The Relational Newsroom:

An Appreciative Inquiry into how

Leadership Empowers Learning in Newsrooms

By

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A thesis presented to the Victoria University of Wellington

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education

Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

January, 2014

Acknowledgements

I am moved when I think back to the people who have contributed in this process of going from someone with no experience of university, through to a masters thesis.

For the calm guidance, thought-provoking questions, and being the epitome of Appreciative Inquiry, Dr Cherie Chu thank for being my supervisor.

The 11 journalists who took part in this research gave their time out of busy daily news deadlines and I acknowledge them for the contribution. To all the journalists over more than 30 years with whom I have shared a wonderful craft, and who know that the work we do can make a difference, thanks for the inspiration to keep contributing through this thesis. I make particular mention here of the staff during my time at Horowhenua-Kapiti Newspapers, where my first role as editor was a catalyst for this research. I intend that the many things I did not get right in that role will contribute to the future of newsroom leadership. In journalism I also acknowledge my first editor George Abbott, who gave me a shot at journalism, and whose mantra “names and faces, Charlie” still rings true in this age when journalists are being urged to re-connect with people. Thanks to John Henton as a manager for giving me the opportunity to begin understanding leadership. Thanks also to two people I sought out as journalistic advisors for this thesis: Jim Tucker whose robust discussion helped hone the topic and for the four years of support in pursuit this thesis; Dr Grant Hannis for the marriage of sharp academic intellect and understanding of journalism when it was needed.

My colleagues in the Journalism Education Association of New Zealand, and particularly Dr Cathy Strong, have been regular sources of knowledge, discussion and sage advice over four years of papers and thesis.

Thank you to friends with whom I have shared training and development programmes, and who are role models for making a difference, which is my intention with this research. Particular thanks to my mate and great listener in times of stress, John Lyttle, to the wise, clear-thinking and committed Dr Glen Lauder, and to Marama Taiwhati, who steered me to Victoria University's Faculty of Education. There I have found a nurturing home with people who care about education making a difference, especially my friends in the Pacific Leadership Cluster. That Pacific view on life has impacted the way I think, notably Dr Kabini Sanga's deeply thought contributions are always with me, and Laura van Peer has been a proof reader extraordinaire.

I acknowledge the support in funding and collegial discussion I have received at Whitireia New Zealand Polytechnic, specifically the Faculty of Arts and the leadership of Kaye Jujnovich, and my Media Training Centre colleagues.

Family and friends have been supportive and patient in this process. Being of service to the community informs this thesis, and is something I have always seen as a natural part of life thanks to the example of my parents, Ross and Joan. My children and grandchildren are particular inspirations for this thesis, because I intend journalism will contribute to the future of the world they are living into.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my wife, Cheryl, for her support and aroha.

Noverim me, noverim te

(Let me know myself, let me know you)

Augustine of Hippo

Abstract

The field of journalism in New Zealand has gone through significant changes in the last few years, with the onset of digital technologies, their impact on the funding of journalism and on readership, and in turn on the way journalism is performed. Therefore, the aim of this study is to understand how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms and, in turn, contributes to the training and development of journalists. The intent here is to contribute to the constantly evolving field of journalism as it deals with the digital changes driving what is arguably the most concentrated period of change in its history.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) has typically been used in organisations to manifest positive change for people. However, for this study I have creatively adapted and applied the Appreciative Inquiry framework to situate qualitative research methods inside three newsrooms in New Zealand. Focus groups in each newsroom were comprised of individuals from different hierarchical levels of the workplace. As the lead researcher I led the groups who operated as co-researchers following the AI process of four phases comprising Discover, Dream, Design and Destiny seeking to understand how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms.

The findings were initially drawn from an analysis of the themes which arose in the discussions. From the findings I use AI theory and adapt the AI process to propose a Relational Newsroom framework for use in newsrooms. By embedding newsroom groups constantly using the 4-D cycle of AI and involving the public in live interaction process with newsroom decision-making, the framework would generate practices of communication, trust, personal leadership and structure identified in the findings. This study concludes with proposals in the form of action statements for use in both news media and journalism school newsrooms to have journalists engaged and involved in creating the future of the field.

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Chapter One: Introduction

"This blind spot concerns not the what and how – not what leaders do and how they do it – but the who: who we are and the inner place or source from which we operate, both individually and collectively."

(Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski & Flowers, 2006, p. 5)

Leadership and learning in workplaces are two connected and constantly developing fields informed by a rich depth of ongoing academic scholarship in research and practice. There are contexts, however, in which the study of leadership and learning have received less attention, and one of those is media newsrooms. Leadership in newsrooms can be viewed from two perspectives: one is the historical hierarchical role of a leader responsible for ensuring teams of journalists use an agreed set of skills to meet deadlines; another is the very practice of journalism's leadership role as it provides people with information they need to make decisions. The aim of this study was to inquire into leadership and learning in newsrooms. I originally set out to understand how leaders could best guide learners in an applied workplace diploma recently initiated by the journalism industry in New Zealand. However, through investigating this topic I also wanted to make a contribution to the challenges facing newsrooms, driven by digital technology which is transforming the way journalism is practiced and paid for. I intended for the recommendations of this research to be useful both in commercial newsrooms, and in student newsrooms so training can better prepare those going into the field for the dynamics they will face, and have everyone engaged in leadership and learning in their practice.

Newsrooms can be places of strong opinions debated among journalists, who generate learning as a collective within what Breed (1997) describes as historical and cultural practices.

Gergen & Gergen (2008) would find rich evidence in newsrooms for their argument of the social construction of knowledge, because "knowledge of the world and self has its origins in human relationships" (p. 161). Within these relationships, formal, non-formal and informal learning all contribute to the concept of lifelong, lifewide learning. Alheit (2009) explains learning and knowledge is drawn from all of our life experiences, and not only focuses attention on everyone as a learner, but also on where learning takes place, including within organisations. Global networks are driving change at such a pace that becoming a learning organisation is necessary for survival (Senge et al., 2008). Key to that survival is that all stakeholders in complex organisational systems must be involved in that learning, not just leaders in hierarchical positions (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Global complexity is changing the way journalists think, act, and interact with the world. Yet for all of journalists' lifelong, lifewide learning and knowledge, the fast-paced change being experienced in newsrooms has been found by journalism scholars (e.g. Deuze and Fortunati, 2011) to have been badly managed and predominantly driven from the top down.

It is against this background that I have sought to involve journalists from different layers in newsrooms to generate knowledge of how leadership empowers learning in the newsroom. The framework I have used is Appreciative Inquiry (AI), which has been developed over the past three decades as a system of organisational development research and practice. Cooperrider et al. (2008) explain that AI starts with the premise that every system works to some degree, and bringing as many different stakeholders in that system together to appreciate the best of a topic will give the system its best opportunity for growth. AI provides a four-phase structure of Discover, Dream, Design and Deliver through which co-researchers work. The stakeholders in this research came together in focus groups, a typical AI tool, in three newsrooms in New

Zealand. The focus groups were made up of different hierarchical layers in the newsroom, including editors, chief reporters, and junior reporters who also nominated informal mentors. In the Discover phase each person brought to the group an example of when leadership empowered their learning in a newsroom, and as a group of co-researchers they worked to understand each other's experience of the topic. They then stepped through the Dream and Design phases to generate provocative propositions which are action statements for the design of the ideal newsroom in which leadership empower learning.

The newsroom groups in the Discover phase developed a positive core of nine factors critical for leadership empowering learning in the newsrooms, which became the first finding. The themes of their action statements contributed to four further findings that communication, trust, personal leadership and structures for relational practices are required in newsrooms where leadership empowers learning. The Appreciative Inquiry process was adapted again for the discussion process to have those findings contribute to recommendations for training and newsroom development for the digital challenges facing journalism.

Organisation of thesis

In Chapter Two I have combined my own experience of journalism's history and its challenges, with research into the field. I begin by describing the news media organisations who employ most of the journalists in the Western world, and whose growth in the past century has been based on selling news and advertising to consumers. The chapter addresses the impact of the internet on advertising and the financial viability of those organisations. In the second section of the journalism background chapter I explore who journalists are, what constitutes good journalism, how the field is changing, workplace training in newsrooms and opportunities which may arise from the challenges faced by journalism. Finally I look at research into how journalism

is tackling its challenges, and recommendations for the field. Based on this background I pose questions to guide this research.

Literature on leadership and learning is reviewed in Chapter Three to address my research question, "how does leadership empower learning in newsrooms?" Beginning with leadership I outline past and present research before specifically explaining two theories of leadership which I argue are alive in the practice of journalism. These are the theory of servant leadership as it relates to serving the public, and the theory of personal leadership and its parallels with the motivation for operating in fields such as journalism. Finally in the leadership section, I review the literature on leadership in complexity, and relational leadership; two interrelated fields where a great deal of research and practice attention is being focused. In the learning section, I look at training and learning in workplaces, and then at theories which have contributed to, and developed further with, the thinking surrounding lifewide and lifelong learning. To synthesise the fields of leadership and learning literature, I situate the final section in the field of organisational development, particularly the concept of the learning organisation.

Chapter Four addresses Appreciative Inquiry (AI) which is used as a methodological framework in this research. The chapter begins by explaining how AI works as a framework for both research and for organisational development. I outline the five principles that underpin AI and I explain the 4-D cycle of Discover, Dream, Design and Destiny embedded in the research method. I then use four examples of the use of AI in organisational development practice and research to illustrate its adaptability as a precursor to making my own adaptations in this thesis. Finally I address some of the concerns about AI raised in the literature.

Outlining my method in Chapter Five involves explaining how I addressed Appreciative Inquiry across choices of research paradigm, theory, methods and tools. The paradigms of

quantitative and qualitative research are considered and my choice of qualitative methods is explained and justified. Underpinning the research is the theory of social constructionism, and the argument that knowledge is generated in relationships is presented. Finally the selection of research tools, focus groups and thematic analysis, is explained. I outline the process I used for identifying the focus groups in three newsrooms, developing questions, working with the groups and thematically analysing the data at two levels, first with the groups and then later by re-reading their discussion.

The findings in Chapter Six are presented in two sections. The first section outlines what the groups found as they worked together through the Appreciative Inquiry process, and contains one finding with nine factors identifying the broad issues which answer the research question: How does leadership empowers learning in newsrooms? The second section covers what I found when I re-analysed the group discussions for overlapping themes which could inform practice. The result is four findings – presented as action statements – which show that to have leadership empowering learning in newsrooms requires communication, trust, personal leadership and structure.

I have again adopted and adapted the Appreciative Inquiry 4-D process of Discover, Dream, Design and Destiny in Chapter Seven to address the two secondary research questions: From understanding how leadership contributes to learning in newsrooms, what forms of leadership training and development would contribute to learning in the newsroom? How would this leadership training and development contribute to journalism practice in the digital age? I begin the Discover phase by revisiting the topics of communication, trust, personal leadership and structure, and draw on the literature on journalism, leadership and learning to which they relate. In the next phase I Dream about what I understood in the Discover phase being alive for

journalism, and draw further on the literature to imagine a possible new future. In the Design phase I take those imaginings and present concrete action statements designed to apply to the field of journalism, and underscore them with practical connections to theory and practice from the focus groups.

The final Destiny phase of the discussion is situated in Chapter Eight. In this way the chapter is both a conclusion for this thesis, and a new beginning. The Destiny phase contains commitments which are intended to contribute to research into the field of journalism, as well as the practice of journalism. The chapter also discusses implications from the research, considers limitations of the research, and presents some final thoughts on how the foundation for the "Relational Newsroom" must be the universal moral good and concern for the other.

Chapter Two: Background/Rationale: News Media and Journalism

"In a journalistic sense, accepting change as an element of life suggests journalism never is a set of practices and values; it is constantly becoming something that it currently is not."
(Gade & Perry, 2003, p. 327, citing Merrill, 1989)

Introduction

To inquire how leadership and learning takes place in newsrooms, it is important to understand the context of the financial and professional challenges being dealt with by news media. To do so, I draw on my own background of more than 30 years as a journalist and editor, together with literature on the news media. I outline mainstream media, its challenges, and opportunities; I then describe journalists, journalism, its practice and training; and the final section looks at changes being implemented, researched and recommended. First, however, I explain the inspiration for this research, which in turn frames my interest in having journalists prepared for, and engaged in, leadership and learning in newsrooms.

The Seed of My Interest

The seed for this study germinated with the introduction of a workplace training programme introduced to New Zealand newsrooms in 2009, the National Diploma in Applied Journalism. At the time, I wondered how newsroom supervisors responsible for overseeing the programme could have time to add another task to the day, because newsrooms were making do with fewer staff delivering news to more complex and digital platforms which required increasing immediacy. Thus leadership and learning in newsrooms became the focus of this research. Before beginning my thesis, the seed was fed over four post-graduate papers and what I discovered through those papers, through the reading and research work of the thesis, and

together with earlier personal training and development, was that the germination of the seed was no accident. The seed for the idea of exploring how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms had been sitting in rich humus-like layers of influences and inspiration built up over the 50-plus years of my life. This is my lifelong, lifewide learning which Alheit (2009) labels biographical learning, a theory which I propose has the potential to help journalists leading and learning in newsrooms play a greater part in transforming the future of the field.

Vignettes of Biographical Learning

Through this study I have come to reflect on my own relationship with leadership, learning and newsrooms through my life. I have memories which I can see in my lifelong, lifewide learning defined by Alheit (2009) have served as layers of lenses through which I have come to view and participate in leadership and learning.

There were inspiring teachers who early in secondary school had me consider an education career guiding others. Then as captain of my college's first 15 rugby team I recall having a sense of frustration about not being able to make a difference as a leader on the field, which could have contributed to me not seeking out leadership until much later in life. Growing up I recall having a sense of resenting authority, and then as a young journalist straight out of school I had a sense of enjoying a separateness from the world on which we reported, in the traditional newsroom culture which is expected to question power. In my late 20s I had a break from journalism of more than three years, and when I began working in newsrooms again I saw that journalistic separateness in a new light and recall having a thought which went something like this: "These people need to get beyond this room and understand what people go through out there in the real world to get on in life". Years later when I was asked to become an editor I initially declined with the thought: "I don't want to have to manage other people's problems". I can see that

thought related to earlier life experiences, and when I finally agreed to become an editor I enjoyed some achievements in my role in the pragmatic sense of getting the job done, but I also made mistakes as a leader for people.

However, I was given another opportunity and I received direct leadership guidance from a new manager for the first time, which prompted me to personally invest in training and development. The result had me shift from a leader who got people to produce a product, to me being interested in people and their growth as journalists. As a result the newspapers we produced together became recognised as better products. I recall thinking: "People should be trained and developed before they are put into leadership positions". I also began to think about how I could contribute to others and to the world through leadership, and educating the next generation of journalists became an obvious choice because of my own enjoyment of journalism, and knowing the difference it can make in communities.

These vignettes can be seen as layers of lenses from lifelong and lifewide experiences which have come together and inspired my inquiry into leadership and learning in newsrooms. I have presented my personal experiences as a journalist and I continue on to providing an exploration of the challenges and opportunities in the context of literature in the following section to further support the background and rationale for my study.

Background: Legacy Media's Challenges and Opportunities

What is legacy media?

I am situating this research in legacy print media which historically publish editions printed on paper and, therefore, capture news at a point in time, but now also publish news websites. In legacy media, advertising revenue produces the majority of the income, which in turn pays for journalism. New Zealand Journalism Training Organisation statistics show that 87% of

journalists in New Zealand are employed by print media (NZJTO, 2011). In New Zealand two organisations in the print sector, APN News and Media, and Fairfax, employ 80% of journalists and a majority of the approximately 200 journalism students who graduate annually are first employed by legacy media. This type of dominance is replicated in Australia (O'Donnell, McKnight & Este, 2012) and the U.S. (Rosenstiel et al., 2012).

Picture of the global news media industry.

It is important to consider the financial issues facing news media for two reasons. Firstly falling revenues have meant that organisations are finding it harder to pay for good journalism, and secondly the way journalism is paid for directly relates to the way journalism is practiced, and therefore how leadership and learning occurs in newsrooms. Legacy media organisations are adjusting to changing habits of news consumers and advertisers. An OECD report (2010) shows newspaper revenue (US$164 billion) still dominates other publishing types such as recorded music (US$27b), films (US$85b), and consumer/educational books (US$112b). However, driven by changing habits of rising home and mobile internet use, legacy media revenue began slowing at the turn of the twenty-first century and has been declining since about 2008. O'Donnell et al., (2012) found newspaper advertising revenue dropped 18% in Australia between 2008 and 2011, in the U.S. the figure was down 23% across 2008-9, and in the U.K. down 30% in 2009. Newspaper sales between 2005 and 2009 fell 4% in Australia, 13% in the US, and 16% in Britain exacerbated by the 2008 global financial crisis. The impacts have included 1,000 Australian journalists losing their jobs in the three years to 2011 and in the U.S. full-time editorial staff numbers fell from a high of 56,400 in 2000 to less than 40,000 last year (PRJP, 2013). The number of U.S. daily newspapers declined 14% from 1,611 in 1990 to 1,387 in 2009. Assuming the readers and advertisers have disappeared to the internet and hoping to attract those

readers and advertisers, legacy media has invested heavily in putting news online. However Rosenstiel et al. (2012) show that for every $1 legacy media gained in digital advertising revenue, $7 has been lost in print advertising revenue.

The financial picture in New Zealand and Australia.

Following the global trend is New Zealand, where this research is situated. The field work for this research was undertaken in newsrooms which are part of the two major legacy media groups, which have their head offices in Australia. Fairfax's total revenue across Australia and New Zealand dropped from A$2.9 billion to A$2.4 billion in the five years to 2011, during which time it shed 2,894 jobs, about one-third of its workforce (Myllylahti, 2012). Revenue was A$2 billion in the financial year ending 2013 (Myllylahti, 2013b). A write-down of the accounting book value of Fairfax publications meant that in the 2011-12 financial year it recorded a A$2.8 billion loss. APN News and Media wiped out A$485 million of value from its publications recorded in its balance sheet in 2012, and has sold assets such as community newspaper titles, magazines and a stake in outdoor advertising (Myllylahti, 2013b). As news consumers have left traditional print media, so has advertising. New Zealand Advertising Standards Authority figures show that what ASA calls interactive, or internet-based, advertising spending has grown from zero in 2002 to $366 million in 2012, representing 16.9% of total advertising spending (ASA, 2013). Meanwhile, advertising spending in newspapers has fallen from $830 million in 2005 to $540 million in 2012, dropping behind television advertising spending in 2011 for the first time in history. Legacy media have not been able to replace their revenue with either online advertising, or with paywalls which charge news consumers for content (Myllylahti, 2013). These figures, then, suggest that legacy media on traditional paper, solely online, or even as a mix of the two,

needs to change. The decline has been tracked by scholars, who identify some of the impacts on the practice of journalism, and consequently on leadership and learning in newsrooms.

A narrative of decline.

Against the background of commercial facts and figures, narratives of decline in journalism are easy to locate in research into journalism practice. O'Donnell et al. (2012) quote journalists questioning how the quality of news reporting can be maintained when they are asked to produce multiple story versions, for example for social media, the web page, and the next day's newspaper. That is for just one of a number of stories they may be expected to produce on any day. O'Donnell et al. highlight issues such as "churnalism", a term which means using media releases with barely any changes; blogging opinion, which replaces news coverage; chequebook journalism, which involves paying subjects or sources for exclusive stories; and financial challenges. Doing more with the same number of people, or with fewer, has been described by journalists as a never-ending treadmill (Gill, 2011).

Boczkowski (2011) calls the situation a "monumentous crisis of economic sustainability" (p. 122), and he sees it generating an even greater level of what he calls "pack journalism", which means chasing and running a story simply because competitors in the marketplace are publishing it. His research suggests news consumers are bored with this form of reporting. While global access to information is touted as the internet's greatest gift to mankind, conversely the globalisation of news content and its replication across multiple sites to fill space and time is viewed negatively in the literature (Hirst, 2011; Marjoribanks, 2011). To an extent this has been fed by the growth in public relations (PR), which is seen as a challenge to democracy because of the large numbers of people employed in the field, many of them former journalists (Anderson & Ward, 2007; Hirst, 2011; Merrill, 2011; O'Donnell et al., 2012; Singer, 2011). For example the

Australian Football League's PR unit AFL Media, employs 40 former or graduate journalists to feed fans its own version of football news on digital platforms (O'Donnell et al., 2012). The ease of self-publishing is producing a range of what Hirst (2011) calls news-like content and "noise" created by individuals in social media and blogs which Myllylahti (2013b) finds are increasingly breaking stories which are followed by journalists. But Singer (2011b) warns: "When everyone can be a publisher, anyone can be a spin merchant; we need the watchdog" (p. 226).

Amid the impacts news media's leadership has struggled to respond effectively to its financial and operational challenges (Deuze, 2011). A study of the early reactions to digital change found management had been told to implement change without being provided with the tools to successfully do so (Killebrew, 2003), while Deuze and Fortunati (2011) identify organisational investment and innovation in the hands of a select few in what has effectively been change driven top-down.

Research of journalism tends to predominantly focus on what is wrong, thereby looking away from the good of journalism, O'Donnell et al. (2012) found. Others have also seen value in news media, because a significant number of legacy media businesses in the U.S. have been bought by private equity firms, some out of bankruptcy proceedings (Farhi, 2013; Myllylahti, 2012; Myllylahti, 2013b). As Myllylahti (2012) reported, one major Fairfax investor pointed out that the company was still consistently producing cash, just less of it. Amidst the downward trends, then, there are those who continue to hold a torch for journalism, and to see opportunities among the challenges. I argue that two things have been missing to a significant degree in the focus of organisational problems and the impact on the practice and product of journalism. One is the voice of journalists as they work through changing the way they operate, and second is a focus on what journalism does best and how it can be adapted for future challenges.

Challenges create opportunities.

There are those who mix realism with optimism as they encourage journalists to engage with transformation of the field. Three specific opportunities have become clear as I looked at leadership and learning in newsrooms: focusing on and adapting what journalists do best, preparing them to take more personal responsibility in their roles, and exploring individual and collective creativity as organisations explore new structures

Firstly, digital journalism is recognised for its technological potential to produce new and progressive ways of keeping the public informed (O'Donnell et al, 2012; Singer, 2011). The opportunity lies in examining what journalists do best, including their prize-winning journalism practices, say O'Donnell, et al. (2012). The authors suggest the establishment of values and standards could provide some answers to its challenges. For example, O'Donnell et al. found that journalism's role of serving the public interest by scrutinising the powerful and holding governments to account was still held dear by journalists, who found their readers responded positively when these were done well. O'Donnell et al. also found "citizen fatigue" (p. 27) for the idea that journalists were the ones who decided who or what was news and what was not. The authors discovered journalists in the traditional mainstream media were increasingly collaborating with readers. Both O'Donnell et al. (2012) and Lowrey and Gade (2011) highlight journalism's democratic responsibility to get even more connected with news consumers via digital technology.

Secondly, signs of greater power and opportunity becoming available to the individual journalist have also been noted (Deuze & Fortunati, 2011). Picard (2013) discusses individual journalists managing their own news sites, blogs, and social media, a trend which is potentially transforming journalists into brands. Employers are coming to rely on the online following

individual journalists have among news consumers (Lowrey & Gade, 2011). While this brings with it the responsibility of ensuring a journalist does not shift from reporting the news to becoming the news, it also carries the potential for higher wages, better employment opportunities, or self employment via the digital media age.

Thirdly, there are opportunities seen for greater individual and collective creativity as organisations explore new structures. For example, the removal of hierarchies in a legacy media site at News Limited's Adelaide Advertiser led to journalists being responsible for how their story progresses through its life cycle on each production platform without reference to a supervisor (Evershed, 2011). The way change has been managed in Adelaide may have a lot to do with how management and journalists engage with each other at that site (Marjoribanks, 2011).

There is potential to inquire into how leadership and learning in the organisational context of the newsroom can help transform the field of journalism.

Summarising challenges and opportunities.

In this section I use literature to provide an understanding of legacy news media, to illustrate its struggle to adapt to the digital world financially and practically, and to see the opportunity for increased connectivity with the public for the field of journalism. My research inquiry into leadership and learning in newsrooms can be seen in the context of challenges and opportunities for the field of journalism. The immediate past may have seen dramatic change in how journalism is paid for and how much organisations are prepared to spend on it, but news media has a long and rich history behind it. It is logical to creatively engage journalists who have a stake in the field and a passion for it. Such suggestions raise questions of who journalists are, what their roles are, and what constitutes good journalism.

Journalists and Journalism

Having proposed to engage journalists more deeply in transforming their field, I believe it is important to understand who these people are, the context of their work and why they practice journalism the way they do. Situating such research into leadership and learning in newsrooms requires a focused understanding of the cultural context.

Who are journalists?

The definition of journalist is not a fixed thing, for the very reason that journalists eschew authority. To be ordained to practice, for example, in the same way as doctors or lawyers, would be to hand over power to a legislature and this is exactly the issue which has been considered in inquiries into media regulation in New Zealand, Australia, and Great Britain in recent years (Burrows, 2013; Finkelstein, 2011; Leveson, 2012). Journalists by tradition are expected to be detached and independent, whether they are covering a local gala, questioning a politician, or reporting from sites of trauma such as a fatal car crash or even war zones (McCaffrey, 2011). However, McCaffrey says such objectivity is a mythology driven by educational textbooks rather than practice in newsrooms, due to their cultures.

Despite originating as a craft, journalism is now seen as a profession. Hollifield (2011) says the journalism culture involves professional knowledge, established ethics, education, a certain degree of independence and discretion in the work process. Hollifield also says the culture involves referring to fellow journalists as their primary reference group for professional conduct, a sociocultural dynamic which Breed (1997) found is often driven by the publication's owner. Inside this culture, journalists have been protective of their status as those who decide what constitutes news (Deuze, 2008; Perez-Latre & Sanchez-Tabernero, 2009; Singer, 2011). Journalists claim they are responsible for acting ethically, while the increasing numbers of

citizen journalists such as bloggers (Myllylahti, 2013b) are not. However, Singer (2011) points out that acting ethically is precisely what critics claim journalists do not do consistently. Research has identified concerns about decision-making on what is ethical or not, and specifically discusses the homogeneity of journalists' backgrounds, and their homogenous world view. For example young, well-educated, middle-class, and male was the picture painted by Henningham's 1998 Australian research findings and Deuze's five-country study of national news cultures in 2002 backed up those findings (cited in O'Donnell et al., 2012, p. 36). Research has also found this homogeneity advantaged men over women in Australia (North, 2009) and New Zealand (Strong, 2011).

In New Zealand the picture is similar in all but one respect – more than half the journalists in New Zealand are women who typically outnumber men in journalism schools (Hollings, 2007). The other significant factor for New Zealand in Hollings' research, based on the 2006 Census, was that 81% of journalists were European and just 6% Maori. By comparison in the general population 74% are of European descent and 15% Maori (Statistics NZ, 2013). In total the 456 news media businesses in New Zealand employ 4,485 journalists, 52% of whom are female (NZJTO, 2011). In this section I have outlined who practices journalism in legacy media, both in New Zealand and internationally, journalistic culture, the ethics to which they adhere, and the homogeneity of newsrooms. With that background, the next step is to understand the discourse surrounding what good practice should look like, particularly in light of the transformation of the field, and my interest in studying leadership and learning in newsrooms.

What is good journalism?

Research has shown journalists are intrinsically motivated by professional values which they recognise as producing good journalism (Kunelius & Ruusunoksa, 2008; Mierzejewska, 2011;

Tsourvakas, Veglis & Zotos, 2004). Acknowledging that what constitutes quality journalism is neither easy to define nor universally accepted, O'Donnell et al. (2012) compared two recognised academic studies of quality journalism from the US; those of Merrill (1968) and Meyer & Kim (2003). Merrill's five criteria were independence, strong opinion emphasis, editorial focus on politics, educated and articulate staff, and appeal to opinion leaders. Meyer and Kim's list comprised readability and ease of use, localism, editorial vigour, a balanced news/advertising ratio, and a wide range and diversity of commentary and interpretation. O'Donnell et al. (2012) suggest Meyer and Kim's (2003) list is more reader-focused while the older work by Merrill has more of the historical inward-looking, self-referential culture also referred to by Deuze (2008). The comparison between Merrill and Meyer & Kim (2003) is pertinent for O'Donnell et al., (2012) and for this thesis, because Meyer & Kim's (2003) reader-focused model for quality journalism is seen by the authors to be driven by digital impacts which are changing the way journalism is practiced.

O'Donnell et al surveyed 100 journalists and news executives in Australia for their opinions of 15 characteristics of top quality journalism. The top five rankings were: 1) a strong element of public benefit, 2) editor's support is essential, 3) it is platform neutral, 4) it keeps the newspaper profitable, and 5) it involves investigative reporting. The reader, therefore, was number one. Three-quarters of the 100 editors and journalists surveyed said their number one role was to inform the public, or similar. Giving citizens the information they need to make decisions is a common theme in the literature; (see, for example, Craig, 2011, and Gade & Lowrey, 2011). Also notably in O'Donnell et al.'s (2012) research, the editor's leadership was ranked as the number two priority. Participants in the Australian study were also asked to rank 11 criteria used

for judging journalism awards, and therefore quality. The authors found core professional values filled the top five spots: ethics, newsworthiness, public benefit, originality, and research.

O'Donnell et al. found monitoring those in positions of power is seen as part of quality journalism. They cite a 2010 OECD report on news publishing discussing the vital role of "upholding transparency, democracy and freedom of expression, mainly because of their editorial independence from governmental or other bodies" (2012, p. 12, citing OECD). Australia's Independent Media Inquiry also noted journalism's role in society's well-being (Finkelstein 2012). Mindful of this ethos, Lowrey & Gade (2011) challenge journalists and news organisations, then, to focus on what changes are needed to keep them relevant in the future. In light of my study, news media appear to be finding that managing all these types of shifts in thinking, while maintaining journalism's role in democracies, is not easy, and it is worthwhile asking, how are journalists being prepared and trained in an ongoing manner for these changes?

Journalism training.

This research had its origins in seeking to understand how newsroom supervisors work with journalists in newsrooms as a learning environment. It was prompted by the introduction into workplaces of the New Zealand Level 6 National Diploma in Applied Journalism (NZJTO, 2011) to formalise and recognise the skills-based learning which had always gone on in newsrooms. Interestingly, at time of writing this thesis one of the two major employers, Fairfax, decided to trial hiring university undergraduates and using the workplace diploma to train them, rather than the traditional route of hiring graduates of one of nine journalism schools: Six polytechnic schools offer the skill-based National Diploma in Journalism at Level 5 on the NZQA framework, and three universities which offer equivalent programmes as graduate or post-graduate diplomas. The Level 6 workplace applied diploma is designed to build on Level 5

standards. Much of the literature on journalism education, both as preparation for the newsroom and ongoing workplace training, is focused on the model of "learning by doing" (Thomas, 2010, p. 11). Thomas explains the NZJTO oversees the moderation of New Zealand journalism schools, including the three based in universities. Journalism education is expected to reproduce the occupation, routines, and constraints of journalism, so is based on learning by doing.

A search of journalism, media studies, media management, and workplace learning and training journals reveals many articles and arguments on how journalism students are prepared in tertiary education for newsrooms around the world. There is little literature with any detail related to the link between leadership and learning in newsrooms, although there were related articles on training in the digital age (Becker, 2007), funding digital training (Tang, et al., 2011), training during change in newsrooms (Massey & Ewart, 2012) and embedding a journalism masters teaching programme in a working newsroom Klinger (2013). Research by Cleary (2006) showed that the historical dearth of broad-based, structured training in news organisations has been an underlying issue for news media for several years.

This section has illustrated challenges about journalism's changing democratic role, and therefore also questions about how journalists should be trained. Skills-based training continues to dominate preparatory and ongoing training. Relevant to the question of leadership and learning in this thesis, is the potential for research into how learning occurs and is empowered in the newsroom context, particularly for the changing nature of journalism.

Research for change

Journalism scholars have been vocal in their suggestions for changes to recreate journalism's future in response to the challenges described in this chapter, and many of them demand the type of generative, participatory research I am proposing in this study such as in organisational

development theory and practices that address the complexity of post-modern society. Central to such tools are calls for creative ways of re-imagining journalism and therefore the way journalists think to re-connect the field with its core role.

For example Anderson and Ward (2007) studied the impact of changes in news media on advanced democracies in the US, Japan, France, Germany, Italy, and Australia and found soft news replacing hard news, resulting in electorates not being informed enough to take part in democracy. Anderson and Ward's (2007) entire inquiry is framed by the historical argument that news is not just one more commodity to be bought and sold by owners, but, as scholars such as Hirst (2011) and Merrill (2011) also argue, a necessary part of meaningful democracy. Anderson and Ward (2007) called for a government and industry-funded institute to investigate how to get hard news back in the spotlight. Gade & Lowrey (2011) view news media as playing catch-up to a post-modern society embracing multiple perspectives and flexible meanings, which in turn replace traditional sources of authority. One of those traditional sources of authority is journalism, and Gade (2011) argues that embracing complexity with all its uncertainty, if done properly, will give journalism a greater connectedness with its audience of readers, watchers, and listeners.

Transforming journalism must go deeper than just the way a media organisation might operate in the digital age, Kunelius & Ruusunoksa (2008) argue. It must reach down to the way journalists think and act. For example, journalists should see themselves not merely as objective and innocent bystanders, but allow themselves to be used more as a context in which ideas and solutions are developed together with the public (Kunelius & Ruusunoksa, 2008; McCafferey, 2011; Rivas-Rodriguez 2011; Singer 2011). Kunelius (2006), also cautions that with this increased engagement would come a responsibility for journalism to open itself up for judgement

and critique because limiting public debate and perspectives limits journalism's own power, given what it stands for. Lovink and Rossiter (2011) develop this argument further, explaining that it is not for journalism to contain all knowledge, but to assist in its on-going creation and dissemination through relationships, connectedness, and networks.

Such change needs to be prepared for, and not just with management skills, for example Deuze (2011) calls for a more humanistic approach to leadership in news organisations. In a similar vein, Strong (2011) theorises that women newsroom leaders in New Zealand use a glass bubble to survive a testosterone-fuelled environment, and she recommends changes to structures, training, and leadership development. There has been some investment for training for leadership development in New Zealand newsrooms. For example Fairfax has been running two layers of training for leadership for a numbers of years, one at the corporate level, and one purpose-designed in New Zealand for newsroom leadership development (C. Lind, personal communication, February, 2013). More recently APN has introduced layers of development training which prepares potential leaders, ongoingly supports editors with a mix of management and leadership training, and, and particularly situational leadership training which involves groups where individuals take responsibility (L. Franklin, personal communication, October, 2013).

Organisation development theory and practice is a field which journalism scholars have been increasingly urging news media organisation to turn to (Dekoulou, Pühringer, Tsourvakas, 2010; Gade, 2004; Hollifield, 2011; Kung, 2011). A comparative study of Swiss and Greek news media attempts to use organisational development strategies suggests that they have tried, but they are a long way from transforming into learning organisations (Dekoulou, Pühringer, Tsourvakas, 2010). Kung recommends managers tap into theories of organisational creativity and complexity

theory, by providing structures where cognition and culture in the organisation allow for creativity. She cites Amabile's three elements needing to be present in an organisational setting for creativity to be alive socially: 1) Creativity-relevant cognitive skills such as the ability to understand complexities; 2) Expertise in the field and problem solving; 3) Intrinsic motivation to engage in an activity for its own sake, take risks and experiement (cited in Kung, 2011, p. 47).

Suggestions about how to address news media, and journalism's, issues range from public funding, because of its pivotal role in democracy, to following the lead of other fields and businesses which use organisational development theory and practices to address complex challenges. The creativity needed to address journalism's future will demand transformational change in the way the field is understood and practiced. Such transformation will need to be taken into account when inquiring into leadership and learning in newsrooms, and it is clear that having journalists engaged in the process is logical to answer many of the questions posed by journalism's challenges.

Research Questions

The aim of this study is to understand leadership and learning in newsrooms as the practice of journalism deals with challenges driven by the inter-related effects of digital technology and societal change. Through an examination of the contextual issues raised through the discussed literature and my own personal insights, I propose one primary research question and two secondary questions for this study.

The primary research question is:

How does leadership empower learning in newsrooms?

The secondary research questions are:

From understanding how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms, what training and development would contribute to leadership in the newsroom?

How would this leadership training and development contribute to journalism in the digital age?

Summary

In this chapter I have used the literature to lay out the past, present and possible future ideas in the discourse on news media. While the days of legacy media's dominant voice in news platforms are over, many see a return to journalism's core values and role in democracy as the key to its future. From the exploration in this chapter, the following are seen as a way forward for the practice of journalism in news media: A focus on the high points of journalism; giving journalists even at the lowest levels a voice in its future; totally re-imagining how journalism might be practiced in a world of multiple truths; and creating new systems in which to achieve these ideals. Inquiring into how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms, therefore, has the potential to contribute greatly to the practice and theory of journalism in newsrooms. I propose using the organisational development research and practice framework of Appreciative Inquiry to make that contribution.

Chapter Three: Literature Review on Leadership and Learning

"Who learns what and the when, where and how of education are clearly functions of the culture."
(Mezirow, 2009, p. 103)

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to present an overview of the research into the theory and practice of leadership and learning in organisations. In light of my research question, "how does leadership empower learning in newsrooms", it is important to consider the relationship between leadership and learning in organisations because of the generative potential this space has within the living human system of the learning organisation. Specifically it has the potential to play a big part in addressing journalism's challenges.

For this study I chose to integrate the literature throughout the process, which Johnson and Christensen (2008) explain is a relevant choice in qualitative research. Acquiring an understanding of the spectrum of theories which drive practice of leadership and workplace learning before undertaking the field work informed the data collection process, and allowed for more probing or clarifying questions. I was then able to undertake deeper readings of the literature based on aspects of practice which arose from the findings and data analysis. The chapter is broken into three sections, the first on leadership, the second on learning, and the third on a synthesis of the first two as they relate to the thesis inquiry into how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms.

The first section, on leadership, is presented in three parts. The first part sets out the topic of leadership in the context of its past and present in the literature. The second part introduces two established leadership theories which I have identified as relevant to journalism: servant

leadership and personal leadership. The third part introduces two interconnected theories, leadership in complexity and relational leadership, which have been developed in response to the challenges of this millennium, challenges which have greatly impacted journalism.

The second section, on learning, is also divided into three. I introduce literature on workplace learning, secondly I consider learning theories discussed by Illeris (2009) to address lifelong and lifewide adult learning, and finally the literature on Learning Organisations is used to explore how the needs of the individual and the organisation intersect.

The chapter concludes by synthesising the literature to identify arguments relevant to this research into leadership and learning in newsrooms, to contribute to training in the newsroom and to opportunities for journalism in the digital age. In doing so, the literature can be used as a foundation on which to build the findings and propose future action for leadership empowering learning in the newsroom.

Leadership

Leadership research past and present.

More than 200,000 books have been written on leadership (Gergen, 2009), so, clearly, its theories and debates are too varied to adequately cover here. However, key theorists and trainers such as Yukl (2006), Aviolo (2007), Bennis (2007), Drath et al. (2008), and Uhl-Bien & Marion (2009) agree that there has been a movement away from the emphasis on hero leadership to a focus on theory and training for the leadership relationship. Scholars and practitioners may not agree on everything, but they generally agree that there are three elements in the leadership relationship; the leader, the follower, and shared goals. Bennis (2007) lists six competencies for exemplary leaders: “They create a sense of mission, they motivate others to join them on that mission, they create an adaptive social architecture for their followers, they generate trust and

optimism, they develop other leaders, and they get results" (p. 5). However, Bennis (2007) says the days of basing leadership theory on the study of historically great individuals are gone because "the only person who practices leadership alone in a room is the psychotic" (p. 2); theorists are now well into the phase of understanding the relationships, the inclusiveness, and the collaboration that creates leadership, rather than limited models of charismatic or trait-based leadership. The metaphor used by Bennis (2007) for the critical pieces in leadership research, training, practice, and debate is a tripod, with one leg as the leader, another as the follower, and a third as their common goals.

The leader leg includes theories of greatness manifested in wisdom (Sternberg, 2007), influence (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004), charisma (Bass & Aviolo, 1994; Yukl, 2006), ideal traits (Yukl, 2006), and leadership behaviour (Walker, 2006) such as transformational leadership which inspires subordinates to transcend their self-interest for the sake of the organisation (Plowman et al., 2007).

The second leg of the tripod, the follower, has been a more recent field of study and, like the leader, its focus begins with the individual. To build a model of followership, Avolio and Reichard (2008) start with the individual's psychological ownership, which includes developing a sense of self, of one's place in the world, and of self-efficacy, or the ability to confidently perform in that world. A vertical leader-member exchange (LMX) measure has been developed to measure what happens in the relationship between the follower and the leader (Yukl, 2006).

The third leg of the tripod is common goals, which have long played a part in the relationship between leaders and followers; for example, path-goal theory focuses on the behaviour of a leader influencing the satisfaction and performance of subordinates (Yukl, 2006). However, Bennis & Thomas (2002) propose that the label "common goal" has moved a long way from

something set by leaders and handed down in a power relationship, to becoming an idea around which a partnership is situated.

To advance leadership research and practice Bennis (2007) recommends inquiry across different contexts, and he notably nominates the field of media and communications as the most important context because of the role it plays in a complex world. The invitation for leadership research in journalism, then, is timely.

Leadership theory and journalism.

Servant leadership and personal leadership are relevant to the newsroom context because of the role journalism plays in society. Journalists serve readers by providing them with the information they need to participate in life, and by doing so the very practice of journalism can be seen as a leadership practice.

Servant leadership.

For the purposes of this literature review I have included servant leadership because it consistently resonates with the literature on journalism. For example, the top two elements of journalism are: 1) Journalism's first obligation is to the truth, and 2) its first loyalty is to citizens (Kovach and Rosenstiel,2001); while O'Donnell et al. (2012) found Australian editors and senior journalists nominated serving readers as their number one priority, and that journalism served the public interest and democracy. Journalism's democratic role and mission to give people the information they need to participate is also well established (Hagreaves, 2003; Lowrey & Gade, 2011; OECD, 2010). Equating the practice of good journalism with leadership as a societal good, therefore, led me to consider situating journalism practice in the theories of servant leadership first proposed by Greenleaf (1977).

Servant leaders create cultures, opportunities, and environments for people to act, participate, and take initiative (Sanga and Walker, 2005) and place the interests and the good of the people above their own interests (Chu, 2009). Greenleaf's (1977) theory of leadership serving the collective for community empowerment continues to be cited in relation to ethical leadership (Sanga & Walker, 2005; Yukl, 2006), which is a timely topic given inquiries into journalism leadership and practice in recent years (Finkleston, 2012; Leveson, 2012; NZ Law Commission, 2013). Hopper (2008) argues that the motivation for leadership should be a desire to serve. The growth in agency, and even transformation, of followers can be a measurement of leadership in service of others (Bushe & Kassam, 2004; Price & Hicks, 2006; Senge et al., 2006). Given journalism's role in ensuring people have the information they need to participate in a democracy (Anderson & Ward, 2007), there is a clear link with servant leadership for every journalist in their professional and personal practice.

Personal leadership.

Personal leadership draws on a range of self-theories, and in the context of this research recognises the intrinsic motivation embedded in the practice of journalism for the public good (Kunelius & Ruusunoksa, 2008; Mierzejewska, 2011; Tsourvakas, Veglis & Zotos, 2004). Situating and understanding the individual as "self" can be found in a range of literature on leadership and workplace learning and leadership theory. For example, Gardner (1983, 2009) and Gardner & Hatch (1989) discuss the importance of understanding multiple intelligences or ways of knowing among individuals. The potential for leadership through an individual's transformative learning includes questioning personal assumptions, among them attitudes towards authority (Kegan, 2009; Mankey & Stoneham, 2011; Mezirow, 2009). Adopting personal leadership does not require an individual to be appointed to a position or being in a

training programme. For example Yukl (2006) says a follower's self-management is just as important as self-management by a leader in a hierarchical position. Becoming fully integrated human beings is seen as important through personal inquiry into integrity, spirituality, caring, reflecting, meditation, and personal authenticity (Heron, 2009; Goleman, Boyatzis & Mckee, 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Schaetti, Ramsey & Watanabe (2008) propose a link between such mindfulness and creativity as critical for personal leadership. Practices of mindfulness and creativity requires individuals to be fully aware, using all of their intelligence to free themselves from self-defeating emotional habits. Drawing on the metaphor of the artist, Schaetti et al. (2008) use the term creativity in the context of creating one's own experience, exercising choice, no matter what is happening – for example, choosing to be a victim or not – as a way of engaging with the world around us. Schaetti et al. propose practices of attending to judgment, emotion, and physical sensations, and cultivating stillness, engaging ambiguity, and aligning with vision.

Servant leadership and personal leadership are two areas of leadership theory which have clear links with the research in this thesis because of journalists' relationships with news consumers, journalism's responsibility in society, and because of individual practitioners' increasing need to be autonomous and part of a creative, collective complex system.

Leadership in complexity and relationships.

Complexity and relational leadership research are relevant because relationships inside and outside newsrooms are critical in the work of a journalist, and because complexity and its impact on society should be addressed given the challenges faced by the field of journalism.

Leadership in complexity.

The connected world driven by communication technology, of which news media is a critical part, has brought complexity to the forefront of the leadership discussion and theorising. Drath et

al. (2008) offer a complexity leadership framework which sees order in a system as emerging from interacting agents, making leadership not only a top down, but also a bottom up, process. Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey (2007) contrast the complexity of the world's knowledge economy with management and governance systems stuck in the industrial era. They propose Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT) which identifies and explores strategies and behaviours that foster organisational creativity, learning, and adaptability. Uhl-Bien et al.'s (2007) theory is designed to find a balance between maintaining the control structures which are required in organisations, while also enabling the creativity required for both individuals and organisations to adapt. Similarly, Bennis (2007) and Heifetz, Grashow & Linksy, (2009) argue that being adaptive is the most important factor in leadership, and particularly for individuals, so is the idea and creative power of personal leadership (Plowman, 2007; Schaetti et al., 2008). Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) liken the neural networks measured by Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) in complexity science to CLT, in which the key is recognising and enabling the creative space between actors, and their interconnectedness. The critical piece for CLT is a structure, system, or mechanism which allows creativity to thrive, and potentially be measured in research. I propose researching leadership in complexity which suits the context of a field such as journalism.

Relational leadership.

One answer to the research into Complexity Leadership Theory has been to centre leadership research in relationships, or a social system (Schall et al., 2004). Where historically the one to be studied and trained was the leader, there is now a recognition of shared leadership involving the leader, followers, and between followers themselves (Pearce, 2008; Riggio, Chalef, & Lipman-Blumen, 2008; Wassenaar and Pearce 2012).

Uhl-Bien and Ospina (2012) use the continuum metaphor to illustrate the discourse on relational leadership. At one end are the entity or constructivist theorists who seek to understand and train the self, or individual, constructed prior to any relationship beginning. At the other are social constructionist theorists who give greater weight to what arises during the relationship. Social constructionist theorists contend that entity theorists say whatever "self" an individual brings to a relationship has the greatest bearing on the relationship that develops with others. Those who situate their research and training at the entity end of the continuum want everyone, whether a leader or a follower, entering into a leadership relationship with others to already be aware of the "self" they enter the relationship with, and to have trained for the best "self" possible. At the social constructionist end of the continuum, theorists say the process that happens in the space between two or more people has the greatest bearing on the relationship and the result. Therefore, those who research and train in the social constructionist realm use practices that focus on the process.

Uhl-Bien and Ospina (2012) believe there is an argument that the entity theorists' position, striving for tick-boxes of simplification, has created its own problems by trying to partition and simplify reality. An example of this simplification would be personality type or emotional intelligence inventories such as those developed by Mayer and Salovey (Cherniss, 2007) or Schutte (Grant, 2007), or scales of mentoring skills (Godshalk & Sosik, 2007) which attempt to classify people and then assume behaviour. Gergen (2009), however, argues that such measures categorise people as superior or inferior according to the measures' standards. The entity stance is like looking through a window, even multiple windows of triangulation and validation, to get as accurate a view as possible of the phenomenon.

A separation from the phenomenon is, therefore, an ideal for a researcher and even for the participants who should be able to see, know, acknowledge the "self" and their reactions, and potentially ignore or retrain unwanted elements of the latter. In contrast social constructionism asks researchers to go inside and shine a lantern into dark corners, studying the work of leadership from the inside out (Schall et al, 2004), to understand what is happening and the relationships which make it so. The resulting influence of being part of the phenomenon is acknowledged. "The entity scholar sees the lack of independence as a problem, while the constructionist sees it as an opportunity" (Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012, p. 31).

While not addressing leadership specifically, Gergen & Gergen (2008) explain one side of the relational discourse as a framework of social construction which situates knowledge, meaning, and understanding in human relationships. Central to the framework are three points: critical analysis, language, and the social world. The first point, critical analysis, challenges empirical science's objective measurements. The second claims that we only make sense of, or construct the world – and, in a relational sense, even exist – in language. Finally, social process is seen as the starting point of all knowledge, both scientific and otherwise. Gergen and Gergen's three points, when woven together, state that human relationships are the origin of knowledge, and therefore learning, and meaning is derived from the language used within those relationships. Understandings of power and knowledge, in the sense of privileging some and disadvantaging others, as authors argue are framed by the ideas of Foucault (for example, Alvesson & Svenningsson, 2012; Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000; Gergen, 2009; Gill, 2010; Ransom, 1997), has been central to the development of social constructionism.

Lichtenstein et al. (2006) propose the ideal is for leadership researchers, trainers, and practitioners to be searching for the rich interconnections among people acting in contexts which

allow leadership to be co-produced in the space between people. A good example of how this is manifested in training is in a reflection by Kennedy et al. (2012) on two leadership programmes dealing with conflict. One programme, labelled constructivist, is based on entity thinking which focuses on participants understanding their leadership strengths and weaknesses before they enter relationships to solve conflicts. The other programme, labelled constructionist, focuses on the relationship interaction in which leadership and learning about solving conflict arise.

In the former, self theories are used in a range of ways. For example, the facilitator has a clearing conversation to remove concerns from her mind before each session. For the participants, a questionnaire measures and categorises individuals who are then told what "type" of person they are and, therefore, how they typically deal with conflict based on an academic measurement tool. In the sessions participants are given knowledge of those personality types and tools and techniques to manage leadership relationships they have with those for whom they are responsible. In entity theory, an emotionally neutral view of self is discussed as desirable and possible. Language is locked in not only through descriptions of types of persons, but in the naming of the course as a programme dealing with conflict.

The other programme uses a social constructionist framework. The facilitator does not clear her "self" prior to the sessions. Participants who take part in the programme must bring a challenging leadership situation to work on. However at no time is the programme called a "conflict" programme, and a variety of terms are used which are synonymous so as not to freeze what happens in a possible future fixed in language. Participants have tasks in groups using clay, and whatever arises is where the work of relational leadership is situated, with the aim of expanding individuals' capacity to work in a relational space no matter what individuals bring to the space. Kennedy et al. (2012) describe results in the constructivist programme thus:

participants are keen to know what type of person they and others are and to learn how to best deal with that, and they are constrained by language and process. In contrast, the constructionist programme participants had access through story and metaphor to something else for new ways of thinking and acting. While limitations of training the individual are clear to them, Kennedy et al. (2012) warn ingrained ways of operating in Western society make social constructionism a struggle. They prefer individuals in a relationship to understand their own history, and therefore be better able to communicate so differences can be articulated and rhetorical skills used to address them (p. 200, citing Bouwen & Hosking). The potential for relational leadership would be at its greatest if there was a structure or system in place to manage the complex needs of workplaces as learning organisations, and to ensure leadership empowers learning in newsrooms.

Learning

The next section addresses learning through three perspectives in the literature: workplace training, theories of learning, and learning organisations. The three are rich wells of knowledge relevant to my study into how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms.

Learning in workplaces.

The literature on experiential workplace training which typifies newsroom learning ranges from the doing of training, to understanding the trainee. For example, Blanchard and Thacker (2010) is a standard and practical text on the workplace training. Topics specifically related to this research include the long-recognised importance of preparing supervisors for new training (Darwin, 2000; Leberman, McDonald & Doyle, 1996), workplace mentoring literature which focuses on the individual emotional intelligence of both the mentor and mentee (Cherniss, 2007; Ragins & Kramm, 2007), and the importance of understanding how the learner is coping with the work environment (Noe and Colquitt, 2002).

Addressing the issue of understanding the learner's contexts, Hall and Kidman's (2004) work on mentoring academic staff in universities used a series of boxes within boxes to represent a relational map of teaching and learning. The box in the centre represented the learner, and the boxes which surrounded the learner represented the contexts that the learner had to deal with. For example, in the case of supervisors and journalists being the learners, such boxes would represent the newsroom context with all its current challenges, as well as the individual's personal life context which may include, for example, gender and race, their community context, a national context and so on. Jarvis (2009) labels this seeking to understand as philosophical anthropology, a combination of psychological and sociological inquiry which situates the learner in the world. Hager and Halliday (2006) argue such understanding is fundamental to empower and enable lifelong, informal, and workplace learning.

Learning theories.

Introduction to learning theories.

Lifelong, lifewide learning emphasises learning which serves the individual learner, according to official definitions of the terms "lifewide" and "lifelong" set out in a European Commission (2000) policy-setting document. It has been argued that the policy goals for the individual have not been met because there has been a tension between learning which serves organisations and a market, and learning which serves the learner (EUCIS-LLL, 2012).

However, the individual and social responsibility in lifelong, lifewide learning is clearly connected in the examination by Illeris (2009) of influential learning theories of recent decades. Illeris concludes that anyone responsible for teaching and learning needs to understand the cognitive, emotional, and social contexts required for the greatest potential for learning to arise. Illeris says that central to learning is that everyone involved has an awareness of "self as learner"

and is open to learning in any social context encountered, both inside and outside the workplace. Illeris (2009) argues that to interpret learning theories, one needs to holistically balance the learner between content, incentive, and the environment,

Content.

Content in the context of this thesis refers to the knowledge, understanding, and skills involved in learning, rather than simply the practical content to be learned in any given programme or workplace process.

For example Mezirow (2009) argues that those involved in learning should bring connection and imagination of how things could be otherwise as a motivation for sharing learning. Mezirow claims that the connected knower enters into the perspective of another and tries to see the world through his/her eyes. This understanding approach to mentoring or coaching can be learned, and opens up opportunities for leaders wanting to empower and enable individuals and teams in the workplace. It also fits with relational leadership, outlined earlier in this chapter, and with transformational leadership.

Gardner (2009), too, addresses content from different viewpoints. The practical application of his theory of multiple intelligences uses three foci of 1) six entry points for learning, 2) using analogies to get the point across, and 3) approaching the core of the topic. However getting caught up in the "doing" of the applications should not mask the "being" Gardner (2009) calls for: "The performances of understanding that truly matter are the ones that we carry out as human beings in a world that is imperfect but one that we can affect – for good or for ill" (p. 115). While Gardner's multiple intelligences clearly address the practice of learning, their theoretical foundation is also linked with many of the leadership theories, including servant leadership, already addressed in this chapter.

Incentives.

Learners, and that includes those responsible for learning in workplaces who are also learners, are encouraged to look first at their biographical learning. Alheit (2009) explains biographical learning is assumptions or meanings they bring to the learning environment from their backgrounds. The ensuing social learning process between the actors, which he calls "social capital" (p. 127), involved needs to be understood and recognised for the value it represents to the development of society. The idea of social capital described by Alheit (2009) has clear connections to the intrinsic motivations of the professional values which journalists espouse (Kunelius & Ruusunoksa, 2008; Mierzejewska, 2011; Tsourvakas, Veglis & Zotos, 2004). However, there is also potential for the meanings that learners bring into learning environments to create negative impacts and get in the way of motivation, or incentives to learn. To address this potential Heron (2009) starts from the premise that we live through a set of lenses built up throughout our lives – something happens, we make it mean something, that meaning becomes a lens, and we live into our future through that lens of what is possible. Heron proposes that if individuals can be coached to consider that each lens may not be a truth, and bring mindfulness to practice, then broader learning choices or ways of knowing, also described by Heron and Reason (2008) are available. It can be argued that there is a connection to both mindfulness in personal leadership described earlier in this chapter, and the reference in the previous content section to Mezirow's (2009) point of seeing through the lens of others.

Environment and context.

Most workplace learning is experiential learning. For the greatest learning to happen in workplace situations, everyone involved is challenged to see their workplace as organic, even a living entity, thus opening the way for expansion, growth, and possibility (Cooperrider et al.,

2008; de Geus, 2002; Usher 1992, 2009). This sense of organic possibility invites all learners to challenge workplace practice and to be comfortable doing so.

For example, Usher (2009) calls for educators – and one assumes that includes workplace supervisors – to help students to challenge and interrogate experience. Thus everyone enjoys the benefits of experiential learning accruing in the workplace, and is not limited by what is already known in the context, opening up the motivations available in experiential practice such as desire, transformation, and personal power.

Usher's point about challenge to workplace practices resonates with news media given the complex challenges it faces and the part which needs to be played by everyone in the newsroom. Many people, however, complete tertiary education, such as journalism school, and then go into the learning environment of the newsroom without the personal power that Usher advocates, which raises the need for mechanisms or systems to address the issue at the tertiary level.

Zeihe (2009) addresses the point about the environment in his theory of detraditionalisation of society's structures, challenging those responsible for learning at all levels to rethink their understanding of structure. He recommends building rules of play or structure around imagined possibilities and anticipation for goals which are clearly achievable in order to provide an opportunity for transformational learning.

Understanding the content, incentive, and environment therefore, are important for leadership empowering learning which would enhance a newsroom's ability to operate as a learning organisation.

The learning organisation.

In the modern, complex, global environment, workplaces have been encouraged to see themselves as learning organisations, rather than managers as thinkers and labourers as doers.

Senge et al. (2005) argue that in this world of global networks driving change and learning, hierarchical leadership is inadequate and needs to be replaced with empowering individuals. Cooperrider and Srivastva (2008) describe organisations as open-ended systems which are "capable of (1) becoming more that it is at any given moment, and (2) learning how to actively take part in guiding its own evolution" (p. 378).

Senge's (1990) theory of the five disciplines for the Learning Organisation – an organisation or group which is continually expanding its capacity to create its future – outlines a structure based on five disciplines of systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision, and team learning. According to Senge (1990) the most critical of these is systems thinking, which states that every human endeavour is a system bound by interrelated actions and, therefore, the whole system needs to be addressed, for example, when challenges arise. Personal Mastery means constantly striving for a personal level of proficiency, and recognises that an organisation's commitment to, and capacity for, learning can be no greater than that of its members. Mental Models are deeply ingrained assumptions and generalisations which influence how we react to the world, and which need to be unearthed for learning to occur. Building Shared Visions requires principles and guiding practices which are shared by all, and not dictated from above. Team Learning starts with dialogue in which team members suspend assumptions in order to understand each other and it is out of this relational space that individuals and organisations learn.

Senge et al. (2008) argue that those not operating as learning organisations live in an industrial-age bubble. In the bubble metaphor, during periods of expansion two parallel realities develop, one inside the bubble and one outside. As the organisation, and indeed the field, becomes a bounded entity, clear in its definition of what is inside and what is outside the bubble,

then that which is outside loses priority, and loses the ability to understand, let alone consider and learn, the complete system in which they exist. The realities, values, and logics of the outside cease to count for those inside. De Geus (2002) and Senge et al., (2005) say such fixed ways of operating externally will also be manifested in different ways internally, and these fixed ways of operating for individuals in the organisation will often be hidden from view, like blind spots. Extending the metaphor of blind spots to the context of the news media, it can be argued that one of those fixed ways of operating internally is the issue of gender raised by Strong (2011). She concludes that women in New Zealand newsrooms have broken through the glass ceiling, but that they have to operate in a glass bubble to survive a testosterone-driven culture.

Learning organisation theory, then, is about far more than workplace training. It addresses and can even transform the entire culture and system of an organisation, and therefore I propose that inquiring how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms similarly contributes to journalistic practice and to the complex challenges faced by the field of journalism.

Leadership and learning – where relationship and self meet in complexity.

For this study, I have reviewed the literature on leadership and learning. I have explored historical understandings of leadership, which have identified the leader, the follower, and their common goals as focal points situated in leadership theories relevant to journalism. The demands of modern organisational and social life have led to more recent complexity and relational leadership theories. Nowhere is this more manifest than in the field of learning. To synthesise the range of ideas covered, I integrate proposals from leadership's perspective with the literature on learning in organisations.

The literature on leadership is split between self versus relationship camps (Ulh-Bien & Ospina, 2012). Equally, the literature on learning is divided by placing the focus on either the

learner or the organisation or demands of the field. Both divides remain problematic (EUCIS-LLL, 2012) despite detailed attention paid to Learning Organisation theory and practice by such as Cooperrider et al. (2008) and Senge et al. (2008).

Despite these divisions, leadership and learning scholars, trainers, and practitioners in fields such as journalism can find a way forward with the simple metaphor of a coin used by educational and adult learning psychologist Tennant (1998, 2009). Tennant argues that concern for the other is the only universal moral good, in which the individual and social relationships are two sides of the same coin. Tennant challenges those who argue for either as poles to instead see them as alive in the same paradigm, and from such ethically-centred practice shared visions can arise. The motivation to be fully engaged in workplace learning relationships requires the learner to have a strong sense of how their self was put together. For the learner to be this engaged in learning and the social, she/he needs to have access to a strong awareness of self; both the self constructed from past meanings, and the self who can be shaped by future possibilities in relationship, discussion, and even argument with others.

Such an argument appears to contrast with Gergen (2009) because the former argues for the ideal of a strongly self-aware learner, while the latter concludes that an over-emphasis on self-awareness limits the potential of relationships in fields such as leadership and learning. I propose that my research helps to see both Tennant's and Gergen's theories as not so far apart, and that an Organisational Development framework, such as the systems thinking of Senge et al. (2008), or the Appreciative Inquiry of Cooperrider et al. (2008), can generate both sides of the coin simultaneously when executed well.

Chapter Four: Appreciative Inquiry Framework

"Could it be, as Drucker's provocative manifesto so clearly implies, that the leadership of change is entirely about the discovery and elevation of strengths?"
(Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008, p. X)

Introduction

This chapter considers Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a methodological framework. AI can be both a research method and an agent of change (Reed, 2007). Cooperrider, Whitney, and Stavros (2008) describe the AI philosophy as a tool for understanding and fostering innovation in social organisational arrangements and processes. Because it provides both the methodological structure and proven potential for addressing organisational challenges such as those facing legacy news media, the aspects of understanding and innovation attracted me to AI as a framework for inquiring into how newsroom leadership empowers learning.

I have divided the chapter into three sections: the first section explains the historical and theoretical underpinnings of AI; the second section describes the structure of the AI process; and the third illustrates AI's use with examples of its application in different contexts. A brief critique of AI is also presented.

Appreciative Inquiry's background

Not your typical action research.

Appreciative Inquiry was established as a theory by Cooperrider & Srivastva (2008) who argue that, if a researcher is attempting to generate useable theory from action research capable of making a difference in the world, using anything other than appreciation is counter-productive. The reason, they argue, is the generative capacity of appreciation versus the recycling of problem-solving in which action research becomes trapped into regurgitating a

limited pool of knowledge. Looking for problems shuts down the wonder which researchers are increasingly calling for in the research of, and practice in, the organisational life of business, culture, government, and communities (Gergen & Gergen, 2008; Senge et al., 2008).

Cooperrider & Srivastva (2008) say the revolutionising of the social sciences with the power of ideas and meanings shared allows for empowered collective life. For example, the automatic historical acceptance of power being delivered from the top of the table shifts when ideas, information, beliefs, and theory come from around the table and end up in the middle of it. This same collective thinking is central to AI philosophy which has been used in some of the most structured of organisations such as Motorola, BP America, Hunter Douglas, SmithKline Beecham, Johnson & Johnson, and Price Waterhouse, among others (Cooperrider, Sorensen, Whitney, & Yaeger, 2000). Cooperrider et al. contend that where action research is not serving organisations is in the "action" part of the term because it is captured by the process. Instead, the authors argue for the "research" part of the term to contribute theory which will allow new knowledge to emerge and drive change, instead of being captured by the "doing". Cooperrider et al. explain that both researchers and people in organisations must be comfortable with appreciative theory and practice so that the participants effectively become co-researchers.

Five principles.

Five principles and streams of thought are central to AI: The Constructionist Principle, The Simultaneity Principle; The Poetic Principle, The Anticipatory Principle, and the Positive Principle (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005). The following summary explains the principles.

The Constructionist Principle.

According to the Constructionist Principle, knowledge only exists in relationship (rather than in individuals). Language and discourse create reality. Inside this principle arises our sense of the

true, the good, and the possible – and questions: How do we know what we know? Whose voices matter? Is the world governed by external laws independent of human choice and awareness? Where should we locate knowledge? Cooperrider & Whitney (2005) argue that inquiry and action are one because generative theory creates tomorrow's possibilities. Radically questioning everything that is taken for granted is critical in the constructionist principle. To situate that in the real world the Constructionist Principle will change the very nature of activities such as strategic planning, needs analysis, assessments, audits, surveys, focus groups, and performance appraisals. To be effective, leaders must recognise organisations as living, human constructions, and train to ensure that they are.

The Simultaneity Principle.

The Simultaneity Principle says inquiry is change, rather than inquiry and change being separate moments (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). A change agent articulates questions, and that questioning research can alter our view of ourselves, and how we view reality and conduct our lives. By the very fact they are posed by and with human beings, questions can only be socially constructed, and so they are the source of our ideas, discourse, research, and social-organisational action. The Simultaneity Principle requires those in relationship, for example working together in a newsroom, to reflect on whether the question they are asking will generate conversations about the best, and therefore what is ideal, or possible. The researcher, therefore, must carefully consider her/his questions because they will generate the stories from which the future will be dreamed and designed.

The Poetic Principle.

The Poetic Principle says that just as there is endless interpretive possibility in a poem, so the pasts, present, and futures of an organisation, seen through the eyes of its stakeholders, is an

endless source of learning, inspiration, and interpretation (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). The human experience of any element in a human organisation can be researched, because that experience is a product of social processes. When the means and ends of an inquiry are linked – for example, the best of leadership empowering learning – options multiply. We could inquire into the best of joy, enthusiasm, or efficiency.

The Anticipatory Principle.

The Anticipatory Principle says that the images of the future guide current behaviour. Human systems project a horizon of expectations. Organisations and the humanity that makes them up grow towards the light, or wither in the dark. The authors cite as examples studies such as the placebo effect, the Pygmalion dynamic, optimism and health, mood states and effective decision-making, and wins impacting a system such as a sports team or a business.

The Positive Principle.

The Positive Principle says things like hope, excitement, inspiration, caring, camaraderie, sense of urgent purpose, and joy in creating something meaningful together are the types of positive affect and social bonding which build and sustain change. Likewise, positive questions drive and maintain change. Affirmative language is a healthier and more effective way of approaching change management than articulating problems to be solved. Illustrations of the theory of affirmative basis of human action and organising are making traditional change management [and research] traditions look obsolete.

These five principles, then, underpin the process and structure of an Appreciative Inquiry.

Appreciative Inquiry as a Process

According to Cooperrider et al. (2008) there are four propositions which underpin the process and practice of AI: 1. Inquiry into what's possible in organisations should start with appreciation.

2. Such an inquiry should produce applicable information. 3. The inquiry should be provocative. 4. Collaboration must be part of any inquiry into the human potential of organisational life. The authors argue that everyone involved in the process must understand the theory that says organisations move in the direction they study, and therefore AI makes a conscious choice to study the best of a topic. Having made that point, the process steps through deciding who to involve, making an affirmative topic choice, and then implementing the 4-D cycle phases of Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny.

Teams and topic choices.

Cooperrider et al. (2008) explain that topic choices are preferably made by the group, but can also be set by hierarchical leaders. The theoretical stance of the Constructionist Principle, that our words create our worlds, means an AI moderator grounded in the methodology plays an important role in providing guidance for framing topic choices. The authors use the example of an automotive company where an AI consultant developed the wording of the organisation's original topic choices in the following way: Communications became "compelling communications"; learning and development became "continuous learning"; management behaviours became "integrity in action" and "inspirational/irresistible leadership"; commitment and enthusiasm became "culture as a strategic advantage", "fun at work", and "let's do it" (Cooperrider et al, 2008, p. 38). Another option is to put together a team to develop topic choices. Selection of team members must be based on their investment in the positive core and their commitment to the organisation's future. The team must be representative of the organisation, comprising members from every layer who will provide a diversity of voices, and these can be from inside and outside the organisation. A standard way for a team to develop topic choices is to break into pairs and use appreciative interviews. Cooperrider et al. (2008) describe

four foundational requirements for a team using appreciative interviews to develop a topic choice: 1) High points; 2) A focus on yourself, the nature of your work, your organisation; 3) Core life-giving factors; 4) Wishes to heighten vitality.

It is from this process, and the sharing of the interviews with sub-groups building toward a large group dialogue, that the positive core of an organisation emerges and is honed to no more than five topics. These will be based on affirmative language, acknowledging that words create worlds – the organisation will move in the direction of the inquiry through the 4-D cycle of Discover, Dream, Design, and Destiny.

The 4-D cycle.

The Appreciative Inquiry model at work comprises the 4-D Cycle, the four phases being Discover, Dream, Design, and Destiny.

Discover phase.

The Discover phase identifies what gives life to a topic of, for example, leadership empowering learning, by zeroing in on the peak experiences of each person involved in the AI inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2008). The way into this journey is by having co-researchers wanting to understand factors that made the high points of the experience possible. These factors may be relationships, technologies, processes, structures, values, or methods. By turning towards the light, participants turn their back on deficits. It is not a deliberate act to ignore the bad; rather it is a deliberate act to focus on the best, which in turn becomes a natural process of shedding what does not work. The crucial key for this journey is each individual's stories, which have the power to move participants toward core life-giving facets of an organisation. The stories may be different, but they will head towards this core. Out of this sharing, participants become curious

and inspired, and get to a deeper discussion arising from aspects of the organisation's past. Past becomes positive possibility, something reawakened now. A future starts to appear.

Dream phase.

The Dream phase, or "what might be", engages the group or system in exercising imagination through discussing what an organisation or topic – such as newsroom leadership empowering learning – could look like if it were fully aligned around its strengths and aspirations (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Out of the stories and analysis a rich map of the positive core is developed by the stakeholders who use it as a springboard to envision an expanded future, extending a sense of what's possible. The positive core is both practical and generative at the same time because it is both grounded in organisation's history, and it expands its potential thanks to the work of its stakeholders. The fact that the "dreamers" have a stake in the organisation's past and its future is what makes AI different from other visioning and planning methodologies. The possibilities are compelling because they are based on extraordinary moments, and the data can be benchmarked against studies of other organisations. The process must be as much personal as organisational, and the result is a challenge to the status quo.

Design phase.

In the Design phase, stakeholders must create the organisation's social architecture by embedding it in provocative propositions (Cooperrider et al. 2008), statements of ideals which embody the organisational dream in an ongoing way and are the organisation's greatest potential. These provocative propositions relate to an important element of organisation and organising such as leadership, decision making, communication, or customer service. There are two parts to successful designing: 1) identifying what needs to be designed, and 2) crafting the propositions so they integrate the discoveries and dreams from earlier in the process. The mechanism of the

design phase takes the dialogue which began in the earlier phases to greater depth about the best strategies, structure, staff, and processes needed to support the new system. Provocative propositions are collectively composed to help move the system towards positive action and intended results.

Destiny phase.

In the Destiny phase, commitments, made in relationship with fellow stakeholders, become the base for ongoing action (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p. 46). The stakeholders are typically involved in planning and commitment sessions as individuals and groups of people who have already developed the images of the future. There is a collective purpose and momentum which drives continuous learning, adjustment, and improvisation, so the potential for innovation and implementation is high. Sustaining this momentum requires an appreciative eye. Cooperrider et al. (2008) say that from this point the process never stops, because the commitments may result in new affirmative topic choices.

While the preceding description of forming teams, choosing topics, and moving through the 4-D process may sound formulaic, Cooperrider et al. (2008) stress that the essence of AI will be lost unless the theoretical underpinnings are adhered to and adaptation for different contexts is allowed for.

Appreciative Inquiry Examples Adapted for Different Contexts

In this section I illustrate the variety of settings where Appreciative Inquiry has been adapted. The reasons for using these examples are, firstly, to show the diversity of situations in which AI has been used, and secondly, to show how AI has been adapted within those situations. Understanding the diversity and adaptations which have been used further inform the application of AI in a newsroom context.

AI as research and practice in a health system.

The combination of practice and research is often touted as an AI strength when there is a lack of literature on a topic, which was a situation that confronted health researcher Reed (2007). Reed's focus was a whole-systems approach toward making going home from the hospital in the UK a better experience for older people and their families and friends.

The system stakeholders – professions, agencies, and interest groups – were brought together in an Appreciative Inquiry to specifically focus on the role of a lay assessor in the process. In keeping with AI as a process, they began with an introduction which acknowledged that they already had knowledge and experience of innovations and creative approaches which could be built on, and by doing so they would add to knowledge and develop theory at the same time.

The process started with research which included postal surveys of service users, providers, government agency staff and assessors; interviews and group meetings with stakeholders; and an evaluation workshop with group stakeholders using AI. This was followed by a one-day workshop, using the 4-D process, of service providers, lay assessors, and government agency staff. The one-day workshop began with paired interviews, building to small groups sharing stories of positive experiences, and themes elicited from these were transferred to flipcharts which were posted on walls. Themes were prioritised, and then in the groups the participants with different perspectives worked enthusiastically together on an ideal future.

In her reflection, Reed (2007) warns that despite the chronological look and approach of the 4-D process, the journey from inquiry to development of theory and implementation of practice was not linear.

She attributes this in part to researcher and participant inexperience of AI, but also notes that some untidiness will be part of creative and constructive debates.

AI for leadership development.

Cooperrider et al. (2008) cite as an example a case which adopted the AI philosophy, but used only an individual element of the 4-D process – Discover. In Canada, financial services firm Touche Ross used the Discovery phase as a leadership development process. After training by interviewing each other, about 30 junior partners interviewed 400 senior partners of the firm appreciatively. They showed deep respect, listened to the "best of" history, and their recording of insights and wisdom helped to transmit values. The elders felt like valued teachers, which in turn generated an atmosphere of trust and regard. Many of the junior partners later became senior partners. Leadership is a common theme which arises in illustrative AI literature, and this case was of particular interest to me because of the focus in my thesis on leadership which empowers learning.

Using AI in a small business.

Like the previous case, George and McLean (2002) describe following the spirit of the AI ideals, rather than applying its protocols to the letter, in the context of a small riding stables business in England. The business, Longhorn Western Riding Ltd, had seven employees and contracted services to an up-market holiday village in England. In the third year of operation Longhorn began receiving increasing negative feedback in the form of incident reports passed on from the village staff. The subject of the complaints included rude, abrupt staff, the allocation of inappropriate horses, and guests feeling rushed or inadequately prepared. A cycle of fixing the problem ensued which included ill-tempered monthly meetings with the village sports centre manager, reviews with the Longhorn yard manager and all staff, customer service training for stable staff, and a set of steps to minimise problems for guests. The complaints continued, however, and the final catalyst for adopting an appreciative philosophy was the village sports

manager's comment that the stable must be doing something wrong. The authors and business owners were organisational development practitioners who were aware of AI, and whose customers' experiences were overwhelmingly positive. The strategy developed by George and McLean was a weekly review meeting with senior staff inquiring into what was going well, the introduction of appreciatively-worded customer feedback forms, and the monthly publication of stories of exceptional customer care. The meetings asked the questions "what went really well this week?", "what do you feel proud about having done or accomplished?" and "what can we collectively do this week so that we can report back in the next meeting?" (p. 33-34). The results were incremental but immediate, with a shift in positive attitude from the director to the yard manager to staff to guests resulting in a more relaxed and fun atmosphere. In contrast to the village's complaint form, the stable created a feedback form asking for suggestions for improvement and praise where it was due. Some incident reports still arrived, but they were accepted differently, with appreciation, and George and McLean describe the effect as transformational. From losing one staff member every three months during the problem times, Longhorn lost just one in two years following the introduction of an appreciative philosophy. While they did not follow an AI formula, George and McLean conclude that a central tenet of the framework was on show because the social system moved in the direction they inquired into, from the negative to the positive.

Adapting AI when a hotel system is stuck.

What happens when a group is stuck individually in their stories and viewpoints which keep them poles apart? In a study which started in 1984 – the early days of AI – Barrett and Cooperrider (2002) developed a system they called Generative Metaphor Intervention. They were initially contracted by a hotel to conduct a focused audit for human resources at a time

when the hotel owners wanted management to lift the hotel to four-star status. However, a survey of the 260 employees, plus team-building sessions, task-force meetings, and working with managers over a period of 14 months revealed deep interpersonal and interdepartmental division at the highest level. Their solution was to take the 30 hotel managers metaphorically and physically out of their hotel, and put them in another hotel which was recognised as exceptional. Instead of looking inward at themselves, they had to actively inquire into a situation outside their own. Barrett and Cooperrider started by making straight requests of the hotel management that, for the duration of their visit, they consciously put any interpersonal and intergroup difficulties on hold. The stated aim for the group was that they needed to become a learning system free from the day-to-day tasks of running their own hotel. The five days at the hotel in another city comprised: day one, an eight-hour workshop on AI; day two, an appreciative organisation-wide analysis of the hotel including observations and interviews recording peak moments, staff values, factors of excellence, and possibilities for an even better organisation; day three was spent on data analysis of dialogue and reflection, starting with small groups then bringing the best of the hotel into blueprint of the ideal four-star operation; day four focused on presenting this visionary portrait to the host hotel as a gift; day five was to envision actions they could take to begin to achieve excellence for their own hotel. Barrett and Cooperrider documented a transformative experience which was already beginning to show by day two. The managers brought the metaphor home and not only owned it, but enrolled their staff in taking ownership of the vision they created. The process they developed and now called Generative Metaphor Intervention Process (GMIP), followed four steps: 1) journey into metaphor, 2) poeticising the world, 3) possibility expansion, and 4) return to the original domain. It is easy to see Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny being overlaid on these steps.

Appreciative Mentoring framework.

Chu (2009) used and developed AI in multiple ways in her doctoral thesis on mentoring for Pacific leadership in tertiary education settings in New Zealand. In a broad sense she used AI to discover and appreciate strengths and challenges in four case studies, she used appreciation in mentoring relationships, and she actively brought the appreciative philosophy to her daily life throughout the research process. The settings were, first, a large-scale formal mentoring programme for Maori and Pacific students within a particular faculty; second, co-ordinating a group for an overseas educational and cultural exchange; third, creating a Pacific Leadership cluster across a university; and fourth, a mentoring for leadership case study in a university setting. Underlying each of these contexts was the appreciative philosophy, but within each differing elements of the 4-D AI phases were utilised. Story telling from the Discovery phase was used in all case studies; the Dream phase was particularly adopted in the formal mentoring programme and co-ordinating the overseas exchange contexts, in order to build from the best of "what is" to the best of "what could be"; the Design phase was specifically adopted in the cluster and leadership cases to build short and long-term strategies; and the Destiny phase is drawn from all four cases, marked by the development of Chu's (2009) Appreciative Mentoring (AM) framework. AM adapts the 4-D process to a 4-step – Recognise, Realise, Guide, and Grow – process for the mentor and protégé. The Recognise phase sets the foundation with the mentor living an Appreciative Philosophy for themselves and their protégé, demonstrating care with an Appreciative Heart, and connecting with an Appreciative Relationship. The Realise phase establishes an Appreciative Context for the relationship in reality, focusing on the protégé's aspirations with an Appreciative Understanding, and using Appreciative Motivational Learning to clearly articulate the present and future. In the heart of the journey the Guide phase uses

Appreciative Encouragement of the protégé's strengths and beliefs, deepens the relationship through Appreciative Values recognising each protégé is unique, and uses Appreciative Behaviours, a collection of appropriate affirming actions that enhance protégé growth. Finally, the Grow phase encourages Appreciative Leader-Development so the protégé continually sets goals to work toward their vision for leadership. The Grow phase also has protégés in action with their own Appreciative Mentoring for Leadership.

Appreciative Inquiry critique

Criticism of Appreciative Inquiry tends to be centred on its accentuation of the positive. Reed (2007) acknowledges that AI can be seen as naive and idealistic, painting a sanitised view. However Reed notes that in her own research, comments which were not always positive, or could not always be described as appreciative, arose and were dealt with in the process. Reed also raises the issue of power dynamics in groups, although this is somewhat mitigated in the Discovery phase by individuals interviewing each other, reporting on each other's examples, and checking on their understanding. Even Gergen (2009), who espouses AI's constructionist values, highlights for example that in the move from the Discovery to Design phases, when the vision of the future is necessarily simplified, differences of opinion may be eliminated. Meaning may become altered and potentially manipulated if not well managed. To respond to challenges which argue that AI may suppress critical voices in an organisation, Grant & Humphries (2006) have developed a theory for Critical Appreciative Inquiry (CAP). The positive, emancipatory aspirations of Critical Theory are married with AI's positive framework, for CAP theory. Grant and Humphries (2006) argue for CAP as a way of evaluating AI interventions by using critical theory's scepticism and exposure to abuse of power as a counterbalance, without losing the inspirational intent of AI. The development of CAP began in Grant's doctoral thesis involving

the use of AI with school boards of trustees in New Zealand. However, Barrett and Cooperrider's (2002) example of the hotel system, cited earlier in this chapter, outlines the effective use of AI in a situation when individuals could not get beyond their problems. Barrett and Cooperrider explain how they developed a Generative Metaphor Intervention system to get beyond the problems, and they use the case as an example of AI theory being in continual development, so the process is adapted for new contexts. In a response to the challenge of AI being too positive, Cooperrider et al. (2008) describe the two most fundamental points for understanding AI: first, organisations are living human systems which move in the direction of what they study; second, AI chooses to study the best of that living human system.

AI and leadership and learning in newsrooms

Because it requires those who have a stake in the topic to construct its possible future by inquiring as co-researchers together into high points within the context, AI as a methodology has much to offer the topic and the context of this study into how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms. AI Discovers the best of the topic through journalists telling stories which bring their experiences alive, so that together they can use their creative imagination to Dream, Design, and innovate for newsroom practice. AI balances creative freedom which allows the informal emergence of ideas in complex environments, and does so within a simple structure which is easy for those involved to understand and participate in. Leadership and learning in newsrooms provides a new context for AI, and I argue that, in turn, the fields of leadership, learning and journalism will receive an injection of new ideas and developments.

Summary

This chapter has presented Appreciative Inquiry's theoretical underpinnings, described the structure of the process, used examples to illustrate AI's application in a variety of different

contexts, and considered some of its challenges. I have also made the case for its use in newsroom research into leadership and learning in a study which can contribute to research and practice, because above all my intention is for this work to be practical. The illustrations of AI use have demonstrated that different contexts, research, and practice aims require different approaches, and AI has the flexibility to be adapted. My study has been no different, and therefore achieving that integration of research and practical application in a newsroom is explained in the next chapter

Chapter Five: Methodology

"The questions we ask set the stage for what we 'find', and what we find becomes the knowledge out of which the future is constructed."
(Ludema & Fry, 2008, p. 293, citing Bushe, 2001)

Introduction

Appreciative Inquiry is a collaborative approach to research and practice which has the chameleon-like ability to be adapted across a range of paradigms, theories, methodologies, and tools (Reed, 2007). In my research the paradigm is qualitative; the theory is social constructionism; the methodology draws on ethnography, case study, narrative and action research; the data gathering tool was focus groups; and the data analysis tool was thematic. This chapter explains how each of these contributed to the methodological framework. Matters of trustworthiness of the research and ethical considerations are also discussed.

Research Paradigm

Research paradigms, at their broadest level, are either quantitative, qualitative, or a mix of both (Reed, 2007). Quantitative research involves objective scientific measurement, observation, recording and reporting of phenomena. The qualitative research paradigm can range from objective at one end of the continuum, where researchers try to remain removed from the phenomenon of study, to the other extreme subjective end where the "I" of the researcher is only understood in constantly created relationships with others and there is no fixed phenomenon which can be recorded (St Pierre, 2011). Citing the thinking of Foucault, St Pierre (2011) says a research subject must be seen as a historical and cultural reality constantly changing with that reality. Over more than 25 years, researchers adopting AI have used either a mix of quantitative and qualitative paradigms, or solely qualitative (Reed, 2007). This research does not go as far as

St Pierre (2011), but does strive for a level of subjectivity available in the qualitative paradigm where the researcher is immersed in understanding and constructing reality with participants as co-researchers (Schall et al., 2004). I wanted to be immersed with journalists who work in newsrooms to help to answer the research question: How does leadership empower learning in newsrooms?

Research Theory

At the layer of theory, two worldviews inform the stance of researchers adopting AI: social constructionist theory, and critical theory (Reed, 2007). Social constructionism is discussed in the literature review because it underpins Relational Leadership as a theory. Just as the argument is made for leadership as a social construction, so too as a research philosophy social constructionism argues that knowledge is generated in relationships (Gergen, 2009). Such a view creates a contrast between studying the object and acknowledging and allowing the subject's participation in the social construction of the subject being researched. In an AI approach the way people talk and think about their world together allows them to shape their world (Reed, 2007), so participants become co-researchers in the study. Reed explains there are parallels between social constructionist theory and critical theory, but the latter adopts a more challenging and critical role. I will discuss in the final chapter the opportunity for critique that arose in this research, but for the purposes of my research question, social constructionism best underpins this methodological approach

Research Methodology

At the next level, AI research draws on four methodologies, often at the same time: ethnography, case study, narrative, and action research (Reed, 2007).

Ethnography seeks to explore and understand how a culture or society is created in the way those being studied live their lives (Reed, 2007, p. 60). “While ethnography does not typically focus or place emphasis on the best of “what is”, it does however explore cultures and ideas, and the meanings and sense that groups make of their own culture.

Discrete settings and groups are defined and researched in case studies with three defining points (Reed, 2007). The first is their contemporary nature, the second stresses the importance of real situations, and third is the intimate connection between the phenomenon being studied and its context.

In narrative methodology, Reed (2007) explains, individual stories are told by the participants who work together to understand the phenomena through great examples, and to construct possible futures from them. There are clear links between narrative methodology and the poetic and anticipatory principals of AI discussed in Chapter Four.

Finally, Reed (2007) defines action research as collective and participatory which has the aim of informing or changing practice, or both, and understanding the context. As a method, action research is developed from evidence through responses to questions asked, and allows the researcher to have an impact. Research as an intervention in itself reflects the simultaneity principal of AI discussed in chapter four of this thesis.

Given the links between AI, and the range of methodologies, Reed (2007) challenges researchers to consider that they may be required to develop a mix of approaches which will maintain the principles of AI so high points will generate change in a transparent way which is grounded in reality. In response to Reed’s challenge I situate this research methodologically in four ways: 1) newsrooms are considered ethnographically as cultures in which to situate research; 2) three different newsroom cases are to be studied in the which the phenomena is

considered; 3) narrative methodology is adopted in the form of journalists using understanding of each other's stories to build possible futures; 4) This study constituted action research with the potential to generate change in the broader field of journalism. In a similar way Schall et al (2004) describe using narrative, ethnographic, and co-operative approaches as multiple methods in an Appreciative Inquiry into leadership using leaders as co-researchers.

To maintain the coherency and transparency called for by Reed (2007), this Appreciative Inquiry process into how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms should be underpinned by a strong philosophical foundation with clear tools to ensure rigour. The foundation will be the worldview of social constructionism, to ensure that at every step along the way the voices of the journalists are heard, their stories are understood, and that they contribute to journalism's future. To maintain this foundation I use the tools of focus groups to collect the data, and thematic analysis to analyse the data.

Research Tools

Data gathering in focus groups.

Cooperrider et al. (2008) and Reed (2007) describe focus groups as research tools. Both authors also use the broad terms "groups" and "group work" in examples of AI. For the purposes of this section I use focus groups texts (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Stewart et al., 2007) to outline the appropriate steps in the methods and identify links to AI processes.

Background and rationale.

Stewart et al. (2007) argue that a focus group can produce questionable results if it does not have four key elements: focused research, group interactions, in-depth data, and it must be humanistic. In this case, the focused research of a particular concrete situation was in this case newsroom leadership empowering learning, and all four people in the group had a view on the

situation. Second, the group interactions of the four newsroom members provided the group dynamic required in Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Third, the groups generated in-depth data to provide a rich source of material from which to understand the topic. Finally, my immersion into the newsroom experience of the co-researchers was humanistic.

Krueger and Casey (2009) explain the development of focus groups as an academic research tool from the 1980s on, and participatory research from the 1990s on. Academic rigour requires that replication be possible so the work can be critiqued. Thus, I explain how the groups were conducted, how participants were recruited, how the sample was developed, and how the analysis was performed. The participatory approach grew out of having people use research and evaluation results by involving them in the process as partners and co-researchers. Where academic research requires rigour, participatory research pushes the boundaries of academic research constraints. For example, Krueger and Casey (2009) state that groups used in participatory action research are not focus groups, and they warn that they would rarely put managers and employees in the same group. Yet conversely, the authors say focus groups can generate ideas because synergy can make them become more than the sum of their parts. Further, Stewart et al. (2007) explain that focus group research can gather individuals with some common identity, goals, and concrete situations. As Cooperrider et al. (2008) argue, in diversity comes a greater richness of relationship, dialogue and possibility from across an organisation. For this research, in contrast to Krueger and Casey's (2009) warning, I have found that hierarchies work within focus groups.

Focus groups within the organisation.

Conducting focus groups in an organisation involved specific challenges which were addressed as I developed the method. The most obvious was the hierarchy issue: because each

group contained an editor and a chief reporter, together with two reporters, it was possible that the editor and then at the next level the chief reporter could dominate the conversation, and conversely the graduate and peer could defer to their workplace seniors, or feel the need to say the "right" things. However, the heterogeneous nature of their positions also brought a variety of skills, perspectives, and knowledge to the inquiry (Stewart et al., 2007). Another issue could have been pre-established small groups (Krueger & Casey, 2008) which, in this case, could have been the two senior newsroom team members and the two journalists getting involved in their own hierarchically-related discussions. Also, a further potential issue was that of individuals or pairs feeling as though they were being critiqued. These issues were managed in four ways. The first was embedded in the AI approach, which seeks best-of examples, rather than focusing on problems. The second was at the invitation and introduction stage when these potential issues were discussed. The third was in my moderation of the group ensuring any tension was managed. The fourth was in the follow-up after the focus groups, when feedback allowed participants to raise issues.

Number and types of groups.

I decided to use three groups of four people to replicate the process and compare the findings across groups. I intended to broadly represent three types of news media organisations in New Zealand which have a print background and strong web presence either nationally or locally. The two dominant groups are APN News and Media, and Fairfax, which are both publically listed companies (Myllylahti, 2013). The third group is independent family-owned businesses. Although I was unable to involve an independent news publisher, I chose to continue with three groups; two from one of the large organisations and one from the other.

Numbers in each group.

A point that requires explanation was my decision to use four people in each of the focus groups. Based on Appreciative Inquiry literature (Cooperrider et al., 2008), I wanted the voices of as many layers in the organisation as possible, and four people in the group was sufficient to give me that coverage from a newsroom. This also allowed for the fact that I wanted to start with paired interviews. While focus group literature generally recommends a minimum of five people, smaller numbers are easier to recruit and host, are more comfortable for participants, and allow for deeper insights into people's experiences (Krueger & Casey, 2008; Stewart et al., 2007). One of the three groups eventually comprised only three people, an issue that I explain in the description of the screening process.

Screening of participants.

The process used for participant selection was screening (Krueger and Casey, 2008) or purposive sampling (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Screening is particularly suited for this research because AI calls for a variety of voices so that the viewpoints, experiences, and perspectives from different stakeholders are included (Cooperrider et al., 2008). As Stewart et al., (2007) suggest, the participants were screened by their relevance to the research question: How does leadership empower learning in newsrooms? To cover the layers of the newsroom, my ideal groups comprised four types of position-holders: 1) an Editor, 2) a Supervisor who was likely to be a chief reporter, 3) a Junior Reporter, and 4) a journalist nominated by the junior as an Informal Mentor. My first preference for the Junior Reporter was one participating in the workplace-based Level 6 Diploma in Applied Journalism because the implementation of the diploma was one of the inspirations for this research. It was possible to have a diploma participant in two of the newsroom focus groups, but not in the third, which I explain further in

this chapter. I included an Informal Mentor in each group to ensure there was a balance of hierarchies so the junior felt comfortable contributing (Stewart et al., 2007). Also, the literature on workplace learning is clear that informal peer mentoring or coaching plays an important informal leadership role (Ragins & Kramm, 2007), particularly in newsroom socialisation (Breed, 1997). Eventually the screening was only partially achieved. One group matched the screening, one newsroom had no juniors enrolled in the diploma at the time of the research, and a third included only three people because the Junior considered that the Supervisor also acted as an Informal Mentor. Given my focus on layers in the newsroom, and the group numbers, it was beyond the scope of this research to factor in gender and age. However for replication, contrasting or comparison in future research, it is worth noting that one group was all male, another comprised three females and one male, and another a female and two males. Ages ranged from 20s to about 50.

Crafting engaging appreciative questions and interview guide.

Crafting appreciative questions is aligned with the questioning route required in focus group literature (Stewart et al., 2008). Appreciative questions draw on learning from the past which can then contribute to the future (Cooperrider et al., 2008). In this research the appreciative questions are also my primary research question and sub-questions: How does leadership empower learning in newsrooms? From understanding how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms, what training and development would contribute to leadership in the newsroom? How could this training and development ideas contribute to journalism practice in the digital age? These questions were shared with the participants in background information sent to them. The questions then informed the separate appreciative interview guide. In a full organisational development AI process, the questions and guide are often developed with stakeholders

(Cooperrider et al., 2008), but there was no scope in the focus group time so I crafted both questions and guide. The appreciative interview guide was made up of five parts (Figure 5.1).

Appreciative interview guide:

1. Describe a learning experience during your time in this or any newsroom when you felt leadership most empowered your learning.

2. What were the conditions that made the experience possible?

3. What would you see happening if leadership contributing to empowering learning lived in all layers of a newsroom?

4. Who might someone in your role be as a leader?

5. What would have to happen for this to occur?

Figure 5.1. The Appreciative Interview Guide was made up of five questions.

Parts one and two of the appreciative interview guide steered the Discover phase of the AI process, while parts three, four and five guided the Dream and Design phases. The appreciative interview guide questions were set out on a one-page sheet for participants, discussed in phone calls and included as part of a formal introduction explaining the research and its purpose. These materials were approved by the Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) Faculty of Education ethics committee (see Appendix A). Participants were encouraged to make contact with me if they had any questions. I had copies of the guide with me during the focus groups.

Preparation as group moderator and researcher.

Moderating focus groups requires preparation for the AI process (Cooperrider et al., 2008), and for combining both the researcher and moderator roles (Krueger and Casey, 2009; Stewart et al., 2007). Stewart et al. (2007) cite Langer's list of traits for qualitative researchers acting as moderators and I adapted this list into a practical preparation tool as a sheet of questions: "Today am I: Genuinely interested in hearing other people's thoughts and feelings? Expressive in my

own feelings? Animated and spontaneous? Bringing a sense of humour? Empathetic? Admitting my own biases? Insightful about people? Expressing thoughts clearly? Flexible?" I used this sheet when teaching journalism students, and in the groups I relied on my familiarity with working in newsrooms for more than 30 years as a journalist and editor. There is no substitute for trying out a focus group interview process prior to its use and the pilot process was useful to test the questions for their ease of reading by me and understanding by the co-researchers (Krueger and Casey, 2009), to ensure questions would draw out rich detail, and to test the digital recorders. Following the pilot, the main adjustments I made were to my own written script, and to take display materials as a back-up to whiteboards.

Collection and organisation of data.

Reed (2007) says there is no one AI group system, but for replication those reading the research need to understand how the focus groups were conducted. After an initial introduction to the process, the individual interviews were conducted between pairs at different points in the room and I generally remained quiet, while keeping a note of time, following Cooperrider et al.'s (2008) advice to be genuine, listening, and learning from their experience. There is scope to be an active listener if needed to elicit not only what happened, but also the values revealed in the stories told by each person.

I relied on audio recorders used by each interview pair because I wanted to focus on listening to stories, discussion, and interaction. I personally transcribed the tapes as soon as possible after the groups to ensure quotes were attributed correctly. Stewart et al. (2007) recommend writing notes on non-verbal responses which can carry information, but this contradicts the social constructionist theory of AI (Cooperrider et al., 2008) which emphasises that the dynamic in the room builds the picture, rather than observation and notes. Therefore, the only notes I took were

on a whiteboard, but I maintained an awareness of all those in the room, and drew responses from them if I thought they had been quiet for some time. This was possible because of the small numbers in each group. In line with advice from focus group texts, I used occasional probing questions and prompts such "Would you explain further?" and "Can you give us an example?" as a way of obtaining further information" (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Stewart et al., 2007).

Conducting the Groups.

Discover phase.

In preparatory phone calls with participants I discussed bringing a "best of" experience to the group as an example of leadership empowering learning. I did not guide them any further about what that example might be, therefore leaving it to each individual to come with their understanding of what leadership empowering learning meant to them. The result was that some brought an example of their experiences of someone else as a leader, while others used examples of being in leadership positions and learning. The co-researchers paired up and interviewed each other about their high points of the topic (Cooperrider et al., 2008), using the guide outlined above. I followed Hammond's (1998) advice and had each participant report back to the whole group about what their interviewee had said and asking for confirmation from the interviewee as their story was recounted. At the end of each retelling I asked the group as a whole to comment on what they had heard as a theme or concept, not to analyse or critique it but to value it (Cooperrider et al., 2008). I noted themes on a whiteboard, and as we went through the process as a group we checked back with the interviewee to confirm the themes. A list was made for each person, and then those lists were distilled down to a positive core list. In the group with three members, the process involved one person being interviewed by the group. The three positive core lists can be seen in Table 5.1 as they were recorded on the whiteboards.

Table 5.1: Discover phase Positive Core list for each group as they were recorded.

Group 1	**Group 2**	**Group 3**
Clarity -communication -goal -principals Trust Teamwork Freedom (not being dictated to) Engagement -camaraderie -enthusiasm -communication	Trust Communication Relationships/teamwork Mutual respect Clear goals -excellent journalism Role models/mentors	Support Collegial Structure Challenge Ambition Self-direction Competitiveness

Dream phase.

The Dream phase required the co-researchers to imagine the positive core of newsroom leadership empowering learning that they had identified, being constantly alive in a hypothetical newsroom. As well as the interview guide, I also used a prompting question similar to one suggested by Cooperrider et al. (2008): "If we were to wake up in five years time and walked into a newsroom where that positive core was the norm rather than sporadic glimpses of brilliance, what would be happening?" I reinforced the point that this was not some utopian ideal, but a practical step grounded in the history and experiences of themselves as practitioners. Dream points were written in a new column on the whiteboard.

Design phase.

The Design phase requires provocative propositions or action statements (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Co-researchers were invited to consider not only skills, attributes, and behaviours of newsroom leadership, but who is a leader. They were encouraged to return to their narratives

about the “best of”, and their Dream ideals, and link these with words which could be used to inspire provocative propositions. Design statements or points were captured on the whiteboard.

Destiny phase.

The final Destiny stage of the 4-D Appreciative Inquiry process involves personal commitments based on the Design phase, and did not suit this research. In place of the Destiny phase I made follow-up calls or emails to each participant during which they were asked the following question: Since the focus group on empowering newsroom leadership, has anything altered in your newsroom practice or experience which was prompted by your participation? I also noted any comments which arose from our discussion about the process. Their responses contributed to findings and discussion in ensuing chapters.

Using thematic analysis as an analytic tool.

There is no one right way to analyse data but the process should be made transparent so that it can be shared with the communities the researcher aims to contribute to (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Hammond, 1998; Reed, 2007). Central to this issue is the fact that I am dealing with data inside an AI research framework which is social constructionist in its theoretical nature. Retaining the integrity of the social construction of the data within each group is critical, while also having themes compared and contrasted across the groups to contribute to the future of journalism. Cooperrider et al. (2008) encourage creativity in organisations to identify themes and patterns which may be common threads or anomalies. Braun and Clark (2006) explain that thematic analysis is flexible enough to be used in a qualitative constructionist research as long as the theoretical framework is made transparent. Thus in this section I explain Braun and Clark’s six-phase process for the organisation and execution of thematic analysis and how I adapted the process at each phase.

Before starting the six-step process, the researcher must decide to use either inductive or deductive coding (Braun and Clark, 2006). Inductive means the data drives the themes and the lead researcher does not approach the data with pre-conceived coding. Deductive is driven by the researcher's specific analytic interest, and so is developed prior to the field work. My intention was for the research group to use the data socially constructed within the groups to drive the coding. Therefore inductive thematic analysis allowed the groups as co-researchers to guide the analytic process and development of the initial codes on the whiteboards, which then guided my coding.

The six phases of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke are: 1) familiarisation with data; 2) generating initial codes; 3) searching for themes; 4) reviewing themes; 5) defining and naming themes; 6) producing the report. My use of the first three steps of the 4-D AI process, and my decision to stick as closely as possible to its social constructionist framework, meant I did not exactly match Braun and Clark's analytic phases. However, as a beginning researcher it was important for me to rely on a rigourous and proven method of analysis, and then be transparent about the adaptations I made.

Phase 1, data transcription, comprises transcribing from audio, reading, and initial notes. During transcription individual participants were given their research title of either Editor, Supervisor, Junior Reporter or Informal Mentor. Identifying elements were removed or replaced with generic terms, for example mention of a publication, identifiable events, or individuals. Relevant group transcriptions were emailed back to the co-researchers to ensure they were satisfied with the accuracy. They were given time to respond, and I used the time to re-read the transcriptions to both check the recordings against the typed versions, and to familiarise myself further. None expressed concern about the transcriptions.

Phase 2 is systematic coding of interesting features and collating by code. In this phase I relied on the positive core lists developed by the participants in each group (Table 5.1), which was a departure from Braun and Clarke's system of a researcher assigning codes.

Table 5.2. Discover phase Positive Core lists re-ordered in analysis phase three.

Group 1	**Group 2**	**Group 3**
Clarity -communication -goal -principals	Clear goals -excellent journalism	
Trust	Trust	
Freedom (not being dictated to)		
Teamwork	Relationships/teamwork Role models/mentors Mutual respect	Support Collegial
Engagement -camaraderie -enthusiasm -communication		
	Communication	
		Structure
		Challenge
		Competitiveness Ambition Self-direction

Note: The re-ordered lists re-ordered to assist phase three of analysis. The re-ordering started from the left column, and therefore does not represent significance from the top down

Another adaption was that I did not code the one-on-one interviews, because I wanted to maintain the social constructionist philosophy and have the coding reflect only the whole group

discussions. Therefore, I relied on individuals retelling the story of the person they interviewed, and on the group checking in with the interviewee to ensure their experience was understood. The coding was achieved manually by using comment boxes in Microsoft Word and noting the code or codes if any overlapped, plus my own comments, for example if the quote would be particularly illustrative for use in writing. I did not follow Braun and Clarke's suggestion to collate data within each code by copying pages or cutting and pasting, because I did not want at any stage to risk losing socially constructed contexts.

Braun and Clarke's third phase is searching for themes. To assist with this I took the positive core lists made by the groups on whiteboards (Table 5.1) and re-ordered the lists to look for matches across the three groups (Table 5.2), where I understood from my participation in the construction of the ideas that they overlapped. From the re-ordered lists became codes for potential themes which were: Clarity/Clear goals; Trust; Freedom; Teamwork (relationship, role models, mentors, mutual respect, support, collegial); Engagement (camaraderie, enthusiasm, communication); Communication; Structure; Challenge; Competitiveness (ambition, self-direction).

Phase Four, reviewing themes, is achieved at two levels. The first is checking the themes against the coded extracts, and the second against the entire data set from which a thematic map can be developed. I adapted this phase by allowing the AI Dream and Design statements of the groups to guide the reviewing of themes. By comparing and contrasting statements across the groups, the following four themes developed: Communication, Trust, Personal and Structure. I acknowledge at this stage this is a departure from social constructionism, but was guided by my involvement in the groups. Braun and Clarke encourage the use of mind-maps or tables, and I developed a second table, Table 6.1 (next chapter) to illustrate the phase four themes and where

they matched coded extracts from across the groups. I will discuss the table in more depth in Chapter Seven. Checking for level one, I worked back from the themes formed by the Design statements, to the Dream statements and the positive core summary of the Discover process to look for the best illustrative quotes. Level two, which is checking the themes against the entire data set for validity of individual themes and the meaning allowed me to pick up coding across the groups which had become more obvious as the main themes developed, but I also re-checked on their social construction in the transcriptions.

Phase five is defining and naming themes. Braun and Clarke explain that defining and refining themes in this phase is critical for getting to the essence of each theme and identifying the aspect of the data captured by each theme. In phase five I began setting out the findings based on themes so they were clear for the reader, and to prepare for the final phase.

Phase six is producing the report, which unfolds over the final three chapters of this thesis. In these chapters I address Braun and Clarke's requirement for ensuring that vivid extracts illustrate the story. The extracts are drawn from the data to argue for findings which answer the research questions.

Trustworthiness and Triangulation

All research in the social sciences has limitations, but the issues are not fatal (Stewart et al., 2007). The generalisability of this research is limited because of the specifications for the characteristics of the population of interest. It is not the intention of qualitative research broadly to generalise beyond specific sites of research, and its value comes from going indepth (Krueger & Casey, 2009). More specifically social constructionism values the knowledge in the context, but going beyond one site allows for some generalisation (Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2011).

Generalisation has been assisted in this research by using three different sites from two different organisations, and I chose people across the groups from similar hierarchical levels.

Consent, Human Subjects, Ethical Considerations

Johnson and Christensen (2008) state that there are three areas of ethical concern for educational researchers: "1) The relationship between society and science; 2) professional issues; 3) treatment of research participants" (p. 128). To address these three points I followed the New Zealand Association for Research in Education professional code of ethics, and applied for and was granted ethical permission by VUW's Faculty of Education Human Ethics sub-committee. Documents included in the permission were (see Appendix A):

- letters to the Journalism Training Organisation and news media management
- information sheets for management and participants
- consent forms for news media management and participants
- focus group questions.

Before making any approaches to individual sites, I contacted the relevant senior executives in each organisation. I was mindful that participants may have had a sense of pressure by my receiving prior permission from management, and so I discussed this issue and voluntary participation with everyone. Each person could withdraw up to the completion of data gathering. Members of each group were from different levels of the newsrooms' hierarchy, and any sense of concern about interaction was raised in introductory phone calls with each participant, and managed by me as moderator during the groups. Confidentiality was adopted so participants had the freedom to express their feelings and opinions (Krueger and Casey, 2008; Stewart et al., 2007), so groups were named by number, and individuals by their role. I had been employed previously by one of the organisations, and this was acknowledged in contact with each business.

I am a member of the Journalism Training Organisation advisory committee, and was mindful of any conflict arising. Finally, as a journalism educator I would like my students to be hired by editors when they have completed training, and therefore I needed to be mindful that this did not influence my choice of newsrooms, or my communications with the editors.

Summary

Appreciative Inquiry can be a challenging approach when balancing the demands of traditional research structures to ensure coherency and transparency for the readers, while taking advantage of the creative opportunities AI makes available. To meet those demands I have followed Reed (2007) who laid out the theory and practices which have contributed to AI under logical subheads of paradigm, theory, methodology and tools. This research's paradigm is qualitative, the theory is social constructionism, the methodology is a melding of ethnography, case study, narrative, and action research, and the tools are focus groups and thematic analysis. Particular attention has been paid to the theory of social constructionism because it holds together the rest by demanding that at every step along the way the voices of the journalists as co-researchers in each newsroom are heard, their stories are understood, and the best of the past contributes to journalism's future through the findings, discussion, and recommendations in the following chapters.

Chapter Six: Findings

"We must abandon the view that those around us cause our actions. Others are not the causes, nor we their effects. Rather, in whatever we think, remember, create and feel, we participate in relationship."
(Gergen, 2009, p. 397)

Introduction

The finding in this chapter follow Reed's (2008) explanation that Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a valuable framework for informing macro, mid-range, and micro theories for research and practice. Macro theories deal with broad issues which underpin a topic; in this case, how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms, for example, communication or trust. Mid-range and micro theories address actions; for example, drawing on macro theories to inform and generate structures and daily practices in the newsroom. This is important because such theoretical developments can challenge current ideas or support and supplement current and future ideas and practices.

There are five findings presented in two sections. In section one, Finding One deals with broader macro-theory of the topic drawn from how the individuals in each group came to understand each other's experiences of how leadership empowered their learning in newsrooms. These five findings were drawn from the Discovery phase of the AI process in which co-researchers in the groups listened to each other's stories of "best of" examples of leadership empowering learning to develop a list which represented the positive core of the topic. In section two, Findings Two to Five inform the mid-range and micro theories because they are set out as action statements. From the lists compiled in the groups I sought themes across all three groups to develop these action statements which should apply to future newsrooms. The word "should"

is used in Findings Two to Five to continue AI's intention of being idealistic, and challenging groups to think with provocative propositions which Reed (2007) explains can be explicitly stated, rather than objective statements. I acknowledge "should" is not typical language in research findings and recommendations, but the language continues my use of AI framework for its generative intention.

Finding One: How Leadership Empowers Learning

Overview.

The primary objective of this study was to have members with various roles in newsrooms use their understanding of each other's peak examples of leadership empowering learning to generate ideas for the topic's future contribution to training and development. A list was generated from each person's story (Appendix B), and then a positive core was developed from each (Table 5.1, previous chapter). I was actively engaged in the groups as a former journalist, a journalism educator, and an education researcher; such engagement is recognised in constructionist research methods (Kennedy et al., 2012; Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012) such as Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider et al, 2008; Gergen, 2009; Reed, 2007). AI acknowledges lead researchers as active participants with subjective voices because of the various roles they occupy. Because I was part of understanding and therefore constructing the meaning each group brought to their points, in my post-group analysis I was able to re-order each group's list where they matched for themes to form one list with nine factors relating to how leadership empowers learning: Clarity/Clear goals; Trust; Freedom; Teamwork (relationship, role models, mentors, mutual respect, support, collegial); Engagement (camaraderie, enthusiasm, communication); Communication; Structure; Challenge; Competitiveness (ambition, self-direction). Table 6.1 presents the finding of nine factors grouped adjacently where words or meaning are the same, based on my analysis of the discussions.

Table 6.1. Finding One is drawn from nine factors matched across the groups.

Finding factor	**Group 1**	**Group 2**	**Group 3**
Factor 1.	Clarity -communication -goal -principals	Clear goals -excellent journalism	
Factor 2.	Trust	Trust	
Factor 3.	Freedom (not being dictated to)		
Factor 4.	Teamwork	Relationships/teamwork Role models/mentors Mutual respect	Support Collegial
Factor 5.	Engagement -camaraderie -enthusiasm -communication		
Factor 6.		Communication	
Factor 7.			Structure
Factor 8.			Challenge
Factor 9.			Competitiveness Ambition Self-direction

Note: The factors established by each of the groups for leadership to empower learning have been listed vertically under each group in Table 6.1. Where words or meanings were the same, they have been re-arranged adjacently from left to right across the groups. Some of the factors identified by individual groups have no matching words or meaning in other groups and therefore stand alone.

The following sub-headings explain why the groups chose each factor. Participants' quotes are used to illustrate the factors. It is important to note that quotes are attributed both to those reporting their own experiences and those recounting the experiences of others because of the critical part that understanding the experience of others plays in the Appreciative Inquiry analysis process within the groups. I also explain why I grouped some of the findings together, even though different terms were used in each list.

Clarity/Clear goals.

Group One (clarity) and Group Two (clear goals) discussed stories highlighting individual communications between everyone in the newsroom, and a broader culture of, and understanding across, the environment. Taking responsibility for Communication, a sub-heading under Clarity in Group One, is illustrated by the following statement:

> What came across from that was confidence in the leadership having a great grasp of the subject matter and being able to impart instructions after discussion, there's a clarity and a fluency with the material. (Supervisor)

In Group Two the Informal Mentor's story referenced clear communication between all reporters, and clear communication with hierarchy, throughout a day of breaking news:

> She felt empowered that managers, a) gave her clear instruction, but she also had trust by her managers to not feel constrained and restricted to a certain part of the job, to go and explore a few options that were outlined to her. So she valued her role, clear guidelines given around that role, and she said it was one of the most beneficial days early on in her time in [publication]. (Supervisor)

In both groups stories "clarity" was represented as something that was part of a newsroom culture. Group One's list included the sub-headings Goals and Principles which were clear in the organisation. The term "principles" referred to the Editor's story about running a project which had clear principles established by the whole newsroom. The term "Goals", came from the Informal Mentor's story referring to the empowering environment when he was given time and funding to follow a story. Group Two also used the term Goals as part of the full term Clear Goals with a sub-heading Great Journalism as the goal.

Trust.

The importance of trust was discussed from a range of interlinked perspectives necessary for newsroom leadership to empower learning. It was seen as something that should be an individual practice by everyone working together, and as an underlying culture generated by those practices. Group One related to trust as a process:

> Trusting goes both ways. I can trust in the Editor's decisions but I need to know he trusts in mine as well. And similar with the reporters, I want them to trust me, but I need to trust them as well. (Supervisor)

In Group Two trust was number one or two on the lists of three participants, for example:

> We were all trusted to go on and just get on with our jobs. (Informal mentor recounting own experience)
>
> She's sort of built a team around her of people she trusts and can go to them when she needs to and she just said that relationship was quite important to her, someone she respects and bounces things off. (Reporter recounting Editor's story of being mentored)

The Supervisor reflected on how his practice of checking in with staff about their wellbeing before sending them on a job had developed relationships of trust.

While Group Three did not specify trust in its core list, it was included in their final Design list, and it also made the Reporter's list after the Supervisor asked if he felt trusted by those in positions of authority to dealing with a difficult story of a girl's death.

Teamwork (relationship, mutual respect, role models/mentors, support, collegial).

Teamwork was listed by Groups One (Teamwork) and Two (Relationships/teamwork), and was clearly mentioned in Group Three stories, and alluded to in its list (Collegial). When I was

analysing transcriptions, it became clear that much of the discussion of other factors listed related to teamwork; for example the terms “mutual respect” and “role models/mentors” in Group Two, and “support” in Group Three. Across all three groups there was discussion about flatter hierarchies meaning people have to work together more closely and flexibly.

Group One referred many times to a newsroom culture being important. Drawing from his example of forming teams in a project, the Editor said ensuring teamwork was happening as a practice would help develop the culture. After interviewing the Editor in Group One, the Reporter alluded to mentoring relationships:

> Really important to have a close-knit team and someone like [direct report] so when he had a lot in his head he could go to [direct report] who could provide another angle on it.

Three of the six elements in Group Two’s positive core, “Teamwork/Relationships”, “Mutual Respect”, and “Mentors/Role Models” were drawn from discussions on a range of actions and roles people perform in a team. The Group Two Reporter, whose story involved being mentored during a challenging story, was asked if there was a culture of support in the newsroom:

> I think there is. I have seen that in [Informal Mentor], I know [name] has helped her a lot, and I think that there is quite good relationships.

While Group Three did not list teamwork, the term “Collegial”, was identified:

> In journalism…I don’t think anyone in a supervisory role likes to think they are letting down their colleagues, because it is so collegial and there is a lot of, not structured support, but emotional support. (Editor)

Freedom/Self-direction.

Freedom was specifically listed by Group One only, but also discussed by Group Two in terms of the sense of freedom reporters felt when they were trusted to do a challenging story. There was both the opportunity which empowered their learning, and a responsibility which enhanced their personal leadership.

The term "Self-direction" here is in the sense of being allowed freedom, but it arises again later with the factor of Ambition/Competitiveness as a term when its use is more aligned to intrinsic motivation. The sense of freedom to be self-directed discussed in Group One was strongly present in the Informal Mentor's example about being allowed time to develop a story. Group Two discussed "not micromanaging" and out of that arose a comment about freedom, and the resulting learning. This conversation illustrates the discussion, and the understanding the group reached:

> Supervisor: A theme that actually came through all the conversations, both mine and [Informal Mentor] and [Junior Reporter's], it's not micromanaging. So it's…
>
> BW: …I don't know how you'd write that…
>
> Editor: …don't know how you'd put that…
>
> Reporter: …I think it comes back to the trust too…
>
> Informal Mentor: …it was freedom to do…
>
> Supervisor: …it was such a fluid situation. In some respects we couldn't micromanage anyway…
>
> Editor: …so flexibility…
>
> Supervisor: ...yeah flexibililty.

Supervisor: There's a lot of flexibility around this as well I think. [Reporter] was off-diary for a wee-while so there was flexibility to allow her to give her a lot of time and resources and ability to make a really good job as opposed to turning it round in two days or whatever.

Informal Mentor: I feel it affected her confidence in that one. Having spoken to you about it, a) everyone had enough confidence that you would do a good job, but b) then you actually gained confidence. I hear you talk on the phone to people who rang up and complained, you were confident as well. You stood by everything.

Engagement.

Group One saw Engagement as a key role for leadership empowering learning. The source of the term was the Editor's story about a specific project, but he also was clear that it was an important factor to maintain:

A crucial thing to come out of the project was generating enthusiasm in the newsroom and for the paper, with the background of 'newspapers are dying' chorus. And how you do that is make sure people are engaged involving reporters and upwards. Now [project] is complete, making sure we don't slip back into the day-to-day. (Junior Reporter)

The Informal Mentor saw engagement as a generator of results which produced three sub-headings, camaraderie, enthusiasm, and communication.

As can be seen in the findings, these matched across the groups, with Group Three's Collegiality, and Group Two's Communication.

Communication.

Communication was given its own listing by Group Two, and in much the same as clarity and trust, it was seen as both a culture and a practice. Communication featured at number two for both the Informal Mentor and Supervisor, while for the Reporter it was part of the phrase "clear communication/expectations". The Supervisor linked clarity and communication while recounting the Informal Mentor's story, hence communication as a culture:

> She says that there were a lot of people assigned to different parts of the city as the story developed but she felt that the lines of communication were really open, her role was clearly defined.

The Group One Supervisor highlighted communication as a practice which would look different depending on what was happening in the newsroom at the time. He discussed the difference between following the clear direction of an editor on Budget day, and other days when he would listen for ideas being develop by those reporters in the newsroom:

> The flipside of that is listening. Other days it's an Editor who listens, it's not just a blind direction [of Budget Day], which way you must go, it's listening for the other possibilities, and what are people feeling and thinking about stories.

Communication was not a term used in any of Group Three stories or discussions, but links could be drawn with the discussions surrounding the importance of relationships. The culture and practice of communication is alluded to in comments by Editors in Group One and Three specifically mentioning "no silos" to enhance communication across newsrooms.

Structure.

Structure was part of only Group Three's list, and specifically related to structured training. The following quotes from the Supervisor contrasts the lack of support in the Editor's story with the structured support he has received as leadership training:

> So those contrast quite sharply with what [Editor] went through with having to find her own way and having to learn her lessons by herself, whereas those have been quite formal processes for me. (Supervisor)
>
> From the structured part of it I've valued the insight I have gained into myself and my strengths and weaknesses and what drives me. (Supervisor)

There were no references at all to structured training in Group One, but Group Two's design phase specifically listed the following statement: "Pathways identified, acknowledged, backed up by training".

Challenge.

Challenge was on only Group Three's list, but it is also easy to draw links to the other groups because all the stories had an element of challenge, and both of the other groups used the term in discussion. The Editor in Group Three saw learning as a result of consciously taking on leadership challenges:

> I'm where I am because I put my hand up and there are a lot of people that don't, they don't want to take that route.

In response to the Group Three Reporter's challenge, the Editor pinpointed the learning and growth with the following question:

> Editor: Do you feel if you went out there tonight and right, there's a car crash, and five people killed, and you've got to ring the survivor, the mother who is sitting at home waiting for her family to come home. Do you feel it would be easier to do that now? Which goes back to that breaking through the barrier thing.
>
> Reporter: Yeah.

Ambition/Competitiveness/Self-direction.

I have grouped these terms together because the discussions which generated the terms were all based on the intrinsic motivations of a journalist. The Group Three Junior Reporter used the term "ambition" and directly linked it to a competitive trait, and to what he learned:

> I guess that was one of those ambition things, but there was no way I was going to let anyone else make that phone call. And again afterwards [Editor] came over again and asked how it went and how I was, and it was quite an emotional one, that call. And for me for my learning I was quite proud of the fact that I managed to get the whole story start to finish, get the interview, get a photo, and have it written and ready to go for first edition by quarter past eight. (Junior Reporter)

The Informal Mentor in Group One used the terms "hunger" and "drive" together. This conversation in Group Two illustrates a similar overlapping of competitiveness and hunger:

> Informal Mentor: There was also a little bit of competition between us all.
>
> Editor: So, positive competition.
>
> Informal Mentor: It was positive competition though. In a way that one of us would find something out, and it was sort of still help the other person".
>
> Editor: It's what I call hunger.
>
> Informal Mentor: It was good though.

To answer my research question, "how does leadership empower learning in newsrooms", the three groups came up with lists which I combined to create Finding One comprising nine factors. They are: 1) Clarity/Clear goals; 2) Trust; 3) Teamwork (Relationship, Mutual Respect, Role models, Mentors, Support, Collegial); 4) Freedom (Self-direction); 5) Engagement; 6) Communication; 7) Structure; 8) Challenge; 9) Ambition/ Competitiveness/ Self-Direction.

These factors were drawn from the Discover stage of the AI process used in the research, which in turn informed the Dream and Design phase Findings Two, Three, Four and Five addressing how the Dream and Design phases factors should be used to design future newsrooms.

Table 6.2. The themes and coded data which contributed to Findings Two to Five.

Findings	**Group 1 coded data**	**Group 2 coded data**	**Group 3 coded data**
Finding 2. Communication	Have forums for ideas – clarity Real time results are being communicated Use history to build on future (success and failure)	Goals are communicated effectively – many forms Wins celebrated + acknowledged – ditto Problems dealt with quickly + effectively	Ideas will be celebrated
Finding 3. Trust	People are empowered by trust	Roles are understood + people are trusted to do their role	Trust staff to get on with it
Finding 4. Personal Leadership	Love and take pride in your paper/team Reporters take responsibility	People are hungry, passionate, responsible, proud of work	People will be more autonomous
Finding 5. Structure	Have forums for ideas	Pathways I.D., acknowledged, backed up by training for development Flat hierarchy + role models available	No silos Flexibility in roles Everyone will be adaptable Flatter hierarchical structures

Note: The Dream and Design action statements of the groups were used to guide the reviewing of themes to develop the broad themes for Findings Two to Five. Those findings are set out in the left hand column in Table 6.2. Action statements made in each group and drawn from the codSed data are set out vertically under each group. The action statements which relate to each finding are organised horizontally from left to right.

Findings Two to Five

Overview.

Section Two comprises Findings Two to Five which are drawn from the final Dream and Design phases of the groups. The groups created Dream lists together (Appendix C) to imagine a hypothetical newsroom where these elements were alive and to describe what would be happening in this hypothetical newsroom. They were then asked to Design the hypothetical newsroom through provocative propositions which are action-based statements. Table 6.2 illustrates how the Design statements became coded data and in turn the foundations for Findings Two to Five. They also frame the discussion in the next chapter to answer the two research sub-questions: From understanding how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms, what forms of training and development would contribute to newsroom members? How would leadership training and development contribute to journalism practice in the digital age?

Finding Two: Communication practices should be part of the design of future newsrooms to ensure leadership empowers learning.

Each of the groups in the Dream phase described newsrooms in constant communication. In turn, in the Design phase, these descriptions inspired a variety of suggestions for communication practices which the groups would employ.

From Group One there were three ideas which fitted into communication practice: “having forums for ideas – clarity”; “real-time results are being communicated”; and, “use history to build on future (success and failure)”. The Informal Mentor was mindful of bridging the gap between a Dream whiteboard list which included “chatter, discussion, noise, ideas”, and the reality of another Dream point, “Empty seats – action”, to describe the fact that reporters would

be out on the job connecting face-to-face with people. He recommended regular forums with a clear purpose, hence the use of the term “clarity”, which would drive investigative ideas:

> I think that’s the sort of thing that the reporters would do themselves but they would need to have the support and buy-in from management to be able to create the buy-in to do that. The other thing around that is you can’t have things become a time soak.

The Group One Editor wanted reporters to be constantly in touch with the impact of their stories on readers, and to be learning from them so that success and failure constantly inform the future:

> You kind of need a results board as well eh, particularly in the future where more is going online, and you can see how your story is going online. Real-time results.

Group Two developed four Design statements to deal with specific elements of communication. The first was: “Goals are communicated effectively – [in] many forms”. The goals statement had clear parallels with a point in Group One’s “team” sub-headings that there would be a list of principles in writing and on display. The following Group Two quotes acknowledged discussions which raised the issue that different people value being communicated with in different ways:

> Communication takes a myriad of forms and needs to because people absorb information differently. So some people respond to getting emails. Others need meetings. Others need one-on-one contact time. Is that a fair statement? (Editor)
>
> Yeah, definitely. It comes back to that individual approaches. (Reporter)

The value of people understanding multiple methods of communication was also recognised in Group Two’s second point: “Wins celebrated and acknowledged – ditto [in many forms]”**.** In Group Two’s Dream phase the Supervisor said he would “see people growing”, a statement

which led to the following Design point: “Pathways I.D. [identified], acknowledged, backed up by training for development”. I have included this under communication because it is a newsroom practice which feeds into a culture and which the Supervisor felt was important.

Group Two emphasised communication and training being part of a structure which staircases people from the beginning of their career, using mentors, to more structured training for hierarchical positions. The group’s final point which I have placed under the communication finding is: “Problems dealt with quickly + effectively”. The point was raised by the Editor, which could be expected as the manager of the editorial department. However, the following discussion shows that individuals at different layers of the organisation understand how good communication structures can enhance a newsroom system’s ability to deal with problems being experienced by individuals.

Editor: I think problems dealt with quickly and effectively. I would say that.

Supervisor: Yeah it’s true on all levels.

Editor: So they can’t fester into bigger issues.

Informal Mentor: Which I think also comes back to your clear line of who you go to for something because if you don’t know who your boss is.

Supervisor: And I think ongoing feedback that is not scheduled around reviews, but that is ongoing ... if you’re giving staff ongoing feedback good and bad so there is no surprises at the formal process. So you don’t get to ‘I’ve been meaning to tell you this for three months, you suck’. It’s an ongoing thing.

BW: Is that captured here?

Supervisor: Probably linked to that a bit.

Informal Mentor: To your goals as well...

Reporter: And acknowledging good things and then dealing with the problems.

Group Three's Design point "Ideas will be celebrated" has clear links to Groups One and Two celebrating ideas. Group Three's celebration point grew out of its Dream phase list which included "collegiality", "support" and "working together". These communication factors will be critical in the future, as this quote from the Group Three Editor underlines:

> I will say because of the nature of the business and it's not just the [publication] newsroom but there would be a lot more collegiality and support and there will have to be because there will be the newsroom supporting all sorts of platforms.

Finding Three: Trust-centred practices should be part of the design of a newsroom in which leadership empowers learning.

Finding Three represents the understanding shared in all three groups that trust should be a foundation for all newsrooms. For example, drawing on Group Three's point about celebrating ideas, this exchange draws together threads of trust and autonomy, while recognising the need to maintain communication when newsrooms move increasingly from being physical spaces to becoming a virtual space with people working remotely:

> Editor: I think it is breaking down barriers. ... you've got to trust staff to get on with it. The whole way we work is different now. We've got people working from home. We've got people working more from the field.
>
> Supervisor: More autonomy.
>
> Editor: More autonomy. More, all ideas are celebrated.

In all three groups there was discussion which compared past examples of distant and dictating styles of management with a more inclusive approach. The following quote illustrates is an example and how the factor of trust is important:

> A lot of those things underline the rest, which happened with the [project] and which [Editor] said 'right here's [years] of history what are you going to do with it?' Empowerment's a huge thing there and that's the change in newspaper culture over the years, from the dictatorship 'you will do' to the trust being emplaced, 'how will you do?' and that's a big part, reporters taking responsibility for themselves, that's empowerment. (Informal mentor)

Group Three emphasised the role of communication for trust to work. Group Two saw the shift in the way people communicate as the empowering foundation of trust, and clear communication between individuals about their roles as a source of trust, making this Design statement: "Roles are understood and people are trusted to do their role".

Finding Four: Understanding of personal leadership practices is critical to the design of a newsroom in which leadership empowers learning.

Finding Four brings together multiple threads related to the motivations for practising journalism. Personal drivers were part of group discussions, and they informed group design statements which inspired these findings. Therefore the motivation for being a journalist and being part of a newsroom needs to be considered in newsroom practices which have leadership empowering learning.

Two propositions made in Group One's Design phase, "reporters taking responsibility" and "Love and take pride in your paper/team" contributed to this finding. The first was in response to a question about who would take responsibility for running forums for ideas which were discussed in Finding Two, under communication. The suggestion of reporters running the forum for ideas was made by the Informal Mentor, who also recognised in much of the discussion that there was an underlying theme of why people choose to practice journalism. For example after

listening to the Editor's example of running a project, the Supervisor highlighted guiding principles which were put in writing, and the Informal Mentor reinforced the point: "I quite like that stuff. It's because I get out of bed in the morning and think, 'right I'm off to save the world'."

The same Informal Mentor used three similar references to hunger and success in the newsroom, but married with the need for personal and collegial responsibility. The Group One Junior Reporter, picked up on the drive for good journalism being both an individual and shared responsibility in the newsroom.

> You could have something around teamwork. Like love and take pride in your paper, not just your byline. You want the [publication] to beat everyone else. If I'm sitting on the desk and the police reporters are caning it I'll talk about it and be happy about it, rather than be in competition

The same themes of personal responsibility and passion for the job's values were covered in the Design statement by Group Two: "People are hungry, passionate, responsible, proud of work". This statement reflects sentiments made by the Group Three Supervisor in the Dream phase: "Driven, hungry, self-motivated staff being supported by, but not mothered by, in a structured but flexible…". Group Two formed its statement after a lengthy discussion, and drew on the following quotes made at different times in the discussion:

> If they've gone into this for the right reasons, or because they want to see themselves on TV. (Editor)
>
> It's got to be in-built or it's got to be reinforced. There's got to be buy-in from both sides. It can't just be management telling a staff member to get hungry. If you're not hungry then… (Supervisor)

It's pride in your own work. Because your name's going to go on that at the end of the day. (Informal mentor)

It was positive competition though. In a way that one of us would find something out and it was sort of still help the other person. (Informal Mentor)

Group Three was strongly aligned with competitiveness, ambition, and pride in doing a good job. While none of these terms was specifically included in their final Design statements, the requirement for personal responsibility was clearly embedded in their statement: "People will be more autonomous".

Finding Five: Flatter hierarchical structures require relational practices that empower learning.

Finding Five draws on specific statements made by Groups Two and Three about flatter hierarchies, and conversations and statements across all three groups about relationships. The statements show an awareness that increasingly flatter hierarchies will require not only new structural ways of operating, but also changes in practice, attitudes, and relationships. Group Two's statement, "Flat hierarchy and role models available" recognises the importance of flatter hierarchies in terms of positions of authority and guidance:

Editor: One of the things we've done in this newsroom...[Reporter] mentioned unknowingly, we've actually put unofficial mentors in place for all of our juniors who they can reach out to and it's not done in a labelling sense, 'you're a junior, you're a senior', but simply these people are available to you. We've got four of those operating in the newsroom.

Reporter: And I think because it's not really formal it works better. It doesn't feel so…

Supervisor: …'you must report to him'.

This vertical shift in relationships is evidenced by the Reporter's surprise when the Editor mentioned that years ago a junior reporter would not get to talk to the editor. Horizontal shifts in relationships across the newsroom are also evident:

> A lot of reporters 20 years ago covered their rounds and their rounds only, whereas now they have to be all-rounders really. One day you are chasing ambulances, the next day you're into boxes of documents and great, great stories. So I think there is a camaraderie there between young and old, led by chief reporters, but it filters through. (Editor)

Group Three made four Design propositions, which I have grouped together under Finding Five because of the link they create between hierarchy and relationship. The four were: "Flatter hierarchical structures", "No silos", "Flexibility in roles", and "Everyone will be adaptable". The Junior Reporter in Group Three sowed the seeds for the link by beginning the Design discussion with this statement:

> If you take [Editor's] experience and [Supervisor's] and mine, it seems to be a lot more, again, it's that collegial thing, a lot more fluidity between management, a shift from a mahogany-row era with a much more directional, 'you will do this', prescriptive environment, to one of no silos, flexibility, and adaptability.

While Group One did not specifically mention hierarchy, understanding of the need for changing relationships was threaded through many conversations. For example the Editor talked of Junior Reporters more comfortable with digital technology contributing to senior colleagues, and the Informal Mentor discussed reporters taking responsibility through a forum for ideas which is also listed under communication. The Editor also made the following observation:

> I think you'd see editors alongside reporters, chief reporters alongside artists, you know there'd be that whole cross-fertilisation, whereas previously editors might have been stuck in offices.

Summary

This chapter has presented the findings for my research question, related to how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms. I developed the findings with the assistance of three groups of journalists with a range of experience from different New Zealand newsrooms. The groups shared individual experiences which addressed the primary question of the research: how does leadership empower learning in newsrooms. The findings are presented in two sections. Section one sets out nine factors which the groups identified as necessary for leadership to empower learning, which are: 1) Clarity/Clear goals; 2) Trust; 3) Teamwork (Relationship, Mutual Respect, Role models, Mentors, Support, Collegial); 4) Freedom (Self-direction); 5) Engagement; 6) Communication; 7) Structure; 8) Challenge; 9) Ambition/Competitiveness/Self-Direction. These factors were drawn from the Discover stage of the AI process used in the research, which in turn informed the Dream and Design phase. Findings Two, Three, Four and Five centred on communication, trust, personal leadership and flatter hierarchies. These findings set out in Chapter Five are used in Chapter Six, the Discussion chapter to address the sub-questions: From understanding how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms, what training and development would contribute to leadership in the newsroom?; and How would this training and development contribute to journalism practice in the digital age?

Chapter Seven: Discussion

"A lot of resources are invested in endeavours that have little or no chance of success because the considerations of the 'system' or the authorities have not included an adequate and realistic analysis of the learning situation."

(Illeris, 2009, p. 19)

Introduction

This chapter explores the links between the findings and the literature on leadership, learning, and journalism to identify theory and practice that may benefit the field by addressing challenges that those who work in it are experiencing.

In doing so I answer the two secondary questions posed for this research: From understanding how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms, what training and development would contribute to leadership in the newsroom? How would this leadership training and development contribute to journalism in the digital age? In response to the primary research question, "How does leadership empower learning in newsrooms?", participants identified nine factors which I reanalysed and grouped under the headings of communication, trust, personal leadership, and structure.

I propose that for leadership to empower learning consistently in newsrooms the most critical of those four elements is structure which will allow the other three to thrive. I argue for a structure which will help newsrooms shift from industrial-age ways of thinking and acting, to involve everyone in the system by using Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a creative structure for informal emergence of ideas contributing to action in news organisations.

In this chapter I continue to use the AI framework, which I adapted for this research, because the cyclical nature of AI is part of its iterative and generative capacity. As long as the focus on

the positive core of the organisation, or the topic being researched, is maintained, then the 4-D (Discover, Dream, Design and Destiny) phases can be used again and again in cycles to revisit, refine, and learn more about the topic (Reed, 2007).

In the Discover section I discuss the findings about communication, trust, personal leadership, and structure in relation to leadership and learning literature. Building on these discoveries, in the Dream phase I use the AI principles of imagination and wonder, together with the literature on journalism's challenges, to think creatively about new possibilities for the field. The Design phase draws on the first two phases to propose a theoretical and practical framework for the Relational Newsroom. The final part is the Destiny phase, which in the AI process demands commitments. While I did not use the Destiny phase in the research method, I have used it in this discussion process, although it will not be addressed until the next chapter, the Conclusion.

Discover Phase

The Discover phase involves appreciating what gives life and energy to an organisation or topic (Cooperrider et al., 2008). In a typical Discovery phase participants share their peak experiences of the topic, and ask questions to elicit understanding of the factors that made the high points possible. These stories lead the group to the positive core of the topic, which can become a foundation on which to build a future through the ensuing Dream, Design, and Destiny phases. I have adapted the Discover phase for this discussion to use findings drawn from the work of the groups, and matched with the literature on leadership and learning (Chapter Three). The groups produced a list of nine ways that answer the primary research question, "How does leadership empower learning in newsrooms?": Clarity/Clear goals; Trust; Teamwork (Relationship, Mutual Respect, Role models, Mentors, Support, Collegial); Freedom (Self-direction); Engagement; Communication; Structure; Challenge; Ambition (Competitiveness,

Self-Direction). These were collated as Finding One and then reanalysed to produce Findings Two to Five, which are presented as action statements centring on communication, trust, personal leadership, and structure.

Communication.

Finding Two states: "Communication practices should be part of the design of future newsrooms to ensure leadership empowers learning". Suggestions for practical communication included having forums for ideas, real-time readership results on websites displayed in the newsroom, reporters maintaining communication internally with each other and externally face-to-face with readers, being mindful about communicating in different ways with different people, celebrating great work and ideas, communicating through training, communicating issues quickly, and using goals as a communication tool.

> Communication takes a myriad of forms and needs to because people absorb information differently. So some people respond to getting emails. Others need meetings. Others need one-on-one contact time. Is that a fair statement? (Editor)

Common to all of these practical manifestations of communication is the fact that they involve two or more people who are in relationships of some description. I propose that the focus of any design of future newsroom practices, for example in training and development, should be in the relational space between individuals.

What happens in the "space between" individuals is distinguished by a growing number of researchers and practitioners (Gergen, 2009; Kennedy et. al, 2012; Lichenstein et al., 2006) as an important, if not the most important, locus for leadership and learning. Gergen (2009) argues that the focus on self in relationships, for example in training and development, has come at the cost of the most important aspect, the relationship itself. He says relational being in communication

demands critical inquiry which strives to understand the other; awareness of language and how it produces meaning; and the acceptance that knowledge is socially constructed. Whatever value we place upon ourselves or others depends on the welfare of relationship first, not the other way around.

I argue that theory, training, and practice for communication therefore need to focus on bringing understanding, rather than fixed realities, for leadership which empowers learning in organisations. A practical example of what is possible is contained in Kennedy et al's (2012) reflection of taking a leadership training programme which focuses on self, and contrasting it with a leadership training programme which ignores self concepts and keeps participants, and the facilitator, centred in the relational space between people. The former is locked into fixed ideas and measurements of self, while the latter focuses training on what arises creatively in the "space between".

This foregrounding of understanding the other in journalism relationships is foundational in AI and can form the basis for a new model of communication training and practice which I develop as a theory in the Design phase of this chapter. Such a relational communication practice would also resonate with the primary element of journalism, in which the reader or viewer is paramount.

Trust.

Finding Three states, "Trust-centred practices should be used to design a newsroom in which leadership empowers learning". All groups saw trust being generated by a range of factors. From a pragmatic point of view, the digital nature of the journalism production means there needs to be greater autonomy, and therefore greater trust from hierarchical leaders. This creates a link between the heightened need for communication skills already discussed, and the autonomy

which is addressed under Personal Leadership (below). During my research, an Informal Mentor noted that this communication requires shifting from a dictatorial "you will do" to a trust-generating "how will you do?" which in turn empowers reporters to take responsibility for themselves. A Supervisor described understanding a similar sense of empowerment when retelling an Informal Mentor's story of receiving clear communication, being given the creative freedom to make her own decisions in the field, but also staying in communication. A Supervisor's story involved trusting the clear direction of a hierarchical leader, which empowered him to get on with the task. However, he talked of being mindful in his own practice of maintaining a balance between giving clear direction, and at other times setting aside his own assumptions and listening without judging to reporters to ensure they were valued, and therefore empowered. Trust was seen as a generator of teamwork and community:

> A natural culture will come out definitely of that teamwork. It's not something that will get driven by managers or anything like that, it's a natural consequence. It's important. (Informal Mentor)

Bennis (2007) argues that exemplary leaders generate trust and optimism, but the quote (above) suggests teamwork, rather than a hierarchical leader, is the best source of trust. The argument could be made, then, for Bennis' point about trust and optimism to be generated by a team in an environment where leadership empowers learning. De Geus (2002) says trust is achieved when the community and the individual are interested in each other and that hierarchical discipline and power cannot substitute for the absence of civic behaviour and mutual trust in a community. In this case the newsroom described (above) as having a "natural culture" could be seen as such a community. Trust, therefore, arises in the space between individuals described by Lichenstein, et al. (2006), and is the responsibility of everyone, a factor identified

by a co-researcher in this study. At the same time it generates the relationship and empowers the individuals, including the hierarchical leader, and their experience of what is possible and what they are capable of. In the Design phase of this chapter I address how this theoretical generation of trust could be achieved in a newsroom system.

Personal leadership.

Finding Four states, "Understanding of personal leadership practices is critical to the design of a newsroom in which leadership empowers learning". According to the groups, personal leadership practices are already critical in small, less hierarchical newsrooms because of the autonomy that comes with it. At face value the term "personal leadership" conjures an image of the individualistic self-management of entity theorists described by Kennedy et al. (2012) with all the measurements tools of, for example, emotional intelligence (Cherniss, 2007; Grant, 2007; Godshalk & Sosik, 2007). However the quotes which inspired this finding reveal relational thinking grounded in journalism practice both outside and inside the newsroom. For example, discussion within the groups included the "why" of journalism, plus descriptive terms such as competitiveness, ambition, and pride in doing a good job, "but not at all costs". Statements such as "right, I'm off to save the world", "if they've gone into this for the right reasons, or because they want to see themselves on TV" and "if you're not hungry then…", clearly address relationships with serving the public. Conversely, statements such as "love and take pride in your paper, not just your byline", and "it was positive competition", indicate a range of relationships, from collegial to competitive, with others in the newsroom.

External relationships evident in statements linked to the "why" of journalism can be grounded in the journalism literature which sets out its role in service of others beyond the newsroom. Hargreaves (2003) notes that journalists are part of their societies, therefore each one

must preserve their compass, to be true to their own and their community's values. Others talk of giving citizens the information they need to make decisions (OECD, 2010); being a watchdog and monitoring those in power (Craig, 2011; Gade and Lowrey, 2011; O'Donnell et al., 2012) are for the benefit of the community. Even the journalism student and the journalism graduate entering the newsroom should understand that the very practice of journalism is a personal leadership practice.

Inside the newsroom, personal leadership can arise in a range of ways. The Editors and two of the Supervisors told stories of taking on management roles in their organisations. In each case they spoke of the personal challenge, but their stories also always involved others. For example, the one Editor spoke of valuing informal collegial support, and both of the other editors prized having a mentor to turn to. Across all groups there was a contrasting of an historical silo mentality in newsrooms with the current need for greater collaboration and collegiality. Examples included: Reporters being protective of subject rounds and contacts in the past, but increasingly sharing these now; competition for getting the page one lead contrasted with supporting each other, although there was still enjoying the description of the "hunger" to be first with a great story. In a follow-up call, one of the Junior Reporters said he came to understand that he could practice leadership despite his inexperience: "If I get the chance to help someone else out, to make sure I take the time to do so". His new view was a transformation directly attributable to the AI framework where high points shared in the group generate possible futures for individuals and the group. It also underscores Gergen and Gergen's (2008) point that human relationships are the source of knowledge of the world and self, and Tennant's (2009) idea that self and the social are two sides of the same coin. When the Junior Reporter was impacted he also saw Tennant's related point that concern for the other is the only universal moral good.

Preparation for and measurement of personal leadership practice are addressed in the literature in a number of practices which I propose are interrelated. For Schaetti, Ramsey, & Watanabe (2008) personal leadership is centred in the principles of mindfulness and creativity. The term hunger which arose in all groups aligns with intrinsic motivation which is recognised as typical in the literature on journalism (Mierzejewska, 2011; Kunelius & Ruusunoksa, 2008; Tsourvakas, Veglis & Zotos, 2004), and which Kung (2011) calls on media organisations to recognise and value for its creative power. Hopper (2008) argues the ideal motivation for leadership is a desire to serve, while Price & Hicks (2006) proposes that servant leadership specifically can be measured by the growth in agency of others. Similarly Senge et al. (2006) distinguish leaders operating in a transformational realm as serving a vision infused with a larger purpose so their work shifts naturally from producing results to encouraging the growth of people who produce results. While each of these references to service refers to a hierarchical leadership position, I propose that they also fit with a description of journalism as a personal leadership practice by everyone in a newsroom based on the principles of servant leadership (Yukl, 2006). Such an environment requires the systems thinking of a learning organisation, and which are necessary in organisational life given the flattening of hierarchical structures, an issue typified in journalism in the past decade.

Structure for relational leadership.

Finding Five states, "Flatter hierarchical structures should embed relational leadership practices that empower learning" The groups identified that flatter hierarchical structures were already demanding changes in practice, attitudes, and relationships, a fact well documented (Evershed, 2011; Marjoribanks, 2011; O'Donnell et al., 2012). Some of the practical structural applications raised included role models, the need for journalists to be multi-skilled and able to

work across disciplines rather than in historical silo systems, to have an adaptive mindset, and for individuals to be proactive in helping each other. I propose that all of those elements coming together draw on the Communication, Trust, and Personal Leadership findings so far addressed in this chapter, and they require a structure or system, which allows them to be generated.

While the collapsing of hierarchical structures has happened quickly for news media in the past decade, Organisational Development theorists and practitioners have been engaged in developing ideas and actions which answer the need of post-industrial systems for far longer. For example, Appreciative Inquiry, the methodological framework and 4-D system which informs this research and which is described in detail in Chapter Four, is one of the practical applications which has been used in organisations since the 1980s (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008). Senge (1998) developed the theory of the Learning Organisation using a structure based on five disciplines – Systems Thinking, Personal Mastery, Mental Models, Building Shared Vision, and Team Learning. Senge et al. (2008) describe cases across diverse fields which have used the critical discipline which underpins a Learning Organisation, and that is Systems Thinking.

I propose to draw on these Organisational Development theories, together with the inspiration from the research groups, in the Dream phase to wonder about creative ways of thinking newly for newsrooms, news media organisations, and the field of journalism as a whole.

Dream Phase

In AI, the Dream phase envisions what might be, by building on the Discover phase (Reed, 2007). Dreaming requires thinking big, unrestricted by how the organisation or topic – in this case newsrooms and even the field of journalism – has traditionally been thought of and how it has operated. The Dream phase, therefore, requires creative ways of thinking and creative ideas. In Chapter Two, backgrounding the current state of journalism and the news media, challenges

of the field were outlined. To address those challenges, this Dream phase imagines how the leadership and learning ideas and literature discussed in the previous Discover section should contribute to journalism practice in the digital age and therefore envision a different future. My Dream is for a structure in which communication draws on understanding others, and generates trust, because such a communication structure is grounded in personal leadership practices. That Dream is outlined in this section.

Re-imagining journalism.

The Editors in each focus group were clearly engaged in thinking about shifting from ingrained ways of operating to a re-imagining of journalism. One Editor's story included a reference to rethinking fixed ideas after receiving bottom-up feedback from readers and editorial team members. The Editor talked about members of the public being welcome in newsrooms, while the following quote from another Editor wondered if journalists would have different labels in the future:

> In 10 years from now reporters may not be just working on a round; they might be doing a range of jobs. They might not be even called reporters.

Such engagement in re-imagining answers the calls of news media scholars. For example calls for new routines of journalism (Kunelius & Ruusunoksa, 2008; Lovink & Rossier, 2011; Rivas-Rodriguez, 2011) are already being manifested in practice, such as those journalists trying engage more with news consumers (O'Donnell et al., 2102). However, while Singer (2011) found journalists are changing their perceptions of who they are, she argues there is a way to go to adopting an entirely new occupational culture, and Deuze (2011) sees the answer in a more humanistic approach to leadership in news organisations.

Bursting the bubble metaphors.

As I grappled with bringing creative thinking to this Dream phase, I was mindful of literature on the difficulty in transforming thinking. For example, in their meta-analysis of AI interventions and their transformative potential, Bushe and Kassam (2004) point out that intervention to change how people think, rather than what people do, is very different from conventional Organisational Development practice. Kennedy et al. (2012) could have been talking about journalism when they said that taking a different approach to leadership training, such as the social constructionism of relational leadership, is a challenge in Western society because of our ingrained ways of operating. Drawing on Kennedy et al.'s use of metaphor, and in keeping with AI's valuing of story and metaphor, I was drawn to two theories which use the metaphor of bubbles to visualise what needs to shift. Senge et al. (2008) describe the industrial-age bubble during periods of expansion in which two parallel realities develop, one inside the bubble and one outside. Parallels can be drawn between Senge's theory and the expansion of media organisations in the past century. News media scholars have also identified this disconnection in post-factual, postmodern, increasingly multicultural and commercialised media societies with multiple truths (eg, Kunelius & Ruusunoksa, 2008; Singer, 2011). Such fixed ways will also be manifested in different ways internally, and they will often be hidden from view, like blind spots, for both individuals and organisations which are not operating as learning organisations (Senge et al., 2008). Another bubble metaphor used by Strong (2011) to address gender as one of those internal issues for news media, clearly illustrates their point.

Those bubble metaphors clearly visualised what had to change, and in the Dream phase I began to wonder about bringing systems thinking to newsroom structures to address these internal and external bubbles. First, as one Editor alluded to, what if there was a workable

structure in which editors were constantly getting ideas for new ways of thinking fed from the bottom up, through an appreciative culture, the antithesis of a top-down hierarchical culture? Second, inspired by another Editor who imagined the public in the newsroom, I began wondering: What if newsrooms were able to appreciate the views of news consumers who were constantly able to monitor and offer real-time feedback on newsroom decision-making by being physically, or at least virtually via online, in the newsroom and how might that help pop the bubble of industrial-age thinking? At first glance to journalists working to digital deadlines with fewer resources, such ideas may appear impractical. However, because both ideas clearly link with those generated by the research participants, they are in keeping with the AI philosophy of Dreams being founded in high point examples from those in the field.

Potential benefit of the Relational Newsroom.

In a follow-up call, one Supervisor said that if he had the time he would run similar groups with all newsroom members because of the understanding across layers of the newsroom generated by the process. For example, in the follow-up phone calls all Junior Reporters said that participating in the groups had given them new access to thinking about practice in their newsroom.

The idea of public engagement in the newsroom came from an Editor's proposition that "we would never be ashamed to have someone physically in our newsroom witnessing what we do". The very impracticality of this idea makes it a perfect possibility for this Dream phase which calls for creative thinking uninhibited by practicalities. This idea will be developed in the Design section of this chapter.

In the Dream phase I have drawn on the work of the co-researchers to generate creative possibilities uninhibited by practicalities with the aim of building on the findings of

communication, trust and personal leadership from the group Design phase. Under an overarching theory of the Relational Newsroom, I have developed seeds of ideas sown in the groups or in follow-up phone calls for 1) a structure for ongoing bottom-up feedback to hierarchical leaders; and 2) real-time news consumer engagement in the newsroom. These ideas are turned into useable provocative propositions in the Design phase.

Design Phase

The Design phase builds on the Discover and Dream phases to determine what will be with action plans for the future using assertive language (Reed, 2007). Design statements should be provocative and relate to an important element of the organisation or organising, thereby maintaining the challenging nature of the AI process and stretching the organisation, or in this case the field. Drawing on the findings discussed in the Discover and Dream phases of this chapter, the Design phase comprises two propositions which together address theory and practice for the Relational Newsroom:

1) A group constantly running in newsrooms using the 4-D process;
2) A live public interaction process for newsroom decision-making.

The following sections consider practical aspects of these propositions, and points of inspiration for a Design which, I argue, has the potential to help transform news media organisations and the journalism field.

Relational Newsroom groups in practice.

The first provocative proposition is to have a Relational Newsroom group constantly running in cycles with changing membership once a topic has gone through the AI cycle. Each new group would choose a focused topic related to the newsroom and over a period of weeks complete the 4-D process with meetings. The process would require six meetings involving 1)

choosing the topic, 2) Discover, 3) Dream, 4) Design, 5) Delivery, 6) report to the newsroom. One member of the newsroom would be trained in the AI process, because training is seen as a critical factor in ensuring AI works (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stravros, 2008). Each ensuing group would have one member from the previous group to share the training. In keeping with AI practice (cite), groups would be drawn from different sections of the editorial department and, where possible, different hierarchical levels. It would be possible to develop the concept to involve members from beyond the editorial department and, as with the Group One Editor's project example, even outside the organisation itself.

Inspired by journalists.

A range of points from the groups inspired the idea of the Relational Newsroom. For example one Editor spoke of the value in drawing feedback from people across and outside the newsroom, which transformed his thinking at times. An Informal Mentor raised the idea of forums with a clear purpose which aligned with the call for clarity, and a Supervisor noted the value of everyone in the group coming to understand each other's experiences, and advocated involving everyone in the newsrooom in the process.

Journalists know how to interview and discuss.

There are two practical factors which I have drawn on for this theory of the Relational Newsroom working efficiently. The first is that journalists are already adept at a critical factor in the AI process, interviewing. Prior to the research I had concerns relating to the recognised necessity for journalists to be sceptical when interviewing. Cooperrider, Stavros, and Whitney (2008) explain that training can be required for appreciative interviewing. However, the journalists in this research adopted the co-researcher role quickly, and often went naturally beyond the original interview questions with probing questions to more fully understand the

experience of the interviewee. In two groups the Editor paired up with the Junior Reporter, providing interesting interactions. Both Editors took time to ensure the Reporter was comfortable, and fully describing and personally understanding their own high points. Equally, both Reporters were clearly interested in the Editors' leadership experiences, and their interest was evident as they recounted the Editors' stories to the group. Both sides of these interviews contributed to a greater understanding for the group, which in turn informed the ensuing phases. The second practical factor is the ability of journalists to both tell stories and have robust discussions, a critical factor in relational leadership. Kennedy et al. (2012) say a requirement in leadership research and practice is a community where differences and their implications can be articulated and where members have the rhetorical skills and commitment to do so. Such skills are necessary in everyday newsroom practice, and would be supported by the structure I propose.

Foundations of structure in the literature.

The Relational Newsroom answers a range of points in the literature which are relevant to the findings of communication, trust and personal leadership which could be generated by structure. For example Gergen and Gergen (2008) call for the relationships generated in an organisation to be the locus of knowledge for that system. They recommend replacing the training of individuals for leadership with training to be centred in relationships for leadership. A practical example appears to be described in Kennedy et al.'s (2012) research into two different leadership programmes, described in the literature review of this thesis. One of the programmes described training which expands individuals' capacity to work in a relational space no matter what individuals bring to the space. Kennedy et al.'s (2012) suggest designing workshops that stick to social constructionism. I argue that the Relational Newsroom would answer such a call, because AI groups work by starting with interviews which are founded on individuals' understanding of

each other's high point of the chosen topic, and these are then shared with the group and built through the 4-D process. Such AI groups would effectively be group training which generates relationships, rather than training individuals about relationships.

The Relational Newsroom structure has the potential to address one of the issues in post-industrial organising and its flatter hierarchies which newsrooms are grappling with: while flatter hierarchies may appear simpler, they are actually more complex to manage. Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) argue for a Relational Leadership Theory to address the issue. Participants in this research provided clues as to how informal mentoring in newsrooms with their discussions which referenced for example great communication, no silos, cross-fertilisation, hands-on editors, and tech-savvy juniors contributing to seniors. Those discussions align with Drath et al.'s (2008) identification of the potential for top-down and bottom-up contributions in relational leadership theory and practice. Schall et al. (2004) discuss the need to understand the complex social systems of communities, and in this case I argue that journalism is a community. Similarly, in personal leadership, complexity forces individuals to ask questions and out of seeking that new understanding creative new beginnings emerge (Schaetti et al, 2008). In arguing for a Relational Leadership Theory, Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) call for managers to understand Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT) which would challenge them to enable informal emergence of creativity while co-ordinating the contexts within which it occurs. Kung (2011) extends this to media literature. I propose the Relational Newsroom structure would assist that co-ordination through the group structures.

Public interaction in newsroom decision-making.

AI's generative nature has transformed organisations (Bushe & Kassam, 2004) and I propose it has the potential to transform newsrooms and even the field of journalism. However, Gergen

and Gergen (2008) warn that when transformation for the sake of the organisation takes precedence over relationships the point has been lost, and it is possible that industrial-age thinking has returned. Indeed, many have tried to research, understand, and document journalism's current changes, and a recurring theme is that organisations are simply reacting to the transformation (for example, Deuze, 2011; Hirst, 2010; Kunelius & Ruusunoksa, 2008; Lovink & Rossier, 2011; O'Donnell et al., 2102; Rivas-Rodriguez, 2011; Singer 2011). I argue that the focus should shift to the practice of journalism as a practice of servant leadership, foregrounds the reader as the reason for transformative change. The servant relationship would be addressed with the second aspect in the theory and practice of the Relational Newsroom, which is a live, public interactive process for newsroom decision-making.

Having the public in the newsroom and involved in decision-making would potentially create challenges relating to privacy, protecting sources, exclusive stories, and political and sensitive stories. One practical aspect that would be easier to manage, however, would be newsroom decision-making being fed live on the internet. News media already respond quickly to news consumers' comments about online stories, and they also respond to the number of clicks a story receives: a popular story with many clicks stays on the site longer than others with fewer clicks, and comments are accepted for stories and individually monitored. Public participation in decision-making, therefore, would in theory be simply a further step along the process of public engagement.

Public involvement would address a range of demands in the literature. For example, both Appreciative Inquiry in its fullest sense (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008), and Senge et al.'s (2008) Systems Thinking in Learning Organisations, call for all stakeholders to be engaged in the transformation of a system. Public involvement also addresses Senge et al.'s dichotomy

created by the industrial-age bubble, where those inside the system of journalism are privileged over those outside the system. More specifically, the interaction has the potential to address the calls in the literature for re-imagining what it means to be a journalist (Gade, 2011; Kunelius & Ruusunoksa, 2008; Lovink & Rossier, 2011; Rivas-Rodriguez, 2011;). As O'Donnell et al.'s (2012) survey in Australia showed, senior journalists and editors understand that there is "citizen fatigue" (p. 27) for the idea that only journalists decide who or what constitutes news.

Summary

In this chapter I have used the Appreciative Inquiry phases of Discover, Dream, and Design to consider the findings of this research, and to propose new theory and practice for the Relational Newsroom. The provocative propositions - 1) A group constantly running in newsrooms using the AI process, and 2) A live public interaction process for newsroom decision-making – have the potential to take research and practice of journalism, relational leadership, and AI forward. Through this process I have answered the two secondary research questions: 1) From understanding how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms, what training and development would contribute to leadership in the newsroom? 2) How would this leadership training and development contribute to journalism in the digital age? The final phase of the AI framework process, Deliver, will be address in the next chapter, which concludes this thesis.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion and Destiny

"Without love, without acceptance of others living beside us,

there is no social process and, therefore, no humanness"

(Maturana & Varela, 1987, p. 246-7)

Introduction

Journalism is embarking on new beginnings after a chapter of a stable mass-media model which Kung (2010) points out has lasted some generations. In the same way, I consider this chapter is more than just a conclusion; it is also a beginning in which the recommendations serve as personal commitments for my future actions in journalism. From my observations, recommendations for future research are is typically situated in the concluding chapter of a thesis, so the Destiny phase of my discussion which considers future research and action is positioned very well here. In keeping with the generative intentions of Appreciative Inquiry, starting the conclusion chapter of this thesis with the Destiny phase also maintains the voices of my co-researchers, along with my voice, through to the end of the process. As already acknowledged in the Findings, Chapter Five, the word "should" is not typical language in research findings and recommendations, but I continue to use the term because it matches the generative intention of the AI framework.

In the Destiny phase, I outline the further research that should be undertaken to test the ideas that I propose. Through this process I complete the answering of the two secondary research questions, which I began to address in the Discussion (Chapter 7), by considering the implications of the research. The two secondary research questions are: 1) From understanding how leadership empowers learning in newsrooms, what training and development would

contribute to leadership in the newsroom? 2) How would this leadership training and development contribute to journalism in the digital age?

Limitations of this research are also summarised within this chapter, notably surrounding the part that Appreciative Inquiry has played in the research framework, method and recommendations for future actions. Finally, I reflect on a process which started as a practical questioning of how leadership had time to empower learning in newsrooms, became as much a philosophical reflection on the topic, and has melded the practical and philosophical to offer suggestions which have theory and practice as two sides of the one coin. I see myself as a leader, not only in journalism in New Zealand, but in ensuring that its fullest potential to contribute to democracy in the world is a Destiny constantly worth striving for.

This thesis draws on findings that Communication, Trust, Personal Leadership and Structure should be used as foundations for Relational Newsrooms of the future. Such newsrooms should embed structures based on Appreciative Inquiry theory and practice. The aim of those structures would be to firstly turn news media businesses into learning organisations, and secondly contribute to re-imagining the field of journalism. Critical to that re-imagining will be the voices of those outside the field of journalism, the public, who should be served by journalism. In this Destiny phase I make recommendations which will contribute to such an outcome.

Destiny Phase

Outline of Destiny phase.

In the final Destiny phase of AI, those involved plan and commit as individuals and groups of people who have already developed images of the future through the Discover, Dream and Design phases. Provocative propositions made in the Design stage typically lead to activities, actions, commitments, tasks and processes. In contrast to the AI process used which was driven

by the groups, for the purposes of this chapter I am the only one involved in this Design phase of this secondary, 4-D process. I have adapted the process to suit the discussion which began in the previous chapter, and therefore I am also the only one making the recommendations and commitments. However, as Reed (2007) points out, any reader of this thesis also becomes a potential participant by, firstly, reading it; then considering the questions raised through their own lens; and possibly taking their own actions. My adapted Destiny phase will outline two proposals for further action research which I will undertake to investigate the Relational Newsroom in theory and practice. I also outline implications that the actions I will take may have for journalism, leadership, learning and the development of AI.

Relational Newsroom action research.

The two Destiny actions which I propose to undertake based on the Design phase are:

1) Draw on the Design phase provocative proposal of the Relational Newsroom to develop and implement an action research programme based in a working newsroom.
2) Adapt, trial, research, and implement a Relational Newsroom process in a student newsroom with the aim of understanding how journalism students could be prepared for workplace learning.

For the purposes of this thesis there is no need to further explain action one, because it would broadly replicate the process used in my research and recommended in the previous Discussion Chapter 7. It would need to be adapted to fit the context of the newsroom in which the action research is conducted.

Action two requires more detailed development because it would be situated inside a learning institution, such as the journalism school in which I teach. For example, a scenario could be to start with one of the many student newsroom assessments based on real-life reporting activities,

such as street-polling, court reporting, council meetings, live election coverage as a newsroom project, or internships. One of these could be used as a pilot research project using the 4-D Relational Newsroom process focusing on an aspect of new experiences for the students. The intent would be to have a reflective and contributing process for both the students and tutors on the course, and, in particular, for the students to leave the school and go into newsrooms with a deeper understanding of the Relational Newsroom discussed in this research.

Implications for journalism.

The actions of my Destiny phase would potentially allow many people with a stake in journalism to engage in and have a say in its future. Action one would involve groups of journalists in working newsrooms and their readers, while action two would involve journalism students and tutors. Such actions would bring a humanistic approach called for by Deuze (2011) and give multiple layers of stakeholders a say in the transformation described by Kung (2010), which the field of journalism is currently undergoing.

My suggestions address some of the critical issues facing news media. While those issues manifest themselves in fewer people paying to access news, and in falling advertising revenue, they have deeper roots. Journalism's authority is no longer paramount because, as pointed out by Gade & Lowrey (2011) and Kunelius & Ruusunoksa (2008), news media is playing catch-up to a post-modern society which embraces multiple perspectives and flexible meanings. Such a shift requires reimagining the way journalists think and act, as suggested by Kunelius & Ruusunoksa (2008) and Singer (2011), and therefore the process of its knowledge creation recommended by Lovink and Rossiter (2011). On the one hand, such criticism could be addressed as a deficit but, within the framework of Appreciative Inquiry, I argue that such reimagining and knowledge creation with all stakeholders allows journalism a greater connectedness.

Such a practice of connective journalism requires a body of abstract knowledge which will only come from opening itself up by bursting the bubbles described by Senge (2008) externally, and Strong (2011) internally, by taking on relational leadership practices. Such practices, described by Gergen as "falling into each other's eyes" (p. 336), might actually produce a rolling of eyes among journalists who are paid to be sceptical and live by daily if not minute-by-minute deadlines. My co-researchers may not have fallen into each other's eyes, but they did show the ability through already established interviewing skills to understand, and recount to the group, each other's experiences. I am encouraged to propose that the quick uptake of the co-researchers suggests that if an ongoing organisational development structure such as AI were embedded in newsroom practice it would quickly move from being a theoretical exercise to a state of mind. I saw enough evidence in the three, 90-minute focus groups used in this research to draw parallels with the findings of Bushe (2000), that even organisational cultures that value "hard-headedness" (p. 101) can be touched and become generative when people listen to each other's stories of others at their best. I suggest journalism has historically been such a hard-headed culture, but the connective, humanistic journalism discussed in the literature and by co-researchers in this study, has the potential to transform the field, and to play a leadership role by doing so.

Implications for leadership research.

The transformative state in which journalism finds itself means it offers a crucible for leadership practice and research. When Bennis (2007) listed the fields of study which should collaborate to addressing the world's leadership challenges, the list included "cognitive scientists, social psychologists, sociologists, neuroscientists, anthropologists, biologists, ethicists, political scientists, historians, sociobiologists and others" (p. 4). However Bennis paid particular attention to students of media and communications because of the critical role media plays in the

world. I propose that within the broader field, journalism specifically is perfectly situated to make a contribution.

Certainly the momentum for research into media leadership and management has been building (Deuze, 2011; Killibrew, 2004; Kung, 2010). I used an Appreciative Inquiry process for this research and propose it is the most logical framework and organisational learning structure to unshackle the creativity Kung (2010) says is latent in legacy media, and also to address the complexity which challenges leadership and demands relational leadership (Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012). Appreciative Inquiry provides a way forward to those who are grappling with relational leadership research, and, in particular, the debates surrounding separate entities creating relationships, or relationships creating the entities. The newsroom provides an environment to explore such questions because of the distinct leadership motivations at play in the context.

Taking my lead from Ospina and Sorensen's (2006) premise that leadership can only be understood in context, by understanding how others make sense of it and each other, as they take on the challenges of collective work, the implications for leadership research in journalism must necessarily include, among others, servant (Greenleaf, 1977) and personal (Avolio & Reichard, 2008; Schaetti et al., 2008) leadership practices. Servant leadership goes to the heart of journalism's role to give people the information they need to participate in democracy. The co-researchers who contributed to this thesis reinforced such thinking when they discussed why they do the job they do. Such a mission requires personal leadership and decision-making with its roots in the hunger identified as a factor in leadership empowering learning in newsrooms.

Implications for newsroom workplace learning.

Just as the Relational Newsroom provides a structure for leadership to arise at all layers of the newsroom, so too the system allows for learning to arise at all layers. What my proposal does not

appear to address on the surface is the type of learning which is typical of the National Diploma in Applied Journalism, which could be described as the "doing" of journalism. The applied diploma was a catalyst for this research, because it prompted me to wonder how supervisors in newsrooms which were becoming smaller and busier were going to provide the oversight required to verify the learner's achievements in the qualification. I propose that the Relational Newsroom contributes to these demands by situating the argument in the discussion on lifelong workplace learning.

Describing lifelong workplace learning, Usher (2009) paints a picture which looks familiar to these dreams of journalists in newsrooms, with an organisation of work marked by informal and networked social relations and flat/lateral hierarchies. Flexibility, continuous learning, social skills and flexible competencies, rather than subject-based knowledge, are valued in lifelong workplace learning. I propose group work, collaborative learning and learning from peers can be a positive resource for all involved and it is in the practice of the Relational Newsroom where I propose that leadership which empowers learning can arise.

Such learning does not directly address the oversight of the "doing" of journalism required by a qualification such as the applied diploma. However, I argue that the Relational Newsroom, practiced in both journalism schools and working newsrooms, could contribute by generating reflective learners and leaders at all layers in the organisation. Depending on which layer individuals are in, they will be more ready to take up the challenge of guiding learners formally or informally, or earning a qualification through the evidence of the work they are doing on the job.

One other discussion to consider is put forward by Edwards and Usher (2008): that learning has been captured by globalisation which is driven by corporations wielding power and

knowledge, as is understood in the theories of Foucault (Alvesson & Svenningsson, 2012; Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000; Gergen, 1994; Ransom, 1997). Media corporations such as News Limited are a typical example of the argument. However, learning organisation theorists such as Senge et al (2008) and practitioners such as de Geus (2002), argue that large organisations are, in fact, living human systems which need to operate as learning organisations to survive for the good of everyone. Indeed, the learning organisation structure I propose has parallel's with Usher's (2009) faith in experiential learning when expressed thus, "as a pedagogy, experiential learning has the capacity to unsettle the established order and hence has a transformative potential" (p. 175).

Interestingly, at the same time Usher suggests experiential learning has the potential to break the stranglehold of higher education. Usher's suggestion has been brought into a sharper focus, because as I began writing this conclusion the decision was made by Fairfax New Zealand to take post-graduate interns directly into the organisation and train them as journalists in-house using the applied diploma (Personal communication, C. Lind, November, 2013). For several years Fairfax interns have attended one of the three university journalism schools in New Zealand. This recent decision appears to have taken journalism training back 30 years and more to the time of my own cadetship, when training was still conducted in-house. I believe that the Fairfax decision makes the Relational Newsroom even more timely, given that new structures for learning mean newsrooms represent rich new ground for the use of Appreciative Inquiry.

Implications for Appreciative Inquiry research.

Situating an Appreciative Inquiry process in an operating newsroom, and in a student newsroom, would, firstly, add a new context to the understanding of AI, leadership and learning in different settings, and, secondly, allow for deeper reflection on critique of the AI process.

On the first point, Appreciative Inquiry has already been used in many and diverse areas such as the UK Health system (Reed, 2007), a Canadian financial services firm (Cooperrider, et al., 2008), at the BBC (Berrisford, 2005), at a journalism conference (Holmann, 2001), in a university programme studying leadership and transformative learning (Mankey & Stoneham, 2011), in a small business in the UK (George and McLean, 2002), and to develop a mentoring system for Pacific learners and leaders (Chu, 2009). However, I was not able to find any academic literature of its dedicated use in a newsroom setting, which suggests there is potential for research into its use in the setting.

On the second point, using Appreciative Inquiry in newsrooms has the potential to bring deeper critical inquiry to the AI process. In their argument for Critical Appreciative Process (CAP), Grant & Humphries (2006) point out that AI has been challenged for its focus on the positive, because it may not address problems. However, my research shows that AI in the newsroom context can raise challenging issues, address gaps, and give those who are not in positions of power a voice and access to questioning.

I found the individuals' story telling allowed them and others to critically reflect on the stories. I contend that this factor built into AI is enhanced by using it in the newsroom context where it is the job of journalists to be questioning, to be sceptical, to write stories, and to read and critique stories. As one participant in the research groups said, "In one sense we're professional gossips". However, just as AI theory suggests human beings prefer to move towards the light if they are given the opportunity (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 2008), so too the response of journalists in this research suggest they could be inspired by stories of leadership empowering learning to design an ideal future.

The first evidence of this critical inquiry came in the fact that each story told by the individuals represented a challenging situation for them personally. For example a Junior Reporter spoke of the challenge of talking to a mother whose child had just died, and who wanted others to be aware of the situation causing the death. The stress before making the call caused him to come close to vomiting, but he noted that the results of the experience was one of becoming a better journalist, and of serving readers, through meeting the challenge.

High point examples can also point to gaps in, or inspire reflections on, current practice which can maintain future mindfulness. The following reflection is from the Supervisor in Group One:

> I had an experience the other day where I sat back at the end of a total [expletive] of a story and I looked at it and I pinpointed the error went wrong right at the beginning of the day and it was my fault and [not that of] the reporter who I was hounding all day. It was actually my fault for not doing something much clearer and much quicker at the beginning of the day.

Some of the stories prompted more experienced journalists in the groups to contrast current ways of operating with the past. One of the Editors followed up with this contrast to past practice:

> I am hoping what this shows Bernie is that we've come a long way, and the fact that senior staff spend that time with reporters before and after. Because I am not sure that was going on 20-30 years ago: it was that, 'harden up, get out there and do it. Why didn't you do it?' And we've had a number of experiences in the newsroom, [reporters have] got off the phone and been quite shaken by stories they've done, or it's affected them, or by whatever's going on in their own life. I think we do manage to spot that now.

This quote comes from the Informal Mentor in Group One reporter discussing camaraderie when compared to an earlier experience:

> That camaraderie is really important and newsrooms I have been involved in over the last 10 years have put a great deal of stock into developing and building that. As compared to, say for example, [me] getting a bunch of reporters together in the UK for a drink and getting a roasting from the newsed (sic) the next day 'because we don't want people being [expletive] friends here, ok?'.

All three Editors in the groups contrasted current and future models of increasing interaction between Editors and reporters with stories of a "mahogany row" where Editors were shut away in their offices and passed down instructions. Allowing negatives, problems or concerns to emerge, be acknowledged, and reflected on can be part of the process of Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and journalism's ongoing challenges provide an opportunity for such critique to be explored.

Destiny summary.

The Destiny phase for this research thesis brings together the threads of leadership and learning in both working newsrooms and student newsrooms. I have proposed that action research be undertaken in both contexts by embedding the framework of Appreciative Inquiry in the Relational Newsroom. I argue that such action research would have implications for journalism, leadership research, workplace learning and Appreciative Inquiry.

Limitations

The numbers involved in this study - 11 people in three newsrooms - are too small to allow generalisations to be made from this research. For example in relation to diversity, the numbers

and sizes of the focus groups did not allow for balancing, for example, gender, age, and ethnicity, staff sizes in and across each newsroom.

Social constructionist research produces one picture of reality and one way forward: in the case of this research with leadership empowering learning in newsrooms. However, Uhl-Bien and Ospina (2012) say that partial replication across groups in the research method, as I achieved, goes some way to adding weight to the findings and their usefulness across the field. Another factor in research into journalism in New Zealand, and pointed out by Strong (2011), is that the size of the news media environment in New Zealand, including the number of outlets and journalists, means it is possible to draw some theoretical assumptions for future research, which I have done.

Another possible limitation is that the research was conducted inside the current dominant paradigm of news as a commodity (Hirst, 2011) raised in Chapter 2 on the journalism background, and therefore no other possible constructs are addressed. For example, inside that paradigm, questions of power and authority could be raised, as understood by authors in the theories of Foucault (Alvesson & Svenningsson, 2012; Danaher et al., 2000; Gergen, 1994; Gill, 2010; Ransom, 1997). To an extent the question of power is addressed in the previous section of this chapter, where it is acknowledged that any future research would need to address authority as a construct. However, I also propose that the idea of organisations as living human systems (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 2008; de Gues, 1998; Senge, 2008), and Appreciative Inquiry's aim to engage every voice in the system, go some way towards addressing those arguments.

Final thoughts

This study set out with the aim of understanding how leadership empowered learning in the newsroom. My intent to contribute to leadership and learning in journalism is motivated by more

than 30 years as a journalist, editor, and latterly a journalism tutor. I have been surprised where the journey has led me. For example I started this thesis focused on individual leader development, but by the time I got through the field work I could see the benefits of using relational practices for leadership development in all layers of a newsroom. Having everyone being involved in systemic relational practices to generate a learning organisation is both an ideal and a pragmatic answer to the challenges facing newsrooms. On reflection that shift was inevitable because of a personal stance; that my life would be devoted to having journalism make a difference in the world through educating the next generation of journalists.

As I have taken on academic scholarship in exploration of my goal, I have become excited as a first-time researcher to discover the philosophies about leadership, learning and organisational thinking which have been developing since humanity was able to argue. There have been other times when my 30-plus years of journalism has the sceptic in me questioning, "hang on, what about some of these authors and ideas I have quoted?" For example, Berrisford (2005) talks of AI in another guise being used in the BBC 15 years ago, and yet the past couple of years have produced a series of shocking revelations about ingrained practices and perhaps the turning of many blind eyes (for example, Evans, 2012). Much of the Organisational Development (OD) theory I have discussed (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Senge, 1990) has been developed in the US, the centre of the global financial crisis and born of greed inside some of the biggest organisations in the world (for example, Labaton, 2008). And OD scholars such as Senge (2008) cite organisations such as BP and Shell which have been involved in major pollution issues in recent years (for example Robertson & Kraus, 2010; Vidal, 2013). But as I reflect on all of these stories, I realise that I know about all of them as they have been filtered to me through the news media, and they represent human failings which are found in the media itself (Leveson, 2012).

What all of these examples have in common is that they involve human beings in organisations which are living systems. While those living systems will provide as many examples of failure and problems as we want to find, they provide the equal and opposite opportunity to provide the light for us to follow, the high points of what it means to be a human being. When all stakeholders in a field such as journalism get the chance to contribute to what Cooperrider & Whitney (2005) describe as moving toward the light, then they can actually drive the transformation of their newsroom, their news organisation, and the field of journalism instead of just having change thrust upon them. To adapt a description of AI by Gergen (2008): "If these are the kinds of relations that have given us vitality… what kind of [journalism] can we create that would embody these ideals?". The starting point in this world of global networks driving change is the recognition that hierarchical leadership is inadequate and needs to be replaced with leadership that empowers the individuals to become, as Senge et al. (2005) put it so well, "a real human being" (p. 186).

The "doing" skills of journalism are important to know, and to learn, for those who want to operate in the field. However to have that doing empowered and effective requires understanding, what Maturana and Varela (1988) call the "knowledge of knowledge" (p. 248): the understanding that it takes to operate as a relational human being. This understanding underpins Tennant's (1998, 2009) calls for those who argue about whether self or relationship is the more important starting point in the debates about learning, to consider that they are seeing different sides of the same coin. The starting point for such a discussion should be that concern for the other is the only universal moral good.

The universal moral good, and concern for the other, are also the starting point for journalism.

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Faculty of Education

Appendix A: Letters, information and consent forms

Mike Fletcher
Executive Director
New Zealand Journalists Training Organisation
Communications and Media Industry Training Organisation
PO Box 31131
Lower Hutt 5040
Dear Mike

Re: Empowering newsroom leadership

Further to our informal discussion, I am formally seeking your support for my research into exploring how newsroom leaders can be developed to empower learning for their staff. To identify newsrooms which would be appropriate for the research, I would like to use newsrooms in which journalists have achieved the New Zealand Journalists Training Organisation's National Applied Diploma in Journalism.

I will run three focus groups – one in an APN newsroom, one in a Fairfax newsroom, and one in a newsroom which is not majority owned by either APN or Fairfax. Could you please give me a list of newsrooms in those three categories with graduates, and the number of graduates in each. The information sheet attached for participants explains I am using an appreciative approach to the research, to find the "best of" experiences in newsroom leadership to inform what works and build from that in the research. Given that, and given your working relationship with newsroom leaders and journalist students through the diploma process, I would also like to get your thoughts and input to assist my sampling of appropriate newsrooms for consideration.

I then will identify possible newsrooms and then contact Rick Neville at APN and Clive Lind at Fairfax for their permission to contact, and input on appropriate newsrooms. For the site not majority owned by APN or Fairfax, I will contact the appropriate executive.

I will be stressing that it is important for the research method that the groups be voluntary and by invitation. I will follow up this letter with a phone call in two days to give you a chance to consider the information, answer any questions and get a response.

Yours sincerely,

Bernie Whelan
Masters in Education student, Victoria University
whelanbern@myvuw.ac.nz
Daytime phone at Whitireia Journalism 04-237-3100, 021-383-997

Faculty of Education

LETTER TO NEWS ORGANISATION EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

Date
Name
Position
Address
Address
Dear

Re: Empowering newsroom leadership

I am doing a Masters of Education thesis on how newsroom leaders can be developed to empower learning for their staff. I would like to run a focus group at one of your company's newsrooms where one or more journalists has successfully completed the National Applied Diploma in Journalism. Journalism Training Organisation executive officer Mike Fletcher informs me that the following newsrooms come into that category: (list to be sourced)

Enclosed please find the information sheet for participants, questions that will be asked, and consent forms which will be used for the focus group, which I expect to run for up to 90 minutes. It is important for the research method that the groups be voluntary and by invitation. However, I would like your support for the research, ask that you nominate one of the newsrooms as a preferred site for a focus group, and permission to make contact with the editor.

Once I have your approval, I will make contact with the editor at the site and discuss the research with him. I will follow up this letter with a phone call in two days to give you a chance to consider the information, answer any questions and get a response.

Yours sincerely,

Bernie Whelan
Masters in Education student, Victoria University
whelanbern@myvuw.ac.nz
Daytime phone at Whitireia Journalism 04-237-3100, 021-383-997

Faculty of Education

LETTER TO EDITORS

Date
Name
Editor
Address
Address
Dear

Re: Empowering newsroom leadership

Thank you for taking time to talk on the phone. As discussed, I am exploring how newsroom leaders can be developed to empower learning for their staff. Your (company executive position) has given permission for me to approach you.

I would like to run a focus group in your newsrooms because one or more journalists have successfully completed the National Applied Diploma in Journalism. Ideally the group would be made up of yourself, the chief reporter or similar role, the diploma graduate and a senior peer of that person's choosing in the newsroom. The focus group would run for up to 90 minutes.

Enclosed please find the information sheet, a list of questions and consent forms which will be used for the research. As outlined in the information, it is important that research participants are invited, and that participation is entirely voluntary. Therefore, once I have your approval, I will make contact individually with others in your newsroom.

I will follow up this letter with a phone call in two days to give you a chance to consider the information and talk further about how the research.

Yours sincerely,

Bernie Whelan
Masters in Education student, Victoria University
whelanbern@myvuw.ac.nz
Daytime phone at Whitireia Journalism 04-237-3100, 021-383-997

Faculty of Education

Date

Information sheet for a study into development of newsroom leaders

Researcher: Bernie Whelan, Faculty of Education, Victoria University of Wellington

Purpose of the research

I am a Masters student and as part of my degree I am undertaking a research project leading to a thesis. The purpose of my study is to identify, describe and analyse how newsroom leaders can be prepared to empower learning for their staff given the constant and dynamic state of change in which they operate, driven by new media technologies. I wish to identify, describe and analyse what types of training and development could best serve current and future newsroom leaders so that journalists may have the fullest opportunity to develop and make a difference in the community. I am interested in this subject because of my 34 years as a journalist and editor, and now as a journalism tutor. The University requires that ethics approval be obtained for research involving human participants.

Who will be involved

This study will give all of those with a stake in learning in the newsroom a voice in identifying positive attributes and practices that can be trained for and built on. To research newsroom leadership through diverse points of view, in your newsroom I would like to run a focus group by inviting four people. They are a newsroom leader, the person to whom a newsroom leader reports directly, a graduate of the National Diploma of Applied Journalism, and at least one other member of the newsroom who is nominated by the graduate as being a peer who helped with guidance during the diploma.

What will be expected of participants

The focus group will run for no more than 90 minutes. I realise this is a large amount of time out of a working day and therefore am flexible about when it may best suit your newsroom.

The focus group will comprise four phases.

1) In the first phase participants will be put in pairs and interview each other using the following question

> *Describe a learning experience during your time in this or any newsroom when you felt most empowered in your learning, and*
>
> *What were the conditions that made that experience possible?*

The remaining phases will be completed as one group and be based on points from the first phase, using prompting questions to:

2) envision those experiences, conditions, practices being alive in a newsroom;

3) plan how that might be achieved;

While this study is intended to inform a thesis on newsroom leadership development, I am mindful that the nature of the research method means there may be an impact on your newsroom practice. Therefore, one week later, and then again one month later, a brief email survey will be sent to each participant asking: "Since being involved in the focus group on empowering newsroom leadership, has anything altered in your newsroom practice or experience which was prompted by your participation? If yes, please describe".

By consenting you understand that:

Should any participants feel the need to withdraw from the project, they may do so without question at any time up until the end of the data gathering period. Just let me know at the time.

Responses will be collected by digital voice recorders, by written notes, and by email. All material collected will be confidential. No other person besides my supervisor Dr Cherie Chu, myself will listen to or view the recordings, which will be stored in two places – a password protected Victoria University server, and in a password protected Scandisk Vault in my personal hard drive.

Responses will be transcribed, and then sent back to each individual by email to ensure participants are happy with what they said. Responses will then be interpreted by me and emailed back to the participant to ensure they are satisfied with the interpretation. Responses and interpretations will be put into a written report on a confidential basis. It will not be possible for you to be identified personally.

The thesis will be submitted for marking to the Faculty of Education and deposited in the University library. It is intended that one or more articles will be submitted for publication in scholarly journals and at professional conferences. Recordings and transcriptions will be destroyed seven years after the end of the project.

I recognise that each person involved holds different positions in the same newsroom. I have therefore made an allowance for that in the accompanying consent form, although this does not preclude the group members reaching an agreement at a later time to use the outcomes for newsroom practice.

If you have any further questions or would like to receive further information about this project, please contact me at whelanbern@myvuw.ac.nz, or phone me at Whitireia Journalism on 04-235-3100, or 021-383-997, or my supervisor Cherie Chu, at the Faculty of Education, Victoria University, cherie.chu@vuw.ac.nz or phone 04-472-1000.

This research has been assessed and approved by Victoria University Faculty of Education Ethics Committee.

Faculty of Education

CONSENT FORM FOR JOURNALISM TRAINING ORGANISATION ROLE IN RESEARCH EMPOWERING NEWSROOM LEADERSHIP

Please tick the boxes to the right of each point

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research about empowering newsroom leadership.	
I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.	
I consent to information provided by me being used to contact news organisations I have nominated.	
I will receive a copy of the research findings for feedback before it is entered into the final report.	
I understand that all data will be stored under password protection both on a Victoria University server, and on a personal hard drive.	
I understand that any information I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisor.	
I understand that the digital recording of interviews will be electronically deleted seven years after the end of the project.	
I understand that my responses in contact with the researcher may be used in papers or presentations that are about newsroom leadership.	
I understand that I will receive transcriptions of my responses in contact with the researcher to ensure I am happy with them, and later of the interpretation of those responses for my agreement.	
I acknowledge that other organisation I nominate may be involved in the research, and agree to respect their confidentiality.	

Signed: ----------

Name:

(Please print clearly) Mike Fletcher Date: / /

Position, company: Executive Director, Journalism Training Organisation.

Faculty of Education

(News executive consent form)

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

EMPOWERING NEWSROOM LEADERSHIP

Please tick the boxes to the right of each point

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research about empowering newsroom leadership.	
I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.	
I consent to employees of my business to be involved in research.	
I will receive a copy of the research findings for feedback before it is entered into the final report.	
I understand that all data will be stored under password protection both on a Victoria University server, and on a personal hard drive.	
I understand that any information I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher, the supervisor, the published results will not use my business's name, and that no opinions will be attributed to me in any way that will identify me.	
I understand that the digital recording of interviews will be electronically deleted sevens years after the end of the project.	
I understand that my responses may be used in papers or presentations that are about newsroom leadership.	
I understand that I will receive transcriptions of my responses in contact with the researcher to ensure I am happy with them, and later of the interpretation of those responses for my agree	
I acknowledge that other members of the business are involved in the focus group, and agree to respect their confidentiality.	

Signed: ----------

Name: (Please print clearly) ---------- Date: / /
Position, company: ----------

Faculty of Education

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

EMPOWERING NEWSROOM LEADERSHIP

Please tick the boxes to the right of each point

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research about empowering newsroom leadership.	
I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.	
I understand that my involvement is voluntary and that I may withdraw myself or any information I have provided during the data gathering.	
I understand that my identity and that of the newsroom involved will be confidential.	
I understand that all data will be stored under password protection both on a Victoria University server, and on a personal hard drive.	
I understand that any information I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisor, the published results will not use my name, and that no opinions will be attributed to me in any way that will identify me.	
I understand that the digital recording of interviews will be electronically deleted seven years after the end of the project.	
I understand that my responses may be used in papers or presentations that are about newsroom leadership.	
I understand that I will receive transcriptions of my responses in the focus group to ensure I am happy with them, and later of the interpretation of those responses for my agreement.	
I acknowledge that other members of the newsroom are involved in the focus group, and agree to respect their confidentiality.	

I consent to being part of the focus group.

Signed: ----------

Name of participant:
(Please print clearly) ---------- Date: / /

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Questions in focus group

Describe a learning experience during your time in this or any newsroom when you felt leadership most empowered your learning.

What were the conditions that made the experience possible?

What would you see happening if leadership contributing to empowering learning lived in all layers of a newsroom?

Who might someone in your role be as a leader?

What would have to happen for this to occur?

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EMPOWERING NEWSROOM LEADERSHIP

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL QUESTIONNAIRE AFTER THE FOCUS GROUP

Since the focus group on empowering newsroom leadership, has anything altered in your newsroom practice or experience which was prompted by your participation? If yes, please describe.

Appendix B: Discover phase whiteboard notes for individual groups

Group One Discover phase				
Peer reporter Clarity Team Achieve/goal Getting out - Communication Direct Hunger/ambition Success Understanding Culture - Drive - Success Objective setting Leadership culture - Thought - Judgement Freedom & time Culture - Seeing it - Contact - Confidence -backing Confidence - Self - others	**Supervisor** Confidence in leadership (arrow down) Clear instruction (arrow down) Clear instruction (arrow down) Trust (arrow down) Time +(arrows) Clarity Sense of order Framework Planning Listening - thinking - feeling Flexibility	**Editor** Trust Team Listening Asking/communication Generating enthusiasm Engaging Involving Culture (arrows up these 3) Clarity Freedom Resources Trust ex management (bracket to right of freedom & resources) Seeking ideas Using experience Cross pollination Taking time/mindfulness - focus/refocus Goal awareness Guiding principles	**Junior Reporter** Encouragement Advice Informal mentoring Sharing Modeling (arrow to IM) Multiple skills Camaraderie Old/young tech(nology) Culture – work on it Breaking down barriers Training Trust Asking Communication	**Positive Core** Clarity - communication - goal - principals Trust (consequence) Teamwork - communication Freedom - Engagement - camaraderie - enthusiasm communication(tool)

Group Two Discover Phase				
Peer reporter Trust (not micro) Communication Clarity Flexibility Freedom Competition positive - Hunger Confidence Co-operation (arrow) Acknowledgement (next day)	**Supervisor** Safety Communication Compassion Flexibility Dealing with individuals - 1 approach no fit all Awareness (arrow up) Balancing Better outcome by doing (arrow to individuals comment) Benefits down track - Trust - Relationships	**Editor** Trust No man is an island No-one has all ideas Relationships - Long term Goes both ways Understand what don't know Honesty Respect Understand self Clear/open/up front About expectations	**Junior Reporter** Support Trust Role models Clear communication - Expectations Respect Flexibility Confidence - Given - Result Mentoring - Ongoing Robust of process Being challenged	**Positive Core** Trust Communication Relationships/teamwork Mutual respect Clear goals - Excellent journalism Role models/mentors

Group Three Discover Phase			
Editor Self-directed goals Support (?) – [in] past DIY Ad-hoc Journalists thriving - Tension - Drama Journalist first Don't want to let self down, others down Collegial – not structural, but emotional Steep curve	**Supervisor/Informal Mentor** Structure Opportunities Insight - Strengths - Weaknesses - Drives Support Collegial - Given - Sought Sounding board (arrow to sought) Ongoing learning Ambition/confidence	**Junior Reporter** Support/encouragement Confidence Trust Pride Empathy Service reader Challenge	**Positive Core** Support Collegial Structure Challenge Ambition Self-direction Competitiveness

Appendix C: Dream phase lists from each group

Group 1	**Group 2**	**Group 3**
Excitement constant Chatter Discussion Noise Ideas Empty seats (action) Cross fertilization, e.g. editors-reporters, [chief reporters-editorial artists] Principals in writing Why [journalism]? (Save the world)	Excellent journalism Positive environment Staff retention and attraction Job satisfaction Clear pathways for all Great teamwork Outward facing - People [readers] welcome in newsroom Comm[unication] effectively good stuff [newsroom is]doing Busy-ness Productivity Dialogue See people growing Problem employees are dealt with quickly and effectively	Flatter hierarchical structures Trust staff to get on with it People will be more autonomous Ideas will be celebrated No silos Flexibility in roles Everyone will be adaptable