing after the attack.

It was very surprising for focus group participant Aoun, to see the Lebanese media in the house of a victim, reporting live and giving inaccurate information instead of objectively reporting about the incident. “They wanted us to be there,” justified Saad, “because they thought this would help them get clear information about their missing brother. “The reporters were aware of the reasons behind this invitation” continued Saad, “and they used the power of media to get this extensive coverage. But the moment they got there, the youngest brother, Elie Wardini, was already dead, the reporters knew it, the relatives and the friends knew it as well, and they were looking for a convenient way to inform the family.”

In Beirut, at the Wardini’s home, the reporters who had arrived informed their respective televisions. Five minutes later, Saad was reporting live from the scene. She suddenly asked the uncle of young man if he had any news about Elie, and he replied that Elie had passed away. Saad insists that she was not expecting him to confirm the death of the young man on air.

While she continued the coverage, the viewers could see and hear in her frame MTV’s Rahme, arguing and complaining about this unethical announcement in the presence of the family who still ignored the destiny of their brother and son. Two minutes later, Rahme started her stand up on her network and announced and confirmed the death of Elie Wardini.

Her announcement was synchronized with the hysterical reaction of the sisters who had just been informed that they had lost their brother. The camera of MTV was still rolling, very close on the faces of the girls who were screaming unconsciously and crying for their dead brother, while the reporter, Rahme, left the images that the camera was filming speak the controversial “thousand words.”

This type of opportunistic coverage was also a kind of “mission accomplished” for the televisions that came to the home of the Wardinis to get their scoop and got it. This practice is

reflected in Lester's views of journalists who use tragic news and gruesome stories and photographs to attract readers and viewers. "If it bleeds it leads" is an undesirable rule of thumb," (Meyers, 2010, p. 352).

In his interview, editor-in-chief Skandar said he is aware that MTV was judged severely and criticized for filming and publishing the hysterical reactions of the girls who had lost their brother. But he also argued that "The Wardinis wanted the media to film them. No network in another country would have entered the people's sitting room, we did that here, but we did not enter by force."

His explanation might seem enough for some people who think that permission from the concerned persons erases the code of ethics and the values of the profession. Sometimes this view is valid, but it is important to remember that these are traumatized persons who do not have, at a moment of crisis, the common sense they usually have. Thus, as Rawls (1971) says, values and ethics protect the people who are unable to protect themselves. Rawl's "Veil of Ignorance," means that journalist should put themselves in the place of the people who are suffering and make decisions accordingly.

If each reporter who were at the house of the victims that day had tried to put him or herself in the place of the Wardinis, what would have been his or her reaction? Youssef said that "if I were in their place, I would never let any camera or reporter films my pain and my grief." And he continued, "I was there that day, because the other networks were there as well. Since I was there, I had to do my job. I turned on my camera." Thus, Youssef ignored his feelings of sympathy and did what the other networks did, filmed the family in their most intimate and private moment because the family accepted it and their approval made journalists feel that their actions that day were justified.

“I work according to the Lebanese mentality with the influence of the BBC” says Skandar during his interview. “I did what I had to do that day with my crew. At BBC, I would have had a different behavior and a different coverage. I would never enter people’s house.

Focus group participants, Aoun and Nassar could not figure out which part of this scenario is the most unethical. “The family let the reporters in to help them find their brother most probably alive, and not to film them crying his loss.” But in her interview, Saliba said that the media conduct at the Wardini’s does not reflect how she “has been practicing for 20 years in the news department at Tele Liban.” But, she added, “It is too bad that we lost the standards. Very few are still practicing by the values of the profession.”

For journalists, there is always the choice of both doing what is right and being more ethical when this choice helps to protect vulnerable people as seen in Melrose (2017), who insists that the job of a journalist is to inform and to protect the public. But the case of France 2, which had to apologize after showing the footage of a man lying next to his wife’s dead body after the Nice attack, is an example of how media coverage needs to be monitored by legal and competent organizations.

Unusual circumstances can oblige a journalist to make a misjudgment but rules of conduct and ethics oblige him or her to apologize. In the case of the Wardinis, local Lebanese televisions went to the victim’s house, announced his death and filmed the reaction of the traumatized family, but the public neither objected to the images nor asked for an apology. However, the Minister of Information, Riachi, did react to that invasive coverage and said it showed that “it is time to have a serious code of ethics.”

Riachi also offered a very interesting critique of the Lebanese media. For him, “the coverage of the terror attack at the Reina nightclub was an example of what a responsible

journalist should not do. The Lebanese media transformed the sad incident into an event. As journalists, we should be looking for a certain reality, for a truth. In this coverage, no one was looking for the truth. Obviously, the event itself was more important than the ethics or the truth. Hence the need for an urgent code of ethics to protect this profession from further deterioration.”

It can be said that the Lebanese media transformed a brutal and sad incident into an episode of Star Academy. David Thompson, a journalist and expert in Islamist activities who ISIS threatened to kill, warned practitioners against doing this. The Lebanese professionals made a spectacle of their coverage, and this is what annoyed Riachi.

The Lebanese reporters’ argument to justify that coverage was that the Wardinis had asked them in. This may be correct, but so is the case of the man who lost his wife and his son in the Nice attack. He did not refuse to be interviewed by France 2 but the broadcasting of his interview was considered unethical, and the channel was forced to issue an official live apology. “At Sky News,” argued Nassar during the focus group section, “or at any English network, mistakes are not allowed, neither are speculations, or graphics and the privacy of the public is protected.”

And although professional practitioners are humans and make mistakes, they can also learn from them. But when the same mistake, or the same unethical behavior, is constantly repeated it ends up replacing the rule. This is what happens with the Lebanese media, their practice is not based on ethics. Or else, what sort of news were they expecting to get at the house of someone who had just lost a son or a brother, besides grief and extreme emotions?

The Lebanese coverage of the Istanbul attack did not create any awareness, it did not offer any truth, and it did not give any objective information. It was a competition among networks that explored the emotions of the family and the public. In doing so, the Lebanese

media showed a great lack of respect for both.

The Cases under Study from the Golden Mean Perspective

The Lebanese networks are not experiencing the dilemma of having to decide what to publish or not to publish. They are simply not concerned about finding a middle ground solution for this dilemma. The main concern of the country's networks is to publish any news materials that will attract viewers.

Although Lebanese practitioners know what is right and what is wrong and know what is ethical and what is not, they have chosen to do their work by focusing on what news materials might fit their agendas and increase their ratings.

It is important that every institution has internal editorial guidelines based on ethics and values. Hence, synchronized with a code of ethics, the Ministry of Information or the CSA should monitor objectively the practice of the Lebanese media institutions, and make sure they respect ethical codes. This type of monitoring is necessary to put the media on the right path.

Second, the media should work to find the right decisions about how to cover sensitive cases such as terror attacks. Based on Aristotle philosophy, the principle of the Golden Mean helps individuals and professionals find a convenient moral solution, a middle ground solution, between two extreme positions, such as choosing a photo that offers the same type of information and tells the same story about a violent event, but is less disturbing, less aggressive, and less dreadful, to replace the one that is disturbing and offensive (Lloyd, 1968).

This middle ground solution can be achieved by, for example, using graphic animation instead of the real, disturbing and upsetting footage. Blurry graphics respect the privacy of the

victims and if for some reason they cover any unethical material, concerned officials will remind the professionals of the rules of the ethical code, such as it is done at France 2. In some cases of live broadcast, media professionals decide to set a few minutes' delay before broadcasting the information so that the editors can check the coverage and decide what should be broadcasted and what should be blurred or not suitable for broadcasting (Marthose, 2017). This practice is a good example of how to make sure that a middle ground solution remains ethical. And according to Aoun "this is what we have been doing at Sky News Arabia for years."

Skandar explained in his interview that at BBC, where he used to work, there are established rules which are followed by every journalist, if they fail to do so they will face the consequences. This is what is needed in Lebanon.

One suggestion to limit the excesses of the Lebanese media was offered by Eid during his interview. He proposes to reduce the live broadcast or to replace it by flashes, since this could diminish the possibility of running disturbing or inaccurate footage. A special episode on the same day analyzing the incident seriously and objectively and avoiding emotional and subjective news, is another middle ground suggestion. Framing is also essential, the same shot can be taken in a less disturbing angle and still deliver the same message ethically.

These suggestions are a good start to build a code of ethics, since the real job of a responsible journalist is to convey the truth and use an objective content. Such code would help journalists be responsible and respectful of their subjects Marthose's (2017). The practitioners' choice of images and news should consider the privacy of people, respect the viewers and guarantee the accuracy of the information.

Journalism is described as an honorable profession, because the duty of a journalist is to circulate news and democratic societies rely on informed citizens (Belsey & Chadwick, 1992). This is also the opinion of the Minister of Information Riachi. As he put it, “this honorable profession and responsible journalists are at big risk without a convenient law and code of ethics that protect their viewers and their continuity.” His goal is to implement the law of the press as soon as it is approved.

Riachi started working, along with the governmental committee of information and communication, on a new press law which includes a chapter that covers the code of journalistic ethics after the controversial coverage of the Reina nightclub attack by local networks.

In his interview, he said that once approved by the parliament and published in the official newspaper, the law and code of ethics will be explained to the Lebanese networks. To make sure the law is applied and respected and to avoid another unethical coverage, an officer familiar with the details of the law will monitor the behavior of media practitioners.

Some journalists might object to being monitored under the well-known pretext that the people have the right to know and that freedom of the press is sacred. As discussed by Meyers (2010), this could be a justification for invading others people’s private lives and disclosing embarrassing revelations.

For those who think that the law or the rules might put the freedom of the press at risk, the experience in France and England proves them wrong. Rules in those places are organizing the job of the media, protecting their interests and their viewers without putting their freedom at any risk. Thus as seen in Brown (2011), the code of ethics is one of the basic elements of a profession and can function as a type of consciousness for a journalist. The written code of the

Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) also express Brown's view since its principles emphasize the four essential responsibilities of practitioners, namely to seek and report the truth, minimize harm and maintain independence while remaining publicly accountable (2011).

For Minister of Information Riachi the ethics of the media does not threaten freedom of expression. But it is also essential not to threaten the ethics of the profession. As he put it, threatening the ethics of the profession is an invasion of the freedom of others that is, no one is allowed to offend others in any way. These are the essentials of the press law. The law protects freedom but freedom is not above the law.

Social Media vs. Traditional Media

Terrorists need an audience and the best way to attract an audience is through the media, especially through the platforms of social media. "The Internet is neutral and open," explained Kareh during his interview, "anyone can post something. Every user in social media can be a journalist, every citizen is a reporter. Social media platforms are not subject to any law, anything is licit, no one is watching over them, it is a 100% free space," added Kareh. All these aspects make electronic media a major competitor of the traditional media.

Obviously, Internet users are not familiar with the rules or standards of the journalism profession. But practitioners are supposed to follow codes of conduct. Unfortunately, this new media deviate from the values of traditional media. According to Kareh, traditional media should have rectified social media platforms but instead it is following in their footsteps. Kareh explains that traditional media posts attractive, but unethical news on their digital platforms to get more

subscribers and followers. It is using social media platforms like any other user. Traditional media is expected to be more responsible, but it is not so.

In this thesis, a quantitative study of the real influence of social media on traditional media's coverage of terror attack was not included. In addition, the attendees of the focus group and the interviewees did not tackle the impact of social media in the choices traditional media is currently making.

Terror attacks coverage on traditional media might be controlled by codes of ethics, by self-censorship as prescribed by the philosophy of Aristotle, or by the monitoring of officials like the NCA, yet most media institutions are not respecting codes of ethics or values. However, the real danger of publishing terror attacks and terrorist propaganda comes from the platforms of social media. It is by this means that the terrorists convey their message, thus the responsibility of traditional practitioners becomes bigger than it actually is. They should push social media users to follow in their footsteps and not the opposite.

But how should terrorists be prevented from using social media and thus spreading their violent ideologies and fear among the public? One way to do so is the job of traditional media which should be a role model and encourage the users of digital and social media to follow their lead. This might look impossible considering the lack of proper ethic codes in traditional media.

Thus, if the real practitioners remain unethical in doing their daily work, mainly in the coverage of terror attacks, then the future of similar coverages will be ambiguous and dangerous. To analyze and try to find practical solutions for this dilemma is most important, and studies such as this one conducted here are timely and essential.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After having described, compared and discussed in detail the differences between the three cases, this study will attempt to answer its three research questions:

RQ1. What is the right ethical judgment a publication should make when a terror attack is the main story?

Most of the time, journalists are the ‘first responders,’ that is, the first to arrive at the scene of a terror attack. In such sensitive cases and situations, they face major ethical and professional challenges. What should be done in these cases? And how is it done? Perhaps the editorial standards of the Agence France Presse (AFP) can offer some ideas on how journalists should deal with a critical situation: “Although we are deployed on the ground to provide news coverage we do not surrender our humanity” (Marthose, 2017, p. 71).

This is a simple but essential reminder to journalists that they are as humans as their subjects are and should keep it in mind, especially when they do their job covering a terror attack. Balancing their humanity with the demands of covering sensitive stories is possible through the use of rules and codes of ethics. Practitioners should be aware of their obligations and duties, and apply them to their daily practice.

Both France 2 and BBC practitioners follow their organization’s rules and codes of ethics. And if they break the rules, which is a possibility when they are working in specific conditions and covering sensitive cases, the law will put them back on track.

As shown above, the networks in Lebanon, contrarily to France 2 and BBC, lack a clear law or code of ethics that guide practitioners in their daily work, especially when dealing with sensitive cases. This is the main reason why the coverage of terror attacks by the Lebanese media is guided only its own political and commercial agendas.

Before discussing the right ethical judgment to make in all kinds of media coverage, but especially that of terror attacks, media institutions and practitioners should have codes of ethics and refer to them. To make the code of ethics efficient, the practice of media professionals should be monitored by concerned officials.

Separately from this code of ethics, every media institution should have editorial guidelines or an internal charter of moderation that concerns values and ethics. The code of ethics may vary from country to country and between networks, but it should remind practitioners that people and their privacy should always be respected. Victims of terror attacks have the right to die with dignity.

The media should be aware of professional guidelines, and double check their information, seek the truth and beware not to glorify terrorists or frighten people. Media professionals and organizations should raise awareness on wrongdoings to mobilize the public. By following these principles, the freedom of the press is preserved.

The Ministry of Information or the National Council of Audiovisual should do an objective job and gain the trust of practitioners. In addition, they should make sure that media professionals and organizations are aware of the principles, the basic rules of the profession, and of values and ethics. This measure will help to build a good relationship between officials and the media, where they indirectly collaborate by doing their job well.

Such procedure will also help practitioners be prepared to face sensitive cases objectively and professionally and to find an ethical way to deal with terror attacks. Doing otherwise will take their practice in the wrong direction.

The examples of ethical conduct and rules in England and France prove that their approach to dealing with terror attacks is successful and should be followed by others. Codes of ethics guide the practitioners, protect their professional reputation, and help them contribute to the good of their communities.

RQ2. How can a journalist find a balance between ethics and truth when confronted with shocking visuals and news?

Basically, ethics should always precede the truth. But there might be exceptions and those exceptions should be treated separately, with great care and attention. Shocking visuals are not the news or the event itself, practitioners should focus on delivering the news and the facts, shocking visuals might be allowed in the story if they serve a case or a mission. But if they are not serving the truth and only spreading fear and encouraging violence and terror, they should not be published. In short, extreme visual materials are never to be used for egoistic purposes, such as scoops and ratings.

RQ3. What are the main differences in the coverage of the three cases under study? In which cases the Golden Mean of Aristotle was valid?

As seen previously, MTV showed a lack of humanity and respect for the public and was unprofessional in its coverage of the terror attack on the Reina nightclub. The privacy of the victims' families was invaded, and shocking visuals were used for egoistic purposes. Wrong

information was published before being checked for accuracy. The terrorist was presented as a star.

The Golden Mean of Aristotle was not used. The Golden Mean was not valid.

At BBC the coverage of the Westminster attack provided objective and neutral news. The vision of BBC is to be “the most creative organization in the world,” but the corporation does not focus simply on what to do, it also focuses on how it should be done (BBC, 2017). Since BBC proved to be highly committed to ethics, it is doing things on their own way which is somehow a middle ground.

France 2 tried to be ethical in its coverage of the Nice terror attack, but the atrocity of the attack led them to break some rules of conduct. However, the station released a live apology as requested by the CSA.

The Golden Mean was partially used.

CONCLUSION

Without journalists willing to commit to codes of ethics, all the solutions discussed in this thesis will be useless. The solutions are meant to guide the media to find the list of do's or do not's in the coverage of terror attacks so that terrorists can cause less harm and be less threatening. Moreover, it is the job of every practitioner to fight terrorism and to protect ethical values. But editorial policies have been ad hoc, and media outlets are still publishing sensational and terrifying news because they sell advertising.

Certainly, an act of terror is newsworthy, but it is indispensable to be vigilant and act responsibly. A terrorist should not become a hero in the media. One of the reasons of the success and survival of terrorism is the news. But the voice of terrorists should not be heard, and their message should not be understood (Williams, 2016). After all, the terrorist is watching the news. And he knows how it works; he knows how to take advantage of it.

Some major broadcasters chose to respect values and avoid to mitigate potential propaganda value but they are exceptions, The New York Daily News for example, published on its website the photo of James Foley decapitated, and Fox News published the video of the Jordanian pilot burned to death (Williams, 2016) both crimes committed by ISIS. But in other countries, the unethical behavior has replaced almost completely the values and codes of ethics. Such is the case in Lebanon, where broadcasters have published news without any consideration for the consequences of their unethical conduct, their main concern was to get the higher ratings.

Therefore, the media should stop "playing the terrorist's game." Professionals should not offer the terrorist what he is expecting to obtain from them.

Jenkins (2016) writes that the obvious reaction to terror is not to be terrorized. It should be, as New York's mayor, Rudy Giuliani, did when he told his citizens after 9/11, to 'buy a pizza, take the kids to the park, see a show'. Citizens must not run for cover or let the terrorists change their lives.

But the media is doing the opposite.

Limitations:

This research tried to find answers and solutions to this dilemma based on a qualitative research design. It did not rely on quantitative research techniques because the focus is not on the effects of the unethical coverage of terrorism on viewers but it is on the editorial decisions of media practitioners about what to publish or not to publish whenever they deal with terror attacks. The participants of the focus group and the journalists interviewed did not include every practitioner or random ones; the people chosen had a direct experience covering the cases under study and worked or are still working for different networks.

The focus group was formed only of 6 participants, because the members chosen to participate work in news departments and might be called for news coverage at any time. For the same reason, it was also very hard to gather professional reporters and cameramen, who work in the news in one day.

Mr. Charbel Abboud, reporter at Future TV, Ms. Rachele Karam, reporter at Al Jadeed, Ms. Denise Rahme Fakhre, reporter at MTV and Mr. Bassam Bou Zeid, reporter and anchor at LBCI were supposed to join the focus group session, instead, they apologized the last minute because of their commitment in the breaking news of the visit of Mr. Saad Hariri, the Lebanese

Prime Minister to Emmanuel Macron, the French president that took place the same day of the focus group session.

The reason for choosing these cases in particular, is the difference in the kind of media coverage each of them received.

Some facets related to terrorism or to ethical behavior of the practitioners were not discussed in this thesis.

The relation between politicians and terrorism with its effect on media was not tackled as well although it is extremely important, because, many politicians also use terrorism to gain popularity. For example, 9/11 saved George Bush, the former president of the United States and François Hollande the former president of France” (Jenkins, 2016). LBCI’s Abboud, one of the participants of the focus group, for example, emphasized that some nations protect and help terrorists.

Social media platforms are also used to justify the unethical behavior of some traditional media. The relationship between social media and traditional media was barely discussed in this thesis, but it needs to be addressed seriously and great detail.

American companies that own social media and should regulate their content are also using terrorists for selfish reasons. Those companies follow the US rules and regulations. The president of Lebanon’s Internet Society Governance Committee, Kareh explained during his interview that terrorists are using social media platforms to deliver their messages and spread their cause. Unfortunately, he continues, the owners of social media have the power to censor them or block them but are not doing so.

The language used to report terror attacks is subject to discussion and was not analyzed in this study. When the media say for instance, the “Islamic state,” when the term “state” is used to refer to terrorist organizations, it gives them an official status which is the opposite of what is needed to achieve the main target in the fight against terrorism.

Recommendations:

More topics and subjects can be analyzed and discussed based on this thesis.

Media are conditioned by many factors that are affecting the choices of what to publish or not to publish. The rapidity, every media institution wants to be the first to publish the information (scoop value), most of the times without taking the time to check the quality and, or the accuracy of the news; Financial interests, media institutions need money to survive, grow and compete with other networks, and this need obliges them to adopt sometimes unethical choices (race for ratings); People’s interests, media focus on what people prefer to watch, because they need to attract the viewers and the advertisers; Political interests, every media institution has an agenda that imposes the choices and decisions; Relativity of values, moral and ethics differ and vary between countries and cultures, that is why we cannot generalize.

Violence on television can have severe effects on viewers mainly children who watch violent scenes or play violent games. In doing so, they may become more familiar with the pain and grief of others and might develop an aggressive or destructive behavior toward others. Being exposed to violence might also create anxiety and fear of the world around them (Fergusson, 2011). A terror attack is a serious violent action where real people are injured and killed. “It is not a surprise then that a terror attack can have a serious impact on people’s mental health.

Terrorists use fear as a psychological weapon, and it can have serious psychological implications for individuals and whole countries (Antonius, 2015, p.6). The psychological effect of terror attacks on people is not the main subject of this research, but the unethical coverage can have severe effects on people's well-being and needs to be widely studied.

The safety of journalists is essential during the coverage of terror attacks, this aspect was also not covered in this study. Many good professionals were assassinated or killed while they were doing their job.

In addition, it is important to ask if their interaction with terrorists, either through a direct interview or some other form of indirect communication is legal. Are journalists supposed to interview perpetrators or crime who want media attention? Will this be considered as a contribution to their mission? Or might this give the journalist the opportunity to intimidate the terrorist and diminish his power? Some say that terrorists should not be interviewed, but the coverage of their actions contradicts with this idea. Those points are worth to be discussed because of their importance in fighting terrorism and in finding the right way to deal with terrorist attacks and their actors who are spreading fear and anger in different parts of the world.

Maybe it is not the job of journalists to fight terrorism, but they are not supposed to contribute to their mission or help them achieve their aims.

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APPENDIX A**FOCUS GROUP AND ONE-ON ONE INTERVIEWS****Focus Group:**

Location: Isol - Beirut, Down Town, Shaker and Oueini bldg., facing the governmental palace.
5th floor,

Date: November 17, 2017

Duration: around 2 hours

Number of participant practitioners: 6

One-on-one Interviews:

Participant practitioners, locations, dates of interviews and approximate duration:

1. M. Riachi: January 2, 2018, 15 minutes, at the Ministry of Information, Hamra street, Beirut.
2. N. S. Choueiry: November 28, 2017, 40 minutes, at Tele Liban, Tallit el Khayat, Beirut.
3. N. B. Monsef: December 4, 2017, 15 minutes, at An Nahar bldg. Foch Street Martyrs Square, down town, Beirut.
4. A. Skandar: December 1, 2018, 1 hour 12 minutes, at MTV bldg., Naccache, Matn.
5. G. Eid: December 2, 2017, 47 minutes, at MTV bldg., Naccache, Matn.
6. C. E. Kareh: December 6, 2017, 45 minutes. Zalka, facing wooden bakery.

APPENDIX B

BACKGROUND ABOUT FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS AND INTERVIEWEES

Focus Group Participants:

Mayssaloun Nassar is a French-Lebanese journalist. She worked for several pan-Arab and international production companies and television channels before joining France 24 in 2011 as a journalist editor. And since November 2015, she hosts "In the sphere of taboos - Fi Falak Al Mamnou ', a social talk shows that tackles taboo subjects on the "In Arabic" channel.

Larissa Aoun, has around 18 years of experience in the TV news production. She has worked for several local and pan Arab news stations in Beirut and Washington DC. She serves currently as reporter/producer at Sky News Arabia.

Alain Dargham, in 2015 he moved from Al Hurra TV in Washington to MTV as a reporter in the news department. He started his career as a correspondent in the United States of America where he learnt how to cover the news and respect ethics. He was covering the Boston Marathon on April 15th 2013, when a terror attack took place and he found himself covering the death of people instead of filming the winners at the finish line. This incident marked his career.

Layal Saad, the youngest reporter at Al Jadeed news department, she joined their team in 2016. She reported live from Elie Wardini's house the next day of the terror attack at the Reina nightclub in Istanbul. Layal was the first reporter to announce the death of Elie Wardini live from his house, and filmed the hysterical reaction of his sisters when they heard the bad news.

Pierre Youssef, a cameraman who works in the news department at Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International (LBCI) from around 30 years. He filmed a huge number

of terror attacks; wars and conflicts. Pierre was as well filming live from Wardini's place the next day of the terror attack at the Reina Nightclub.

Mario Abboud, news anchor, in 2012 he moved from Al Jadeed to LBCI. He is a news anchor. He covered many terror attacks that took place in Lebanon.

List of interviewees:

Melhem Riachi veteran journalist minister of information.

Nada Saliba Choueiry, editor in chief and news anchor at Tele Liban.

Nabil Bou Monsef, Deputy editor-in-chief of An-Nahar newspaper.

Amjad Skandar News and political manager at "Al Mada" TV, Honna Baghdad, Al Sumariyah TV, at Murr television (MTV).

Georges Eid is a Lebanese multilingual journalist, anchor, war correspondent and documentary producer at Murr television (MTV). University lecturer.

Dr. Charbel El Kareh, PhD-Attorney at Law enrolled at Beirut Bar Association (BBA), with over 16 years of practice; Legal consultant specialized in Corporate Laws, Insurance and Mutual Funds law as well as Information Technology (IT) and intellectual properties. President of Information and Communication Technology Committee of BBA and member of Lebanese Parliament' IT committee; President of Internet Society' governance committee (Lebanon Chapter).

APPENDIX C

FOCUS GROUP DATA GROUPING

The moderator introduces the topic and the participants and starts with the first question.

1. The ethical and the right way to cover terror attacks.

* Aoun explains that, at Sky news it is forbidden to use any kind of disturbing footage such as dead bodies, blood, and a full respect to the victims is expected. It is a decision based on experience and morals.

* Saad asks and if something is broadcasted by mistake?

* Aoun: nothing is broadcasted by mistake. The material is double checked to avoid this. Everybody knows the rules but it is double checked to be on the safe side, mainly because terrorism is a sensitive case.

* Saad: At Al Jadeed when there is a terror attack, a crew is sent to the location with an SNG for a live coverage, my concern as a reporter is to tell what is happening based on the sources from the officials like the security forces, the red cross. Some reporters film dead people and they even walk on them, I just stand as far as I can to have a blurry image, to avoid unethical footage.

* Youssef: In France for example, the coverage of all the terror attacks that took place was not disturbing. In Lebanon, the competition between media is breaking all kind of rules, ethics and taboos. There are no limits; they are filming victims, children and dead people.

* Dargham: I agree, basically graphics should not be used or broadcasted but the reality in Lebanon is different. Either in a live coverage or edited reports. We all remember the assassination of Rafik Hariri in 2005, people were filmed totally burned.

* Nassar: yes but they removed Hariri footage and kept all the other victims.

* Dargham: still in some places Hariri's footage were broadcasted as well in addition to many disturbing footage of burned people. Ethically, this kind of footage should not be broadcasted. Because television is rolling, anybody could be watching. Media should have respect for the audience, mainly for the relatives of the victim who might be watching, and they might have no idea that someone of their family passed away in the explosion. And this is definitely something very shocking.

* Abboud: In addition to disturbing footage, what is unethical as well and dangerous is when wrong information is broadcasted, or inaccurate, or details that might serve the assassin instead of the victim. Personally, I try to describe the situation, and I try to link it to people who threatened without confirming their involvement in this attack. During a live coverage the risk of mistakes or unethical images or comments is higher. Sometimes the camera films victims or injured people, as an anchor I apologize, and I address indirectly the cameraman to change his frame and to pay attention. There is no way, to announce the name of any victim unless the family is informed from officials. Sometimes we receive names of victims during the live but we never announce them.

* Nassar: there is something I would like to mention that is related to the law. Here in France, the article 35 from the media and journalism law mentions that it is strictly forbidden to broadcast any detail of any kind related to a crime. Including footage of the victim or wounded, if the media do not have the clearance to do so. If a victim is filmed without his approbation, he has the right to sue the institution and the journalist who filmed him and who broadcasted his footage. And if he is not alive, if he is dead and filmed, his family can sue them as well, and this is transferred to criminal penal code, it is not related to the journalism law anymore, which means that besides the unethical behavior, the invasion of privacy is also considered a violation. No one

knows who might be watching my news? Do I have the right to invade the dignity and the privacy of the people who are vulnerable and will never be able to overcome this? This is definitely unethical. But when the law is involved, another issue is raised here, which is the freedom of the press. How are we supposed to present and cover the terror attacks?

All these questions are being discussed in Europe today, lately a female deputy in the parliament in France proposed a law project that forbids publishing photos and names of terrorists in media after a terror attack. Many media institutions refused this proposal, considering it as an invasion to the freedom of the press. Others believe that, this is the media choice. And what kind of choice. Are we supposed to fight terrorism or no? Are we only mediators or we have an opinion and we share it?

* Aoun: Here in Lebanon the law is not clear, and it is not functioning right many times, we find ourselves obliged to stick to the policy and the rules of the institution and the internal code of ethics set by the network. Unfortunately most of the Lebanese networks do not follow the code of ethics. And they use anything to get higher ratings. The only concern of an editor in chief is to get viewers. And definitely, according to him the image of a child crying or wounded equal viewers. Steaming feelings is what matters.

* Youssef: I have been a news cameraman for 32 years. I always teach my students that being a journalist or photojournalist is a big responsibility, the freedom that we have is a big responsibility. And you have to be very careful of what you should publish or not. You might contribute in starting a war or a big conflict if you misjudge the information that you have or if you know its impact and you still publish it. Some instructors teach their students to use their freedom and to do or say whatever they know, they think this is free speech, but no, this is not correct.

* Dargham: At MTV, and not only because I work there, they do not publish images of blood unless it is blurred. Since, when a disturbing images are published, we are marketing and spreading the project of fear among people, and this is happening actually in the media.

* Nassar: this is an indirect propaganda, mainly when ISIS videos are published.

* Aoun: the footage of the pilot for example.

* Dargham: in Lebanon there is lot of irregularities.

* Abboud: and the people who were put in cages and drowned. When the terror attacks are given an important space in the coverage, this is also a message to the nations who are protecting and helping the terrorists, and we all know that some nations do help terrorism. So although I am helping unintentionally and in a certain way the terrorist himself, but when I highlight on the atrocity of the terror, I am telling the protectors that someday, this might happen to you, in your country, to your people.

* Nassar: after the attack at Charlie Hebdo, we received, at France 24 two emails, the first one asking us to call Daesh only “terrorists” and the 2nd one not to publish any footage or names of terrorists who make attacks. David Thompson, is a journalist and he is expert in Islamic groups, Daesh threatened to kill him, he says that we should not transform terror attacks into one of Star Academy episodes, can you imagine the kind of people or children who might be watching?

* Aoun: you mean that the responsible journalist is becoming rare?

* Nassar: unfortunately, after the Bataclan attack, I was sent to “Pompidou” hospital where they sent the victims. We never go to the houses of the victims. The scene that touched me but I did not film it, was a father and a mother holding a bag with their son’s or daughter’s clothes covered with blood. I cannot film the pain of people this way. I do not have to visit the father of a victim to know and show how much he is suffering. Our job is to give useful information.

* Aoun: the opposite happens here in Lebanon.

* Abboud: The media reflect their environment, victims and death are not conceived the same way in France and Lebanon for example. We got used to killing in Lebanon and we are proud to film them. In the Arab world we play with the feelings and emotions of viewers. We use the footage that attracts the people. I cannot be the only network who abides by the rules and ethics when the values and morals are not respected in the rest of the TVs. Either it is respected by each one or no one. TVs are not NGOs. On an individual level every one has values and ethics, but when it comes to TV it is not the same. When you are the only one who follows the ethics no one will watch you, and we all know that networks survive of the ratings.

* Youssef: this is right, in Lebanon and the Arab countries, we are obsessed by the ratings, and what the viewer wants.

* Nassar: but the viewer is smart, and at the same time he takes what we, media persons, give him. After my coverage that day, I received plenty of messages and people were telling me that they do not feel comfortable and are annoyed of the Arab networks' coverage.

* Aoun: In addition to the invasion of people's privacy in a horrible way.

* Dargham: I can understand if we make a story with the martyr's family three weeks after the attack, I am using this word "martyr" because it is used in the Arab world, while it is supposed to be used only for the army.

* Aoun: we are not underestimating his death if we do not say "martyr". At sky news we do not use it.

* Dargham: so in three weeks, I do a story with the relatives and friends of course if they do not mind.

* Nassar: what about the dead person? How do you know that he or she does not mind talking

about him or her?

* Dargham: I will tell you why. We are living in a very conservative society. Simple and poor people might be influenced and could be recruited by terrorists at any time. Poor people have nothing to lose. At “beib el tebbene” in Tripoli for instance, the story of a young girl who had dreams and a future but was killed is inspiring for many people.

* Nassar: means you are playing a role?

* Dargham: a social role, I am a journalist. After three weeks I am not making a scoop, I am filming a social story to make a positive influence.

* Nassar: I respect this, but I believe this is the role of social counselors.

* Dargham: I think we do have a big social responsibility as well. I do not live in a French society, where the law protects me, here the law does not protect anyone. People with no kind of power do not get anywhere. We are the voice of those people. When I was in the United States of America, things were different. I do not have to be a journalist with a platform to get my rights. Here things are not the same, I am their voice.

* Nassar: I am not judging you; I do respect what you are saying. As a French TV, we are considered as the right hand of the French diplomacy that has values and rules, we spread those values in our media.

* Aoun: a small example away of terrorism, when I make a story about refugees or the marriage of minors or the electricity, I do have a message and I am as well trying to change something in the life of the refugees, or of this minor girl. Then, the journalist has a role.

* Dargham: you are lucky Maysaloun. To have laws and rules you follow, here it is messy.

2. Do we have or do we follow a certain code of Ethics and if yes is it known and respected by all Lebanese journalists?

* Saad: I know the code of ethics, I think the older generation forgot it or they got over it in a way. They try to create their own ethics. I am the youngest reporter in the network where I work, and I think one of the reasons behind recruiting me is because I know the code of ethics and I respect it. Sometimes my TV asks me to overlook on some unethical things, I do not accept.

* Abboud: I think the code of ethics is related to its environment, so is the media. In some cultures people eat insects, in others they are afraid of them. In Europe they do not have the honor crimes, here we do have it. Violence against women is not treated the same way in Lebanon and in France for example. So the law is set based on its environment and culture. The media will follow this law. Therefore in Lebanon, it becomes very normal to film victims and to be even proud about it. In Europe, they cannot look at this kind of footage.

* Aoun: it is correct but we can adapt, I came from a Lebanese culture and I am working with a British one, but I understood their law and I am respecting it. They organize discussions and workshops, mainly for people coming from different cultures to explain the rules and the ethics. And they send emails to remind us of the rules. They even answer our questions about the kind of footage we want to publish and the reasons they refuse. And they explain why I can not publish images of a dead child or any other graphic, eventually I have to respect the policy and the internal law of the institution regardless of which culture I am coming from.

* Nassar: this is the reason why I think media's role is to deliver the message only. As individuals we do not work according to our beliefs but according to the strategy of the network, that have one target, which is to get more viewers. Another example is the first issue of Charlie Hebdo directly, after the attack, they put on their cover the policeman who was killed during the

attack. The ministry of interior affairs objected and considered this as an invasion and lack of respect to the privacy of a dead man. Knowing that everybody, including the ministry of interior affairs was over sympathizing with “Charlie Hebdo”. Which means that ethics have nothing to do with my personal opinion towards it. Why am I publishing graphics? To get viewers.

* Dargham: the Associated Press sends raw footage, so that the journalist can have a clear idea and he has the freedom to choose wisely what to publish.

* Youssef: The Lebanese media are working according to one rule, which is the viewership. They broke all the values, laws and ethical rules. All they care for is the rating. They are in some kind of competition, and doing their best to get the most attractive footage. Death became very cheap in the Arab networks. As a photographer or cameraman, my job is to shoot everything I see and it is up to the reporter and the editors to choose what to publish and how to publish it. But If I am shooting live, I feel more responsible and I act responsibly. As a photographer, my job is to shoot. During the war and the explosions period, I used to drive with my camera rolling in my hand ready to film any explosion or attack when it happens the moment it happens. It is my job to catch the moment. When they assassinated the ambassador of Russia, they judged the cameraman who left his camera rolling. This is exactly what I do. The job of the terrorist is to kill, my job is to film him doing that. If I switch off my camera to help him, I will not be doing my job.

If I do not have my camera, I behave like a normal human and I offer my help. I am aware and I respect ethics and morals. When I was covering the assassination of Hariri, I could not film any of the victims, the explosion scene was horrible, I took large angle, and this I what I do in live coverage.

3. Who is the huge coverage of terror attacks serving: the media, the public or terrorists?

* Abboud: When the media give an important space to the coverage of terror attacks, and when they highlight the atrocity of the act of terror, they are sending a message to the countries that are supporting terrorism. The media itself will never support terrorism on purpose. But it is just a direct message to tell the protectors of terrorism that these sad and horrible scenes might happen in your country and to your citizens. The act of killing that you committed might be transferred to your country. It is also a message to tell the politicians that this is the result of your conflicts. Now the way we deal with the topic, could be an advantage to the agenda of the terrorist or a disadvantage. It is important to make the terrorists and their protectors feel insecure to avoid serving their targets. Beside, in the presence of digital media and social media, traditional media cannot hide important information.

* Youssef: From the terrorist point of view, he considers that his mission was accomplished through the coverage, the language used and the time given for the attack. From the television point of view, he did not do it intentionally. Most of the times they do not think of the consequences of their coverage, all they care about is the rating and the competition.

* Aoun: I believe most of the times it is the terrorist who is benefiting from this coverage, and the network gets better ratings.

* Saad: The terrorist is definitely benefiting from this coverage mainly that the media exaggerate and they serve their propaganda. The media helped the terrorism to grow. And the network is benefiting as well by increasing its viewers.

* Nassar: It depends. And the question is important. For instance during the coverage of the Nice's attack, France 2 decided to run the truck walking through the people. It was a decision

taken by the editorial team. What was their argument? They wanted to send a message to the security services, wondering how did this truck manage to walk all this way and killed all those people without being stopped by the security? In France 2 they think that their job as journalists is to show the lack in the security's mission. It is not the attack itself that they wanted to show but the missing job of the police. But did they, unintentionally serve the terrorist at the same time?

* Aoun: of course they did. Regardless of their intention.

* Saad: people watch what we offer to them; they do not have a choice. The media should not publish. At Al Jadeed we received a video sent from "An Nasra" with the kidnapped militaries saying that they are well treated. We did not broadcast it because they are hostages. We serve their agenda and we spread their message if we publish a movie produced by the terrorists themselves.

* Dargham: Maysaloun, concerning the truck, it would be more ethical to replace the real truck by graphic animation and I send a direct message to the security and the police. I make a pressure without running disturbing and unethical footage.

* Nassar: I agree with you. This was an editorial decision. This kind of war and terror proves how hard it is to respect the rules. Mainly in a live coverage.

* Youssef: in a live coverage it becomes more the responsibility of the cameraman to be careful what to shoot and our will to show the viewer the answers he is looking for after a terror attack. And the risks are bigger when we are live for hours.

* Dargham: still in a live coverage there is a high risk of committing mistakes.

* Nassar: In France, we do not cover live for hours.

* Youssef: because in France nobody covers live, there is no competition. Here they know if one

TV covers live and the others are not covering, people will watch the one who is transmitting live from the location of incident. The competition is breaking all the rules and the ethics.

* Saad: This live coverage is a trap for the reporter, we are subject to errors and repetition. And we try to maintain the ethics but sometimes the camera involuntary takes unethical footage. I had an experience with a live coverage, and Pierre, although we were the only TV transmitting live, they refused to interrupt it, they left me for hours until I had nothing to say just because something might happen. The terrorist of Costa in Hamra street, only Al Jadeed arrived to the location before they closed the street and nobody was allowed to get in. I made an excellent stand up, it included all the necessary information that I had, and we ended the live. Karma Khayat went crazy, and she asked to resume the live and to keep on covering even if we repeat the same information continuously. I received information about another terrorist who was still free; I could not say something like that.

* Aoun: and what about giving false information, in the case of Wardini and during two days, the media said that he jumped in the Bosphore and the truth was that he covered his friend with his body and he died. Do you copy from each other? You do not double-check your info?

* Saad: The family told us.

* Aoun: ok, but the family is not a trustful source in these situations, beside you need to check the information you receive mainly under these circumstances.

* Saad: I agree with you, but we thought the family had the right information about their brother.

* Abboud: This is a big mistake in media, not to double-check our info. It is happening more because they want to publish the news or to send a push notification before the others.

On the other hand, I agree that the live coverage for hours is a trap for anchors and reporters. We find ourselves sometimes repeating the same information. If it was up to me, I will not cover for

hours, just flashes would be enough, but this is a decision related to the managers of the network. My job is to avoid making mistakes and to remain professional and respect the rules and the ethics as much as I can.

4. When do ethics come before the truth? And is there a situation where journalists are allowed to use unethical footage?

* Aoun: It depends on the case. In some situations we can make exceptions as long as we stay in the range of ethics and respect. I think that ethics are always the priority.

* Nassar: every case should be treated separately.

* Dargham: I believe what is happening in “Orma” requests an “unethical” behavior, actually I would call it a positive choc, so that the world knows what is happening. It is more than terrorism, it is a genocide. Mainly because the “terrorists” are trying to hide their crimes, in this case our job as journalists, is to show the atrocity of their massacres so that the world acts and stop them.

* Abboud: I put ethics before truth when I am not sure of the news I have, when the news or the information I have, might create a conflict in the country, or sectarian strife. And this is how I work. Sometimes during a live we know delicate information, either we do not reveal it even if other networks published it, or we double check before we publish it. I might use unethical footage or information to contribute in a good case. “A photo replaces a thousand word” the photo of Aylan Kurdi was enough to shed lights on the numbers of Syrians who died in the sea. The photograph of Aylan was not used to make harm to children, but to invite the world to look at the Syrian children.

* Saad: I agree with that, the photo of Aylan Kurdi made a positive chock. It was not very

shocking, the little boy looks sleeping. The photo was used for good purposes.

* Nassar: but he is dead and he is a child, his photo was used. This is unethical, we can deliver the message of the people drowning in another way.

* Saad: but they already know and they were not doing anything, those kind of photos embarrasses them and they find themselves obliged to do something. Another example is the incident and the assassination of Georges el Reef, the footage although unethical, I believe we should use them to create awareness and the people will think twice before doing the same thing. I noticed that the killing incident decreased after this. Tarek Yateem, got a death penalty because of the footage. I encourage the publication of unethical footage to support a cause.

* Nassar: The way France 2 did when they published the truck!?

* Dargham: I respect what you are saying but I disagree, in some cases this strategy works in some other situations it does not work.

* Saad: on the other hand, ethics come before the truth in two cases, in the case of death, I believe in the right to die with dignity, and if the information might harm a person. For instance, I do not announce the name of a girl who was rapped; our culture prohibits us from doing such thing. Because we live in a judgmental society. The woman will be blamed and condemned in any case. I feel that I have to protect her.

* Dargham: Again it is linked to the culture of every society.

Before moving to the cases under study, the participants watched footage about the coverage of the three cases in the respective media under study as well.

5. The cases under study

* Aoun: further to all what we said already, it is obvious that in Lebanon the ethics are missing. No one respects the code of ethics, reporters, editors. The law does not punish when needed. They punish for political reasons and not for ethical reasons. And this applies to the coverage of the Reina nightclub attack, they went to the houses of the victims, they published false information, they had no respect to the victims. They filmed very emotional and private moments.

* Dargham: if you mean the Wardini's who lost their brother, they wanted the media to come to their house, and they did no regret it. They did not mind.

* Saad: I was at the Wardini's house, I can tell you my side of the story. I contacted the family and I was proud to be able to talk to them and I was very content that they accepted that I come to their place. The attack is outside Lebanon, and there are Lebanese victims, it is then natural to go to the victims' houses. MTV and LBCI were there as well and later on, Future TV and OTV joined us. The Wardinis asked for the media, because they thought that this might help them know the fate of their brother. Politicians and friends came to their house as well. When we arrived, we knew that their son Elie Wardini passed away in the attack. I was discussing this with Denise the reporter from MTV, and we thought it is unethical to announce it on TV. The family had no idea yet. The relatives and friends were trying to find the right moment and the right way to tell them. I informed my TV, and they asked me to stand by for a live. At this moment, the scoop in this case, is in the first 10 minutes, viewers get bored afterward. And once we announce his death or his survival, the story is done. I started my live coverage, and I said that we still do not know anything yet, we are still waiting for any official information, and during the live, his uncle was beside me, I asked him if he had any news concerning Elie, and to my surprise he said, yes, it is confirmed, Elie passed away. I was not expecting him to announce it. At this moment I

saw and heard Denise screaming while I was still rolling and continuing my stand up. It is her voice that the girls heard and not my interview with their uncle.

* Nassar: but when you chose the uncle, you took the risk, he might announce it, and you knew it.

* Saad: I was hoping that he won't say it.

* Nassar: We do not build news on hopes and speculations. Maybe you did that on purpose!

* Saad: I made a stand up before this one, I could have said it but I did not.

* Youssef: I think Layal was smart, she felt that the relatives, mainly the uncle were looking for a way to reveal the news, she gave him the opportunity to do that, maybe intentionally maybe not. This annoyed Denise a lot, maybe because she wanted to announce it before the others. They are competing, even in death.

* Aoun: this was not the only unethical decision, the live coverage of the sisters shouting and losing consciousness was even worst.

* Saad: I did not take close ups for the sisters, I asked my cameraman to keep it large and not to make any close ups.

* Aoun: still, this is extremely unethical. Large or close ups, we can see the sisters crying and losing consciousness.

* Saad: The rest of the families did not let us enter their houses, we did not go. But they let us in, I saw them a couple of months after the incident, and they did not blame me for anything, it is the opposite, they wanted to be filmed, some people need to share their mourn or anger.

* Dargham: when Denise confirmed to the editor in chief that day at MTV the death of Elie, he told her not to announce anything because she is in their house, and this is unethical. Maybe Denise made that reaction because she was just discussing this with her editors and she knows

that this should not be announced like that.

* Youssef: let me share my side of the story, because I was there as well. It is correct that they let us in, and we knew the young man died. First, I would like to mention that, at the beginning we stood outside the building, and we had the intention to stay there. But when the rest of the TVs went inside, we could not stay simply outside. It would not be fair. We had to follow them. Once we are inside the house, every thing was authorized for the camera. We can film everything that might happen in that house. In addition to that, the family itself wanted the media to be there. I believe that we should not have been there in the first place. Maybe we should have waited outside the house. But since we entered their home, as journalists our job is to tell everything happening in that house. My job is to film, I know and we all know that this is unethical but I cannot turn off my camera when an event is happening in front of me. And a reporter's job is to report and tell his story as well. Eventually I asked the TVs to leave. Five SNGs were inside the house, more than the family members. If I were at their place, I would have asked the crews to leave, or not to be here in the first place.

* Dargham: In the States, when there is an important case, like the Boston attack. They sit in the garden of the house, escorted by the police, waiting to let them in. if they let them in, they enter and they make their stories, if not they will not. This is their job. But definitely journalists are not allowed to break in or film in an unethical way, or without the clearance of the concerned people. At the Wardini's house, they were there because the family let them in.

* Youssef: this is the point, they let us enter their house, my job as a cameraman is to keep rolling.

* Nassar: but what do you expect to get from the house of someone besides emotions? in all cases it is still an invasion to their private life. The point or the job of a journalist is to give

accurate and objective information to the public not people crying or losing control. We never do something like that in France.

* Aoun: neither in England nor sky news. During the coverage of the Westminster attack, and all the other attacks that took place in London, we only tell what happens according to the officials' reports, and witnesses. During the Westminster incident, BBC covered live for three hours only because the terrorist went to the parliament, the attack was not over. Otherwise they do not cover live for hours.

* Dargham: I am not filming emotions, I am not asking them about their feelings. I ask them about the plans they were planning to do together, the last thing they shared, what is your message? Why did you ask us to come? If the victim or their family has something to say, I should be their medium, they need me. After the announcement of the death of James Foley, the first thing the American journalists did, was going to their parent.

* Nassar: The journalist should be objective. We are human beings of course, but while we do our job, we need to separate between our own feelings and our objectivity. Al Jadeed is very subjective and they behave as if they are in a kind of battle all the time.

* Saad: smiles.

* Dargham: they are bold; they build their bulletin on excitement. They created their own style. And the people who work for them, become like them, even if they were not.

* Abboud: it is my turn to share my opinion. I believe that since the family let the media enter their house, it is not the responsibility of the network anymore. At the same time I do not believe that any of the networks' target is to film the screaming and the panic of the family. But since they are there, their job is to film but not for a long time, if I were there and I had the choice, I would have filmed for 10 or 15 seconds, just to show the pain and then I would have moved to

something else. I was there, we received the news of the death of the young man, I had to shoot the reaction, otherwise why did the crews went there in the first place? There is the credibility of the media, if I do not want to shoot everything happening in that house, why I sent a crew and an SNG for a live transmission. I could have sent only a crew for a report, which gives the choice to choose the footage I want to add to my report. But in a live transmission with other TVs present, I have no choice but to cover the event as it is, I can just control the timing. If one TV acts ethically the others will continue their coverage, what do people watch? They prefer unethical coverage. It is the human nature, people are curious to know. It is like a reality TV show unfortunately.

* Nassar: This will never happen in France. After the attack at Nice, France 2 was the only one that used some unethical footage, like I said before the truck and an interview with a man his wife is lying dead next to him, France 2 was condemned and judged of being as unethical, and the Audiovisual council, “Conseil Superieur de l’Audiovisuel” (CSA), sanctioned France 2 and they were asked to apologize, and they did during that in their news bulletin. Of course the attack was horrible, France 2 acted with emotions, it happens. But other channels did not follow this path and the law was present to limit this and end it.

This is the main problem here in Lebanon. People are very emotional, they forgot the ethics, their only concern is the competition and the rating. And the law is not respected and not applied. And officials are not reminding them of the ethics, so this kind of coverage is growing and no one is preventing them.

6. How can the golden mean be applicable when there is a terror attack?

* Nassar: I believe that in Europe mainly in France they found the right way to deal with terror attacks. The use of graphic animation instead of real footage is one of the solutions. Avoid emotional interviews. And the most important thing is that the law is respected and it prevents journalists from exaggerating in their coverage. France 2 conducted an unethical interview and they ran an unethical footage, but the CSA was present to remind them of ethical values. And because they had to apologize, I believe they will be more careful whenever they have an ethical issue to deal with. The middle solution for them in the case of Nice would have been, a very clear graphic animation that shows the lack of security in the place, and representative interviews with officials to ask about this gap since this was their concern as they explained. For every case there is a middle solution without harming any part or invading the privacy or the ethics.

* Aoun: Every institution should have an internal code of ethics that organizes their work ethically; that takes into the consideration their targets and the culture of their society. This is what we have been doing in Sky News Arabia for years.

* Youssef: The world through the lens of my camera is not the same one that I see as a person without my camera. As a person, I have ethics and respect for every body, and I might not be able to look at a dead body or an injured person, and it happened to me many times. When I film, I do not have feelings, I am not afraid of anything, I am just doing my job. I do not have a middle solution when I am filming; my job is to keep rolling. After 32 years of shooting news, all kind of news, I never turned off my camera. I wait for the moment of an event to film it. The middle solution is up to the editors and the TV management to find it. And of course there is always a middle solution. They can blur the unethical footage for example. But as long as no one respects the ethics and the law, and every one cares only about the rating, we will keep on running unethical news.

* Dargham: The experience in the States and in Europe proved that it is not impossible to respect the code of ethics that is made to protect all sides. The freedom of speech, the public and the news. The most important thing in Lebanon is to make every outlet commit to codes of ethics. The code of ethics should balance between ethics and freedom of speech, taking into consideration the culture of the society. And there is always a way in the middle to keep that balance. For instance, victims can be filmed if we have their approval, otherwise we should not do that. As a basic rule, we should not use or publish graphics and we can use graphic animation instead. The live coverage can be replaced by breaking news, which reduces the possibility of making mistakes and shooting unethical footage.

* Abboud: Are we filming victims to make a scoop or to shed lights on the horrible act of terror committed? If the scoop is their target, then there is no solution. But if they want to do a good job, then it is easy to find a middle solution, and it is recommended in the case of terror attacks. This is what they do in some eastern countries like England and France. If they can do it, we can as well adapt a middle solution to our culture. One more thing, traditional media should not try to compete with social and digital media, otherwise this will prevent them from finding a convenient solution for a balanced coverage.

*Saad: Editors are the ones who decide what to publish and how to publish it. There is a small contribution from the reporter, but the final decision is for the management. I do not think that we might be able to find a solution in the current situation. Even a middle solution, that is very possible, is not applicable if they do not take the decision to respect law and ethics. A middle solution is fair for everyone. Personally this is what I try to do, maybe in a live coverage, it is a bit harder to control, but in a report I can apply the code of ethics that I learnt.

One-on-one interviews data grouping**Melhem Riachi****1. What bothered you in the Lebanese coverage of the attack on the Reina nightclub?**

The performance of the media institutions to this terror attack in different ways provoked me, the disrespect of death, the lack of humanity. For them, the event itself was more important than the ethics. And even the way they dealt with the event was unethical. The form became overwhelming on the content, and the appearance overwhelmed the core of the incident. The real event was lost. As journalists we should be looking for a certain reality, for a truth. In this coverage, no one was looking for the truth. We learnt at university and through our experience and we know that the core of journalism is not about investigating on the victim's mother, how much she cried, and how she cried or if she laughed, what were her last words. The investigation in journalism and the news is about a real and objective content.

2. Will the new media law and code of ethics be respected by media institutions in Lebanon?

The code of journalistic ethics is not an independent law anymore, it is a chapter in the law of the press that was updated and approved in the governmental committee of information and communication, and I was part of this. It was transferred to the committee of administration and justice and to the parliament.

When it will be published in the official newspaper, we will see. We will organize meetings with head of boards and editors to explain the law and the code of ethics.

I am aware that the law might have some weaknesses, and we tried to make this law step over the technology and the scientific development. The Law shall be subsequent articles of evolution and not just precedent. And it will be explained like any other new law. And in the future, it will be adapted to keep up with any development and for globalization. The most important part in this law is the officer who will monitor the behavior of media practitioners related to slander, invective, defamation and reputation abuse, or any abuse to people against their will, the way it happened in the coverage of the Reina nightclub. An injured arrived at the airport and was transferred to the hospital in an ambulance, the reporter followed him all the way asking him: "how he is feeling?" how he is supposed to feel after this horrible attack. They are loosing common sense. The law will be monitoring these kind of situations. Protect the ethics of the profession. In England and France, we do not see disturbing visuals.

3. What about the National Council of Audiovisual (NCA)?

The NCA is so far a consultant council. He will be playing a bigger role in the new law, since I asked to transform the ministry of information into a ministry for dialogue and communication. A major part of the minister of information's duties and powers will be transferred to the NCA united. These procedures take some time because it is related to the government who has a slow pace. This is why I used a short way, by restructuring the ministry and changing the name through the government to gain time. In the new structure, I am renewing the departments to include the multimedia, the dialogue and the communication. Because any

other way needs the approval of the parliament, and like this it takes time. I am trying to find solution in a way that matches with the rhythm of the country, and without slowing my work.

4. The argument of some journalists is that any law related to media is an obstacle to the freedom of the press, what do you think?

There is a very small variance between oppression and freedom. I do not intend to use oppression although the law gives me this right. The main concern is to commit to the ethics of the media and to never threaten the freedom. But it is very important as well not to threaten the ethics of the profession in any way. The prophet Ali Ben Abi Taleb says, “one person’s freedom ends where another one’s begins”. Threatening the ethics of the profession is an invasion to the freedom of others. Means I am not allowed to offend you in any way, not in my questions or answers, not to abuse or slander in the name of the freedom. When I behave like that I am then invading your freedom. This is the game of the law.

The law is under the freedom and not the freedom under the law. This is how the line is drawn.

5. How to cover terror attacks?

I report what is really happening. I show full respect to the dignity of victims. Respect the truth, means not to tell rumors, not to be provocative. Not to make random and quick accusations, mainly when no one knows what is happening or who is behind this attack. Sometimes they follow a link to find out that it is not related to the crime at all. We need to

check and recheck our information. Soon, the ministry of information will make a deal with a company to teach how to verify the information, “fact checking”. For anyone, schools and universities’ students, journalists, it is free of charge, covered by the ministry of information. Checking and verifying the information makes more sense in critical situations, such as terrorism.

Nada Saliba Choueiry

1. The ethical and the right way to cover terror attacks.

When there is a terror attack, we start a live coverage, but we make sure to choose carefully our footage. Because the continuous live coverage has lot of inconvenience. The lack of information can be one of them, the repetition of the same rushes and info, mistakes can be made, wrong information etc. We cannot compete with the private channels. We care about our credibility and the viewers’ feelings. The reporter of TL does not analyze, he is not allowed to start a sectarian, religious or political fight. He does not spread fear for no reason. He does not speculate. He simply informs the viewers about what is happening. We put boundaries and self control at TL. We know what we should do and what we should not. We are criticized for not being fast or for being out of the competition. We are not supposed to be part of the competition. But we are supposed to transfer the news objectively with full respect.

2. Do we have or do we follow a certain code of ethics and if yes, is it known and respected by all Lebanese journalists?

Before, the code of ethics used to be respected, now not any more. I am sorry to say that the level of practitioners have increased, we lost the standards. Very few are still professionals and they still respect the law and the values of the profession. The main target of most of them is to make a scoop regardless of ethics, values or anyone's' feelings or privacy.

Hence the role of the NCA that is not effective in Lebanon while it is very effective in France for instance.

It is really too bad to see how other channels are covering terror attacks. Shocking visuals, subjective analysis, wrong information, no respect for anything, the way the incident of Reina nightclub attack was managed. People are worried about their families and friends there, televisions are filming the traumatized family who lost their son.

Lebanese networks are dealing with tragic incident from a personal and subjective perspective and not from a professional and ethical perception. All they care for is the rating their coverage will get.

3. When do ethics come before the truth? And is there a situation where journalists are allowed to use unethical footage?

Ethics are not a choice. We are born with ethics and values. We do not take a decision to be ethical. It is part of the professional practice, and any other thing we do. We were reminded of ethics at the university, and this is where we should apply ethics in the footage we use when we cover a terror attack.

There are no exceptions for graphics. Disturbing and unethical visuals should not be published for any reason. There is always a way to deliver the message without using disturbing

visuals or information (the example of Nice – France 2 and the truck)

The harm caused by graphics is much more than the benefit that it might offer. The photo of Aylan kurdi did not put an end to the illegal and dangerous escape in the sea; people are still dying in the sea. They opened the immigration of refugees to Europe; terrorists entered Europe because of this photo. There is no reason at all to publish graphics of any kind.

4. The huge coverage of terror attacks and the use of graphics is serving the agenda of: media, public or terrorists?

We need to practice according to a new approach. Because media are offering services to ISIS and other terrorists. They are making professional videos of their murders, Foley's, Kassasbeh and others. They are creative in their massacres. They want their videos to go viral and when we cover in an unethical way, we are contributing to this. We are promoting them. Which is pushing them to be more creative in their killing and terror attacks. On the other hand, we are putting the viewers mainly the youth at risk of getting used to violent scenes and of becoming violent. In Europe terror attacks are increasing unfortunately, but we do not see graphics or invasion to the privacy of people. They do not make subjective analysis. They do not promote them.

5. Who can control this?

It is up to the National Council of Audiovisual to control this, the way it works in France. The ministry of information has been canceled in the rest of the countries, this is what the current minister, Melhem Riachi intends to do. But the NCA needs to be active and valid which is not

the case now. His job is to organize the profession and to monitor their work, and to sanction when necessary. Based on the code of ethics that respects both the practitioner and the viewer.

5. The cases under study.

The way the incident of Reina nightclub attack was managed was unacceptable. People are worried about their families and friends there, televisions are filming traumatized family loosing conscious and screaming for the loss of their son.

Nabil Bou Monsef

1. The ethical and the right way to cover terror attacks.

This is the most important topic today. When there is a terror attack, people watch more the news. Which makes the job of practitioners more responsible and delicate.

It is important then to avoid publishing any disturbing or annoying visuals. Unfortunately this is becoming very frequent in the Eastern countries such as Lebanon, and basically absent in Western countries. In England, France or the US, we do not see dead bodies.

Here at An Nahar, we do not publish any shocking visuals as a commitment to ethical standards. Unfortunately, TV networks are not committing to any codes of ethics in the last couple of years. Their main concern is to get exclusive news. Terror attack should not be considered as a scoop. A terror attack should be treated responsibly and objectively. People are watching, instead of focusing on the scoop, they need to respect the people who trust them and respect ethics and values. Something should be done, because millions of people are watching and this is putting

them at risk of becoming violent themselves. Our job is to protect them and to create awareness and to avoid spreading fear.

2. Do we have or do we follow a certain code of ethics and if yes, is it known and respected by all Lebanese journalists?

The new generations do not know the code of ethics. And it is our duty to enlighten them. They belong to the social media era, and the social media turned the world upside down. Social media is extremely dangerous. All standards and values are lost. We are still the link between the new and the old ways. We still understand both the traditional media with its values and the new digital media with its importance in spreading the information. It is our job then to add some values and ethics before it is too late.

The new generation publishes information without checking their credibility, they want to be the first to publish with no consideration to the truthful information.

3. When do ethics come before the truth? and is there a situation where journalists are allowed to use unethical footage?

Nothing comes before ethics. In exceptional cases, that we do not face every day, the editorial staff will take a decision based on objective discussion, the advantages and inconveniences. If there are serious benefits of publishing it, then we do that. Otherwise no exceptions are to be accepted.

Ethics always come before the news. Ethics are the main standards of this profession.

4. Who is the huge coverage of terror attacks serving: the media, the public or terrorists?

The way the terrorist is presented, as a powerful and strong person, this will spread fear while media are supposed to create awareness. And yet the most dangerous part is when TV crews report from the houses of victims, who are in a critical situation, traumatized and afraid. I call this sorcery.

When we exaggerate in the coverage of terror attacks, we might involuntarily, promote the terrorist and his mission. We need to be careful and give the necessary coverage and highlight on the ugly side and not the heroic part, to avoid offering a service to the terrorist. Otherwise he wins two times, when he killed the people and when the coverage creates more fear and panic. The standard is delicate and scientific.

I belong to a newspaper whose owner was assassinated. The day he was killed was the worst day of my life. We spent the night wondering and thinking what to do. We are dealing with a terror act. That day, no one expected to see An Nahar issued, and mainly the way it was issued. We preserved the standards of the profession. We respected the code of ethics. This was unbelievable. I belong to a respectful newspaper, for 84 years and for many years to come, we will keep on respecting ethics and values with no exceptions. We cannot betray the people's trust and the credibility that we built over the years. We will not loose it.

Amjad Skandar

2. Do we have or do we follow a certain code of ethics and if yes, is it known and respected by all Lebanese journalists?

Everybody knows the code of ethics, but nobody is applying or respecting it, their coverage is related to their agendas.

Two main points to remember in the coverage of terror attacks:

a. Feelings and emotions are requested by the people who lost someone, they need to cry and to show their feelings, beside it is also related to their traditions and culture. And he tells the example of his aunt when she went to a Lebanese condolences and she started crying the minute she got in and stopped the minute she left, and she asked if her performance was good, and showed enough emotions!!

b. Nothing is broadcasted on any network without the approval of the CEO. It is not the choice of the reporter or cameraman in terror attacks and all kind of stories.

In London, the police close the area of the terror attack; the cameramen are obliged to put their cameras very far. While here, police and securities are not used to do that, nobody is putting boundaries to the journalists.

Everywhere in the world, it is the law that forces them to respect the ethics and not because they want to.

After the assassination of Hariri, the police changed a bit their ways and they started doing this, but it was not enough.

I want to highlight on the dialect used, I believe that sometimes it is more dangerous than any graphics. Example when we say: the assassin killed his wife with 17 bullets, can we imagine the influence of this on an 11-year-old young boy or girl? Or a guy who strangled his wife because she discovered that she was married; this is a violent dialect that is as dangerous as the

shocking visuals. Another unethical dialect, when journalists say for example, there is 58 victims between killed and wounded. It is a big lack of respect to people. At BBC language is carefully chosen, they do not say “the islamic state” they do not use the term martyr for the victims of a terror attack.

Concerning the false information, Lebanese reporters give all the information they have before checking them. Mainly in a live coverage the reporter needs to say anything, so he shares all the information he has regardless of their credibility. The way it happened with all the media when they said that Elie Wardini threw himself in the Bosphore, while the truth was totally different.

3. When do ethics come before the truth? And is there a situation where journalists are allowed to use unethical footage?

Nothing comes before the ethics; there is always a way to deliver the message ethically, by blurring when necessary or anything to cover the shocking part. Televisions have the power and the capacity to deliver any message and to be innovative and exclusive without being unethical. But they all use the easy and fast way. Every one has an agenda that is deciding what to publish and how to publish it. In this case the only way to protect ethics is through the law that should be applied on every body and at all times, the way it is happening in England and France for example. The law is the only efficient arm for the ethics and the decision of the journalist. Human has tendency to break the rule just like in the road safety code, people will never respect it unless it is enforced, and when it is applied equally on each one.

This is the situation in all countries, when there is no boundaries or laws or punishments, people will break the rules.

4. Who is the huge coverage of terror attacks serving: the media, the public or terrorists?

I discovered that the coverage adopted by the media is serving the enemy. Most of terror attacks are made for publicity and propaganda. The 9/11 was a show, Ben Laden was not expecting this huge number of victims, he was making a show, it is very creative to make a plane cross into a building, it is a show. And when the media highlight the way they do on these attacks they are promoting them of course unintentionally. I think that if for the coming 2 years, we start giving less coverage for the terror attacks, they will definitely decrease.

The story of his French friend who told him that during the Nice attack, the people were not really aware of what was happening. At the beginning, they thought the truck had a break problem or something, and people were running toward it, instead of running away of it, and they were telling him what to do, so when they run toward him, they got killed. This is due to the fact that people in France are not prepared to war and terrors, while in Lebanon or similar countries that lived a recent war are alerted. A truck running over people this is not a part of their culture.

The visuals of the truck broadcasted on France 2, if it had been broadcasted in the Lebanese TVs, it would have been a very normal thing. In France it annoyed everybody, it did not annoy me personally, I would have published it. As long as the people are anonymous and unable to be identified, it is fine with me.

Rules and laws are not statics and rigid, cases should be treated separately, and are linked to several criteria, such as the policy of the network, the agenda, the will of the victims, the culture.

5. The cases under study.

The challenge was in fact that the event is not in Lebanon. We will focus on the Lebanese victims, precisely their families. We sent a crew to Istanbul and we started looking for the families in Lebanon. We sent Denise to the Wardini's house. She told us that it has been confirmed that Elie Wardini is dead, I told her not to say anything, they should not know from the media. In the control room we had a debate, some proposed to announce it from the studio to avoid embarrassing Denise, some including myself refused, it is totally unethical to know from the media. Every one in the news department was convinced that Denise should not say it, but the discussion was about if we announce it from the newsroom or not? I think that they should know from officials not from us. People criticized us for filming and publishing the hysterical conditions of the girls, but viewers do not know that some people ask the media to film them crying. People think that media invent stories, and boost feelings, this is not true. People many times blame us for not filming them or for not showing their pain and their grief. We are judged of pursuing the scoop and the pain of people, but most of the times, people want to talk and if we do not let them talk they blame us. They want to show their feelings, they want to cry in front of the world, and they blame us and get upset if we do not let them do that. It might be related to the habits and culture, oriental people show their feeling and if they go to a funeral they cry more than the close family, and if they do not cry a lot, this could be understood as a lack of compassion and sympathy. No network in any country would enter the people's sitting room, we did that here, but we did not enter by force.

And other people prefer to live their grief in private and in peace, and they refuse to be filmed. The role and the responsibility of journalists is to be able to judge what could be

published and what should be removed. Many information are not broadcasted because it is considered unethical.

The reaction of Denise to the announcement of the death of the young man on Al-Jadeed is probably due to the fact that we were discussing this matter and we decided that it was unethical to announce it.

This is something I learnt from BBC when I was working with them. The most important school of media ethics in the world is BBC. BBC has a theory and I was influenced by this theory. It is much better to be the second to announce the news as long as the news is precise and credible, rather than to be the 1st with incorrect information. The French and American's media focus on the scoop and to be the first to send the information. Both schools are well represented by Agence France Press (AFP) and Reuters. AFP is faster than Reuters. This does not mean that Reuters does not have the information and they could have published it, but they take their time to check the credibility of the info they receive, they do not worry about being first. In the Middle East, we prefer AFP because they are faster.

I personally work according to the Lebanese mentality with the influence of BBC. If they know at BBC how we work here, they would go crazy. A friend of mine could not believe for example that we have an intro for the news.

Back to Reina we had a dilemma, between the BBC ethical style, which is not to announce, or the Lebanese unethical style that we have the information and we can publish it.

6. What about the coffin of Elie, him lying in the coffin and filmed by everybody?

He was filmed by mistake and not on purpose, this is a live transmission, the camera took the shot unintentionally, and we asked the cameraman to be more careful.

7. And the live coverage for hours?

It is an American style not an English one. In an event like a terror attack, anything can happen at any time, we need to be alerted and ready to get it when it happens the moment it happens. Beside if other TVs are broadcasting live, I should do the same. Otherwise people will zap, I lose them. And during the live I need to have a good reporter and anchor that give good, interesting and precise information to attract the viewer or else he will zap as well.

Just like the news bulletin in Lebanon, it used to be at 8PM, TVs moved it later on to 7:57 and then 7:52 to catch the viewer before other channels.

In this case, I do not like the English school.

8. But the risk of running disturbing visuals during a live coverage is higher?

Correct, but networks got used to these kind of coverage. And the cameraman on field knows what interests his company. And he knows what to film. If graphics are filmed means it was made on purpose and not by mistake.

When I used to work with Al Soumariya in Iraq, we had to cover 100 explosions and attacks per day. We informed our cameramen for instance that blood is taken from 5 meters. No one should film nor broadcast dead bodies. We received recognition from the Iraqi government.

While the chiite they film all kind of dead people to show the world how they are treated, same for the Sunnite. it is an agenda, nothing is filmed by mistake even in a live coverage.

Georges Eid

1. What is the ethical and the right way to cover terror attacks?

The ethical way to cover terror attack, mainly to avoid publishing all kind of graphics; and all decisions should be based on international conventions.

In Lebanon, no ethics are applied or respected. False information is published, we have a lack of humanity.

It is already very hard to tell someone that he lost a close person or a relative, it is the same and even harder to do that on TV, we have no idea of the health situation of the person receiving the news.

One recent example, the story of the 3 boys who raped the girl, they published names and this caused the death of the mother of one of the rapists, because of the shock.

Media are in a kind of race, a competition; this is resulting in unethical decisions and mistakes. Media are playing the role of judges, and this is wrong.

2. Do we have or do we follow a certain code of ethics and if yes, is it known and respected by all Lebanese journalists?

In Lebanon I did not learn the code of ethics from the university where I got my BA. I learnt it in France at the Sorbonne. Today some of the universities in Lebanon are working on the deontology of images, but we still need lot of work, some instructors guide their students in wrong directions. They still think that the scoop comes in the first place.

3. When do ethics come before the truth? And is there a situation where journalists are allowed to use unethical footage?

This is a very important question. Sometimes, the angle changes everything; we can take the shot in a less disturbing angle and deliver the same message.

4. Who is the huge coverage of terror attacks serving: the media, the public or terrorists?

The media's job is to inform and tell. But the main thing is to know how to do that. Practitioners can use a professional and ethical way, or they can adopt a boring, judgmental and unethical way? In Lebanon media overdo and exaggerate most of the times. They are serving the terrorist unintentionally. By spreading fear and horror and sometimes by publishing videos made by terrorists. Terrorists are using the media to promote their battle by spreading fear.

(Golden Mean) It is not hard for media to find a middle solution, by reducing the hours of live coverage, using less disturbing footage. Breaking news instead of continued live news, or a special episode the same day about the incident with serious and objective analysis not emotional and exaggerating news.

I do not know if the National Council of Audiovisual will do an objective role or if it was activated. He might use his power to get revenge from media, instead of censoring it. This is not Europe, the countries surrounding us are not all friends, in addition to the political issues, all these make the governmental tools inefficient and dangerous.

Maybe a private company, not run in any way by the government could be able to apply the ethics equally and efficiently.

5. The cases under study.

I was sent to Istanbul and I escorted the victims on the plane. I could have filmed the victims but I did not. I did not interview any of the wounded. Knowing that, most of the times, the people ask us to film them. They want to share their pain or their ideas. They need to talk, and if we do not give them the chance to talk they blame us.

Georges asks: What is the added value in filming a funeral, or people sad crying, and being interviewed?

Differences between the local TVs and foreign TVs:

They are neutral and very committed to the international norms and codes of ethics. They respect the viewer; there is no chance that the viewer might watch undesirable news.

I was with the wounded all the time, I could have filmed any of them, I was told to get closer, and to interview whoever I want. But I did not film or interview anyone of them. Lebanese TVs compete over the news to get the higher rating. I went to the hospital in Istanbul without a camera; some wounded asked me not to do what other did. We were three Lebanese

TVs in Istanbul; one of them invaded the hospital and the privacy of the people lying in their bed. Those people are under medication they can hardly protest, it is not allowed for any one, mainly networks to get advantage of this moment of weakness to film then of interview them. Even their parents, they should not let the TVs film the wounded person, it is not their decision to take.

If any person is in their place, would he accept to be filmed?

My TV asked me many questions, why you did not film the wounded, why you did not interview them? During the live from the plane, they asked me many times to get closer to the wounded, but I did not, and I said many times, “we will not approach by respect to the privacy of the wounded people”. Since I was filming with my phone, I had the control and I decided what to film. Maybe if I had a cameraman with me he would have filmed private things. Eventually, we had exclusive footage from inside the plane without exceeding any line of ethics or privacy. I accentuated on the fact that this is the first time we transfer wounded people in a plane from a country to another, I was explaining the procedure. My TV would have preferred other kind of coverage with less ethics, they can not blame for what I did, but they asked me why I did not film other things.

Wardini house: I can not judge what my colleagues did or do. Knowing that no one can forbid any person from publishing anything. Even in France, France2 had the freedom to do what they did. It is a personal choice to be ethical or not. In Lebanon, we need a lot of work to get there, I work on it with my students.

I believe it is up to the journalist to decide what to do, how to cover, what to shoot. People supported my way in covering the Reina nightclub not the invasion and the unethical ways.

France 2:

According to the French standards, France 2 broke the rules and they had to apologize. I would not have done it.

Some people ask to talk and share their pain, even in this case I re-check with the people later on if they still want to keep their testimony or intervention before I publish.

APPENDIX D

LINKS: IMAGES OF THE CASES (LITERATURE REVIEW)

Case 1 – Saigon execution. Retrieved from

<https://www.worldpressphoto.org/gallery/themes/36311/2>

Case 2 – “The Napalm Girl,” Kim Phuc. Retrieved from

<https://www.readingthepictures.org/2013/09/have-you-ever-seen-the-uncropped-version-of-the-napalm-girl/>

Case 3 – Bhopal Disaster. Retrieved from

<http://www.famouspictures.org/bhopal-gas-disaster-girl/>

Case 4 – Omayra Sanchez. Retrieved from

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omayra_Sánchez

Case 5 – Tank Man. Retrieved from

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/tiananmen-square-what-happened-to-tank-man-9483398.html>

Case 6 – The Vulture and the Little Girl. Retrieved from

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Case 7 – Firefighter. Retrieved from

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2347862/Oklahoma-city-bombing-Mother-reunited-firefighter-hold-baby-daughter-iconic-Oklahoma-bombing-picture.html>

Case 8 – Victoria Snelgrove. Retrieved from

<http://web.mit.edu/drb/Public/PhotoThesis/>

War photograph - Joshua Bernard, Retrieved from

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https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&biw=1039&bih=663&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=34-jWu_5F4fZU_PFPMAL&q=james+foley+beheaded+daily+telegraph&oq=james+foley+be

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APPENDIX E**PENALTY ON FRANCE 2**

As part of the proceedings initiated on September 14, 2016 against France Télévisions following the broadcast on France 2, on July 15, 2016 at 1h27 and 1:44, images infringing the respect of the dignity of the human person, the Council decided to insert the following communiqué in the 20-hour diary of France 2:

«Communiqué of the Superior council of audio-visual

After an instruction in accordance with the procedure required by the law, the Superior Council of Audio-Visual deplors that after the attack which occurred in Nice on July 14, 2016, the company France Televisions diffused, on the service France 2, testimonies of people in shock, gathered while they were still near the dead bodies of their loved ones. The Council noted, however, the exceptional circumstances in which these clips were broadcasted and the speed of the excuses that France Télévisions has repeatedly submitted. "

This press release was read by the presenter on the set of the 20:00 news bulletin of France 2 during the first fifteen minutes, in the eight days following the notification of the decision of the advice.

APPENDIX F**BBC CODE OF CONDUCT****Our Editorial Standards (BBC, 2018)****i. Trust**

Trust is the foundation of the BBC: we are independent, impartial and honest. We are committed to achieving the highest standards of due accuracy and impartiality and strive to avoid knowingly and materially misleading our audiences.

ii. Truth and accuracy

We seek to establish the truth of what has happened and are committed to achieving due accuracy in all our output. Accuracy is not simply a matter of getting facts right; when necessary, we will weigh relevant facts and information to get at the truth. Our output, as appropriate to its subject and nature, will be well sourced, based on sound evidence, thoroughly tested and presented in clear, precise language. We will strive to be honest and open about what we don't know and avoid unfounded speculation.

iii. Impartiality

Impartiality lies at the core of the BBC's commitment to its audiences. We will apply due impartiality to ^{all}~~se~~ all our subject matter and will reflect a breadth and diversity of opinion across our output as a whole, over an appropriate period, so that no significant strand of thought is knowingly unrepresented or under-represented. We will be fair and open-minded when examining evidence and weighing material facts.

iv. Editorial integrity and independence

The BBC is independent of outside interests and arrangements that could undermine our editorial integrity. Our audiences should be confident that our decisions are not influenced by outside interests, political or commercial pressures, or any personal interests.

v. Harm and offence

We aim to reflect the world as it is, including all aspects of the human experience and the realities of the natural world. But we balance our right to broadcast innovative and challenging content with our responsibility to protect the vulnerable from harm and avoid unjustifiable offence. We will be sensitive to, and keep in touch with, generally accepted standards as well as our audiences' expectations of our content, particularly in relation to the protection of children.

vi. Serving the public interest

We seek to report stories of significance to our audiences. We will be rigorous in establishing the truth of the story and well informed when explaining it. Our specialist expertise will bring authority and analysis to the complex world in which we live. We will ask searching questions of those who hold public office and others who are accountable, and provide a comprehensive forum for public debate.

vii. Fairness

Our output will be based on fairness, openness, honesty and straight dealing. Contributors and audiences will be treated with respect.

viii. Privacy

We will respect privacy and will not infringe it without good reason, wherever in the world we are operating. Private behavior, information, correspondence and conversation will not be brought into the public domain unless there is a public interest that outweighs the expectation of privacy.

ix. Children

We will always seek to safeguard the welfare^[11] of children and young people who contribute^[11] to and feature in our content, wherever in the world we operate. We will preserve their right to speak out and participate, while ensuring their dignity and their physical and emotional welfare is protected during the making and broadcast of our output. Content which might be unsuitable for children will be scheduled appropriately.

x. Transparency

We will be transparent about the nature and provenance of the content we offer online. Where appropriate, we will identify who has created it and will use labelling to help online users make informed decisions about the suitability of content for themselves and their children.

xi. Accountability

We are accountable to our audiences and^[11] will deal fairly and openly with them. Their continuing trust in the BBC is a crucial part of our relationship with them. We will be open in acknowledging mistakes when they are made and encourage a culture of willingness to learn from them.