TOROA

COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

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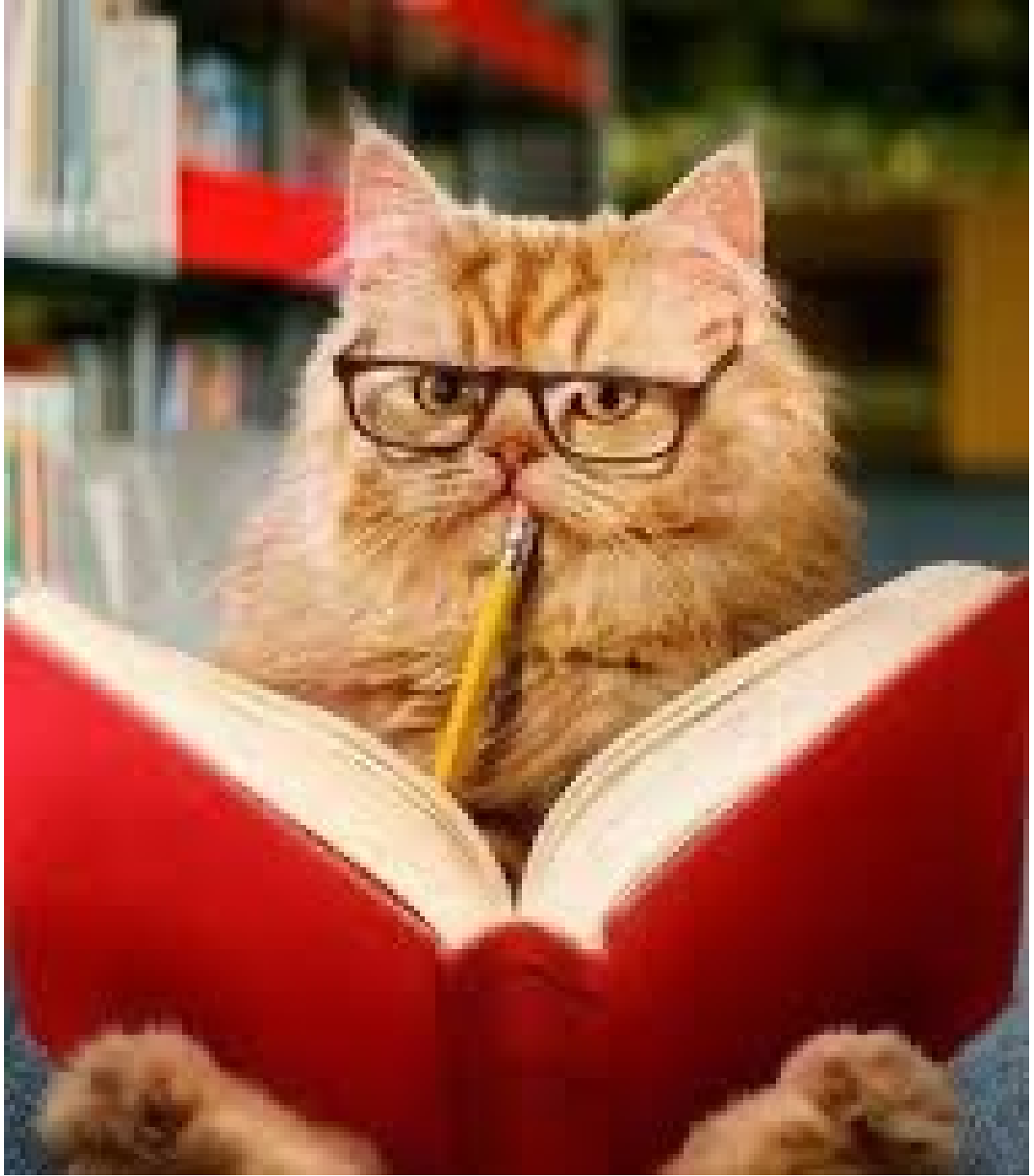
Toroa.Talk 3.4

Journal article writing 4

What we'll talk about today

Polishing your final draft

- Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of your work
- Weeding out unnecessary material
- Reading for flow
- Checking you've said what you wanted to say
- And that other people can follow what you've written

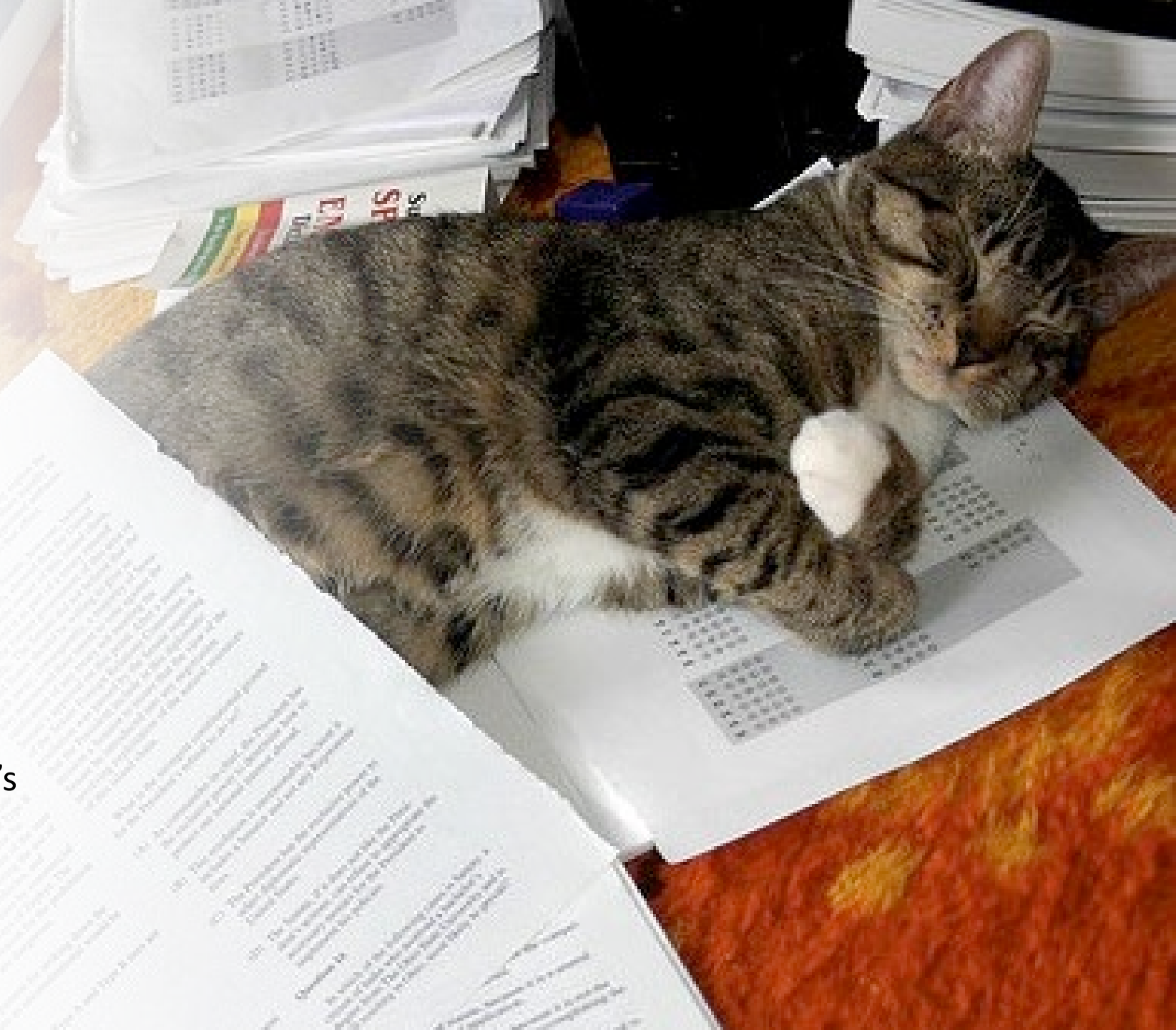


A quick recap: *Why* and *Where* to publish?

- We tend to publish because we wish to communicate our research and contribute to the field
- It’s important to look for journals of higher rank and impact factors
- They can be OA or traditional publisher

A quick recap: titles, abstracts and keywords?

- The most common type of journal article is “data driven”.
- The Abstract and title are short intensive summaries of an article.
- The keywords should capture the main aspects of the paper.
- These elements need to work together to capture the reader’s attention

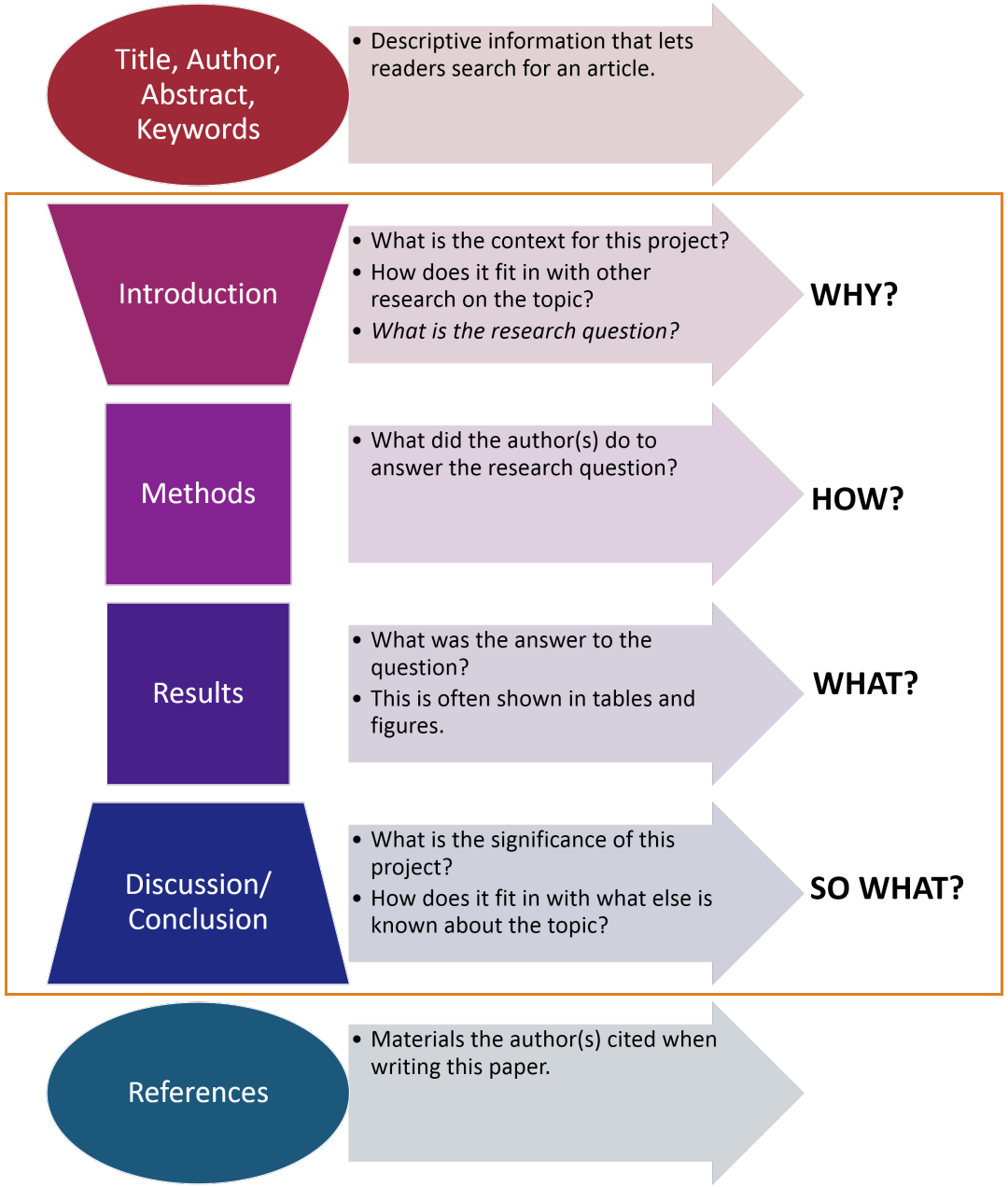


The “shitty” draft

Writing your rough draft

- How to keep writing
- Organising your thoughts
- Structuring the paper
- Content of each section

Sections of a journal article



https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-structure-of-research-papers-article

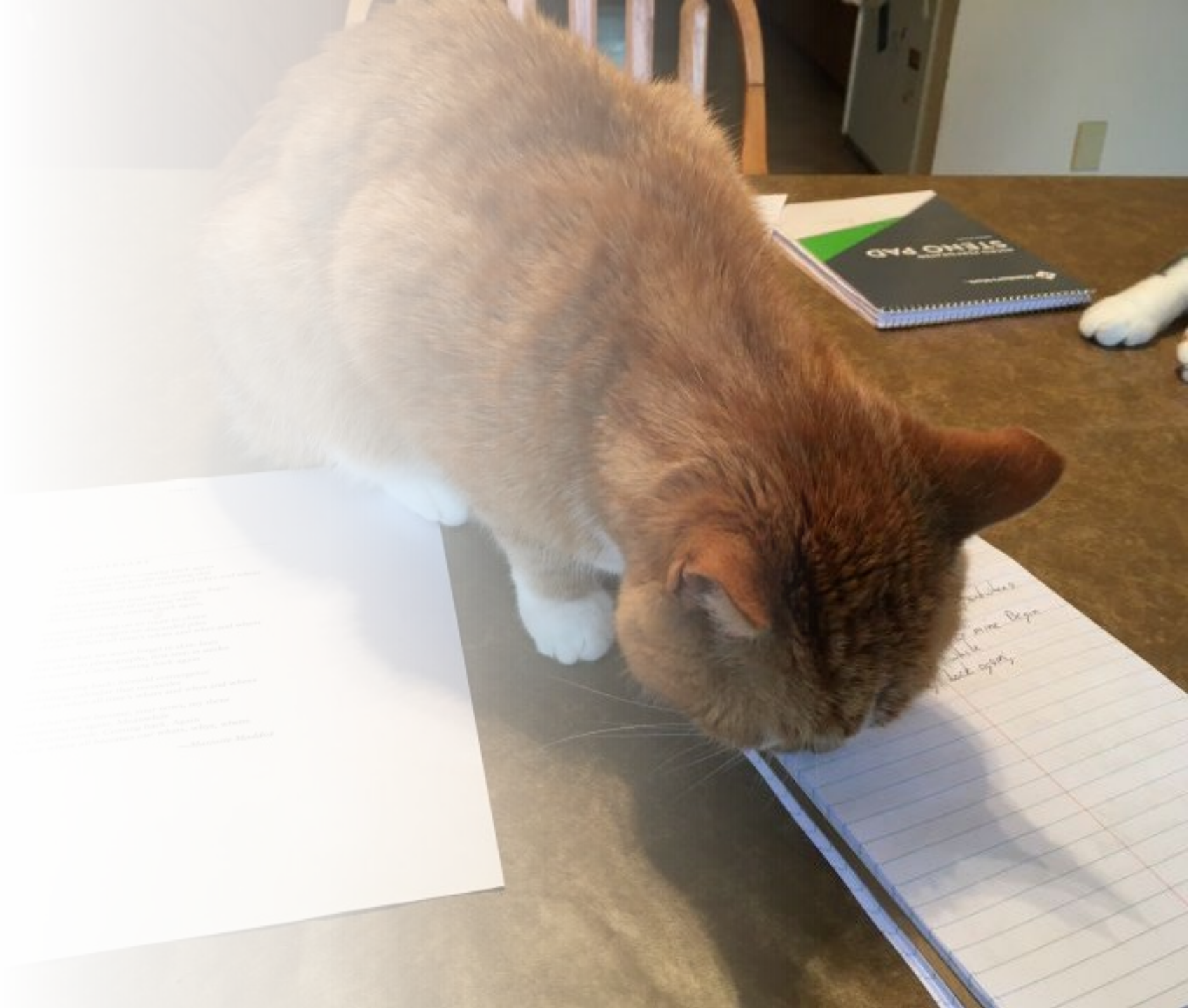
Cleaning up the mess - content

Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your work so far:

- Am I making knowledge claims or just reporting?
- Do I have enough literature?
- Is this an argument - or purely descriptive?
- Is my data sufficient for the claims I am making?

Cleaning up the mess - style

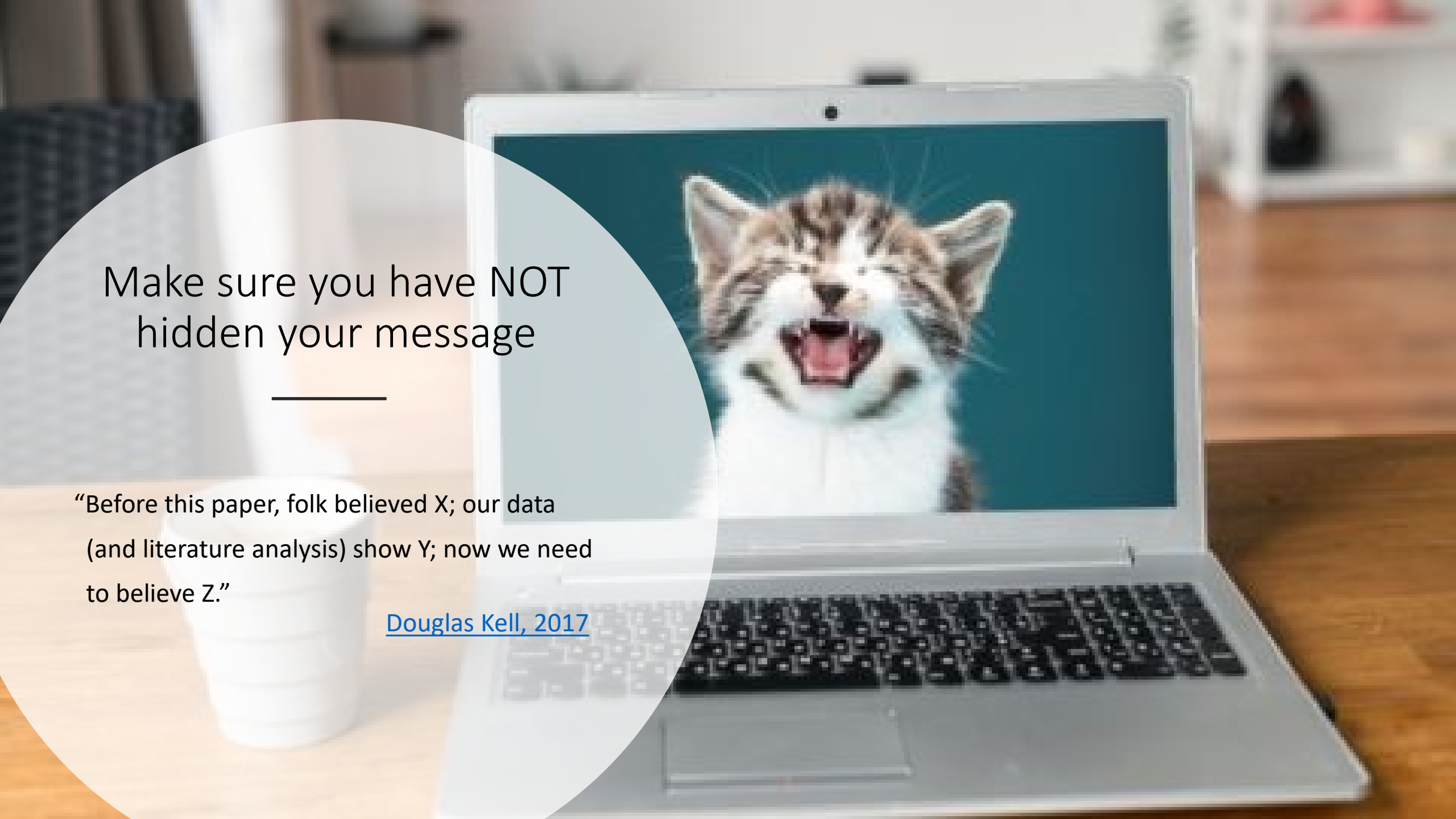
- Correct weaknesses in organisation
- Improve flow from point to point
- Cut any unnecessary information
- Delete all extraneous words



Your contribution to knowledge is clearly signposted

- Have you shown where your work sits in relation to others?
- Have you signposted what new knowledge you have added?
- Is the point of your article high up?

Make sure you have NOT hidden your message



"Before this paper, folk believed X; our data (and literature analysis) show Y; now we need to believe Z."

Douglas Kell, 2017

Enough literature?

- This is the second part of the introduction
- Purpose is not just to review the literature, but is a critical summary
- Relates different writings to each other, compares and contrasts.
- Shows an awareness of the theories and values that underpin the research.
- Uses particular reporting verbs such as: assert, argue, state, conclude, contend.
- It must identify the gaps in the literature that your paper addresses
- It is often the most criticised part of a paper by the peer reviewers

Introduction

Both journalists and public relations practitioners (PRPs) downplay their involvement with the other (Davis 2000; Morris and Goldsworthy 2008; Peterson 2001). Yet, as early as the start of the twentieth century journalists were accepting material provided by PRPs while at the same time resenting it (DeLorme and Fedler 2003). The relationship's tension lies in a rarely acknowledged interdependence (Reich 2006) predicated on both practices being unwilling to admit that they are now so intertwined that neither could function in its current form without the other (Davis 2013; McNair 2011). Further, Davis (2003) argued that journalism and public relations were most effective when the links between the two remain hidden. Hence, public relations does not wish to concede it continues to need journalism's ability to reach the public on a mass scale and the third-party endorsement assumed to be provided by gaining (independent) editorial. At the same time, journalism would prefer not to admit it needs help to fill editorial space from public relations facilitating access to sources and providing pre-packaged information (Davis 2000; Ericson, Baranek, and Chan 1989; Fishman 1980; Franklin 2011; Gans 1979; Matthews 2013). Sensitivities arise on both sides for reasons of professional integrity. For journalists, there is a reluctance to be forthcoming about just how much they depend on public relations materials as this reliance clashes with their perceived Fourth Estate role (Louw 2010), which demands professional autonomy to carry out their watchdog function (Davis 2013).

Journalism Studies, 2016
Vol. 17, No. 2, 177–198, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2014.973147

For public relations, admitting the extent of their input into the news media would mean losing the advantage of third-party endorsement.

This article attempts to shine light on this powerful, but enigmatic, relationship, the direct interactions of which have been largely unexamined by researchers. It explores two examples of journalists' interactions with public relations sources, one via email, the other face-to-face, captured on video, during fieldwork in two newsrooms. The latter is an example of data that before now have been unavailable to researchers. The article uses it to examine how much agency journalists have in their dealings with public relations sources, and what social practices they employ when negotiating the "uncovering" of a story with a source.

The Journalist–Source Relationship

The recognition by scholars of the importance of the journalist–source relationship on the content of news has led to increasing amounts of research. Recent work considering journalists' relations with political sources, relevant here as the two interactions involve local authorities (Davis 2013, 2008; Louw 2010; McNair 2011), concluded there was more promotional activity aimed at journalists than ever. McNair (2011) wrote that as journalists' role in mediating between politicians and the public had grown, so had the role of the public relations intermediaries, meaning these days it would be unthinkable to venture into the political arena without professional public relations back-up. Consequently, according to Davis (2013), public relations increasingly attempted to control access to newsworthy information, public figures and some meetings.

Observers have suggested journalists have become more susceptible to pre-packaged public relations material in light of an expansion of media outlets online (McNair 2011), coupled with an overall reduction in the number of full-time journalists. On average, journalists were now expected to write three times as much copy as a decade ago (Starkman 2010; Waldman 2011), which has afforded greater opportunities for skilled PRPs to present journalists with pre-formulated texts, and hence shape the news agenda. Journalists are not unaware of the techniques of media management and some resent their vulnerability to it. Political coverage now sometimes includes critiques of events or campaign strategies, highlighting politicians' attempts to influence the news agenda (Louw 2010; McNair 2011; Hager 2014).

McNair (2011) noted a shortage of research in the field focusing on local government. Those who have carried out such work (Franklin 1986, 2004; Franklin and Murphy 1991, 1998; O'Neill and O'Connor 2008) concluded that the advent of poorly staffed free newspapers had led to a reliance on local government PRPs providing copy, which was almost invariably positive for their councils.

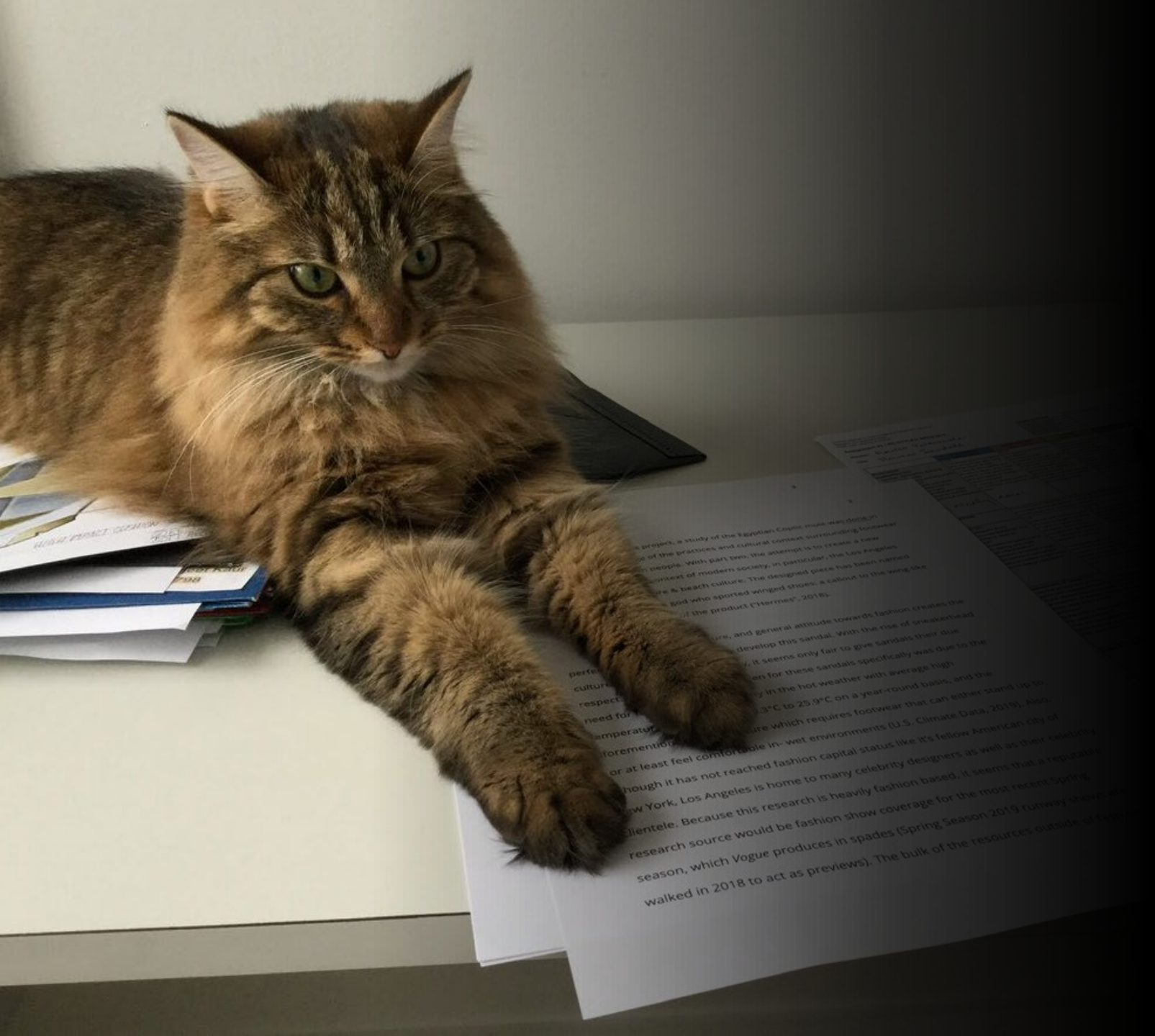
More generally, research focusing on the journalist–source relationship has often examined the result of the relationship, i.e. the texts, rather than the processes and interactions that constitute the relationship itself (Burton 2007; Davis 2000, 2003; Franklin 2011; Lewis, Williams, and Franklin 2008; O'Neill and O'Connor 2008). Very little research has been carried out ethnographically into how PRPs and journalists interact in practice, although studies have used interviews to shed light on what Reich (2006, 497) calls "the generally unapproachable point of transaction at which information is passed between sources and reporters" (Franklin 2003; Hess and Waller 2008; Lewis, Williams, and Franklin

2008; Oakham and Kirby 2006; Reich 2006; Sallot and Johnson 2006; Sterne 2010). McNair (2011, 4) wrote that face-to-face meetings by their nature are hidden from the analyst, requiring "methodologically difficult and costly empirical research to uncover their secrets". He added that access to these interactions could uncover the "potential gap between the public and the private in political rhetoric" (4).

A selection of ethnographic studies across the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s discovered that newsworkers' routine practices led to their dependence on official sources from recognised institutions, such as government or the police (Berkowitz 1992; Ericson, Baranek, and Chan 1989; Gans 1979; Schlesinger 1978; Sigal 1973; Tuchman 1978). Recently, a new generation of ethnographic studies into newsroom practice have been carried out (Boczkowski 2004; Cotter 2010; Hannerz 2004; Paterson and Domingo 2008; Perrin 2003; Singer 2004a, 2004b), but surprisingly few studies into journalists and their sources have used ethnography (Van Hout 2011; Van Hout and Jacobs 2008; Van Hout and Macgilchrist 2010; Velthius 2006). Further, there is no evidence of ethnographic-style research focusing on PRPs' and journalists' face-to-face interactions.

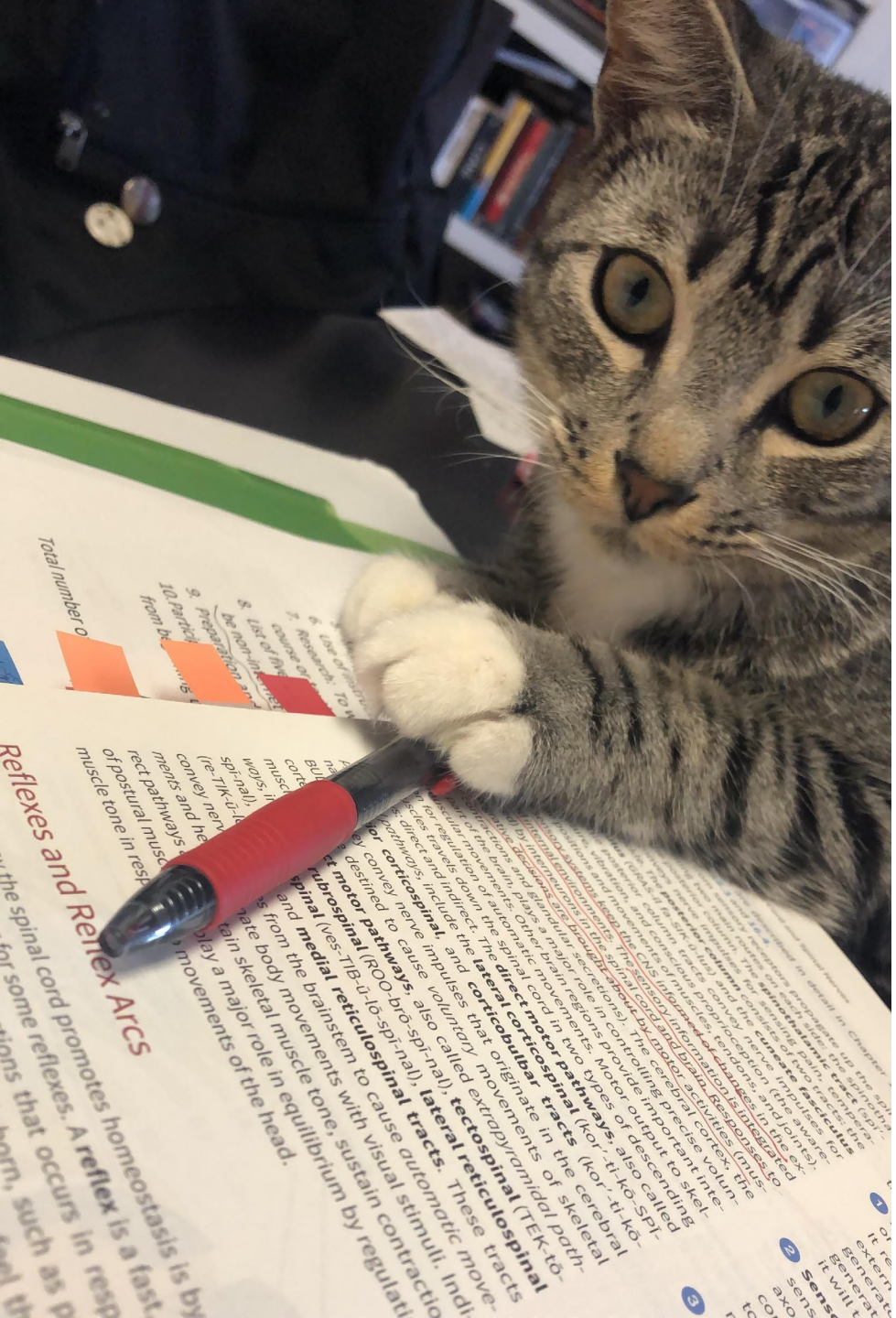
Materials and Method

The current study utilised ethnographic methods of data collection involving observation over a period of time in two newsrooms. It is believed to be the first study where data were captured on video allowing the interactions to be replayed and analysed mode by mode, and providing the researcher with unique insights into the current working practices of journalists. Further, while it may be easy to see the product of public relations in media releases and media conferences, it is arguable that most interactions between public relations and journalists go on behind closed doors in briefings, or via phone or email. All names of people have been changed although it is accepted that some individuals may be recognisable to friends and colleagues. The research has ethics approval from the researcher's university.



Some basics of organising your writing

- Use subheadings
- Match your style and length of subheading with the journal you intend to submit to
- Keep your article to the length asked for by the journal
- Check whether the length included references, titles, tables etc.



Some basic rules of writing

- Clarity is the watchword
- Is what I've written clear?
- Am I saying what I want to say?
- Don't assume the reader understands the topic (or the field) as well as you do
- Avoid jargon
- Make sure you have placed your work in context
- Ensure your main message is clearly signposted

Some more basics of good writing

- Clarity of expression
- Focussed
- Say what you are going to say. Say it. Say you have said it
- Clear formal prose
- Avoid overly long sentences
- Avoid colloquialisms
- Pay attention to verbs

The power of verbs

- Examines/analyses/explores
- Outlines/reports on
- Justifies
- Recommends
- Compares
- Contrasts
- Discusses
- Demonstrates/shows/illustrates/ highlights
- Refutes

Style

- Don’t dwell on insignificant details
- Keep all details relevant to the research question
- And tell a story – use examples and narratives to explain your research
- Stories bring research alive and make it relatable
- But be concise – and get to the point

One effect of the persecutions in Germany has been to prevent antisemitism from being seriously studied. In England a brief inadequate survey was made by Mass Observation a year or two ago, but if there has been any other investigation of the subject, then its findings have been kept strictly secret. At the same time there has been conscious suppression, by all thoughtful people, of anything likely to wound Jewish susceptibilities.

- – George Orwell, 'Antisemitism in Britain' in *Essays*, London, Penguin, (1945) 1984, p.279.

Though the type of grand narrative offered by Marshall was anathema to the national curriculum, the high sales of *Our Island Story* demonstrated that this was not the case with the general public. The most popular recent television treatments of our past, such as Simon Schama's *History of Britain* and David Starkey's *Monarchy*, by and large followed the model of focusing almost exclusively on the actions of kings and queens.

- – Edward Vallance, *A Radical History of Britain*, London, Abacus, 2009 p.4

Taken from "This Itch of Writing: https://emmadarwin.typepad.com/thisitchofwriting/

Recent scholarship on the public sphere has maintained that we need to examine the many manifestations of the public which shaped nineteenth-century politics, commerce, class, gender, and national identities. Most of these studies have reconfigured but been informed by Jürgen Habermas's notion of the public sphere as an ideal realm of rational discourse located between the private sphere of the family and the market and the formal institutions of the state.

- – Erika Diane Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure*, Princeton, Princeton University Press 2001, p.78

Analysts of global integration have been rightfully concerned with elucidating global inequalities. But increasing interconnectivity has also created possibilities for seemingly marginal people to affect larger patterns of interrelation. By concentrating on how economic power is deployed by dominant global actors, analysts of globalizing processes have largely overlooked the ways in which quotidian acts such as consumer demand across the globe influence economic relations, however asymmetrical those relationships might be.

- – Jeremy Prestholdt, 'On the Global Repercussions of East African Consumerism', *American Historical Review* 109 (3) 2004 pp.755-81, p.755

Taken from "This Itch of Writing: https://emmadarwin.typepad.com/thisitchofwriting/

George Orwell's Rules of Writing

1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
4. Never use the passive where you can use the active.
5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
6. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous

- George Orwell, 'Politics and the English Language' in Essays, London, Penguin (1946) 1984, p.359.

How to we ensure we're clear

- Give a version of your paper as an oral presentation or conference paper
- Read your article out loud to yourself before submitting it
  - Is it easy to read?
  - Are most sentences able to be read in one breath?

What if I have too many words?

- With every line ask – Can I live without it?
- Eliminate any words or phrases which aren't pulling their weight or are repetitious.
- Move some text to the appendices.
- If you have far too much – put some material aside for another article

Don’ts

Journals WON’T want to see:

- Lots of information they already know
- A long-winded literature review
- Lots of process-focused information
- The wrong citation/reference style
  - Look in the ”Instructions for authors”
  - Or Submission guidelines

Time to stop “tinkering”

- How to finish:
  - Stop the endless polishing of the same section.
  - Do you need a professional proof-reader?
  - Time to submit.

In summary

A professional (best-in-show) article

- Says what I want it to say
- Is clearly organised
- Is the length asked for by the journal?
- Is well-focused
- Grammatically written
- Uses the important terminology
- Avoids too much jargon
- References presented using the referencing style expected by the journal