
This item was submitted to [Loughborough's Research Repository](#) by the author.
Items in Figshare are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved, unless otherwise indicated.

Biased or balanced? Assessing BBC news and current affairs performance in covering the badger cull in England

PLEASE CITE THE PUBLISHED VERSION

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.11.011>

PUBLISHER

Elsevier

VERSION

AM (Accepted Manuscript)

PUBLISHER STATEMENT

This paper was accepted for publication in the journal *Journal of Rural Studies* and the definitive published version is available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.11.011>

LICENCE

CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

REPOSITORY RECORD

Stanyer, James. 2020. "Biased or Balanced? Assessing BBC News and Current Affairs Performance in Covering the Badger Cull in England". Loughborough University. <https://hdl.handle.net/2134/13373831.v1>.

Biased or Balanced? Assessing BBC news and current affairs performance in covering the Badger Cull in England

James Stanyer

Forthcoming Journal of Rural Studies

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.11.011>

Received 6 May 2020; Received in revised form 1 October 2020; Accepted 18 November 2020

Abstract

This article represents the first systematic examination of BBC coverage of one of the most controversial rural issues in a generation, namely the culling of badgers (a protected species) to stop the spread of bovine TB in England. While the BBC has certain regulatory responsibilities set out in its guidelines to provide duly impartial coverage it has been regularly criticised for being biased. Little is known about the BBC's performance other than what is suggested by critics, previous research having focused on press coverage. Based on an original content analysis of news, current affairs and factual output this article assesses the BBC's coverage. It shows that while competing voices and perspectives were balanced its coverage was not that distinct from its commercial rivals, with both framing the issue as a conflict over badgers rather than about the spread of a disease affecting livestock and livelihoods, and both focusing on a narrow set of voices involved in the conflict.

Key words: bovine TB; badger cull; balance; bias; BBC; news

1. Introduction

In the UK, the BBC remains one of the most important sources of news and information for the population. The organization provides ten national TV channels, regional TV programmes, an internet TV service - BBC Three, 10 national radio stations, 40 local radio stations and a news website (BBC.com). It remains 'the most-used news provider across all platforms' in the UK, with '75% of UK adults' saying 'they use any BBC source for news' (Ofcom, 2019a), further 57 percent named the BBC as their trusted news source—far higher than any other UK news outlet (BBC Trust 2017, cited in Lewis and Cushion, 2019). In 2018-19, the BBC produced some 22,643 hours of news and current affairs output (Ofcom, 2019a). BBC output reaches 96% of adults living in rural areas in the UK (Ofcom, 2019a). The BBC plays a crucial role in reporting and representing societal conflicts including those situated in rural areas. How such conflicts are portrayed plays a key role in shaping audience perceptions of the people and organizations involved, and the causes and solutions (Eldridge, 2005). The BBC's coverage of rural affairs and controversial rural issues has attracted criticism. This has emanated from a range of sources including, advocacy groups on rural issues, Conservative supporting newspapers, and UK government ministers. The BBC have been criticised for being biased against certain rural communities, pursuits and businesses, particularly those connected to agriculture and farming; for providing inaccurate coverage of key rural issues, and for failing to understand complex rural matters. The BBC has a duty to serve all communities, including rural ones, and 'to provide impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with the world around them' (BBC Editorial Guidelines), accurately reflecting the diversity of opinions that exist. Its output needs to conform to the requirements for due impartiality and accuracy (Ofcom, 2019). This is especially important on controversial matters.

This paper explores BBC coverage of the culling of badgers (*Meles meles*) to safeguard cattle from bovine TB (bTB), one of the ‘most controversial and hotly debated environmental issues in modern Britain’ (Lodge and Matus, 2014, p. 367). It draws in part on data from extensive research conducted for the BBC Trust to assess BBC performance in providing duly impartial coverage of rural issues (Stanyer et al., 2014). It starts by providing some context to the cull before examining the criticism of BBC coverage. It then outlines the methods, sampling and instruments used to assess coverage before setting out the results and drawing conclusions. The article argues that the BBC’s performance in covering bTB and the badger cull, a controversial matter on which it has come under much criticism, needs to be assessed not only in relation to how it met its own editorial guidelines around due impartiality, but also comparatively, in how it performed vis-a-vis non-BBC news outlets. BBC news and current affairs has to provide ‘impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with the world around them’ (BBC Editorial Guidelines) regardless of the contested nature of the subject matter and ensuing criticisms. In covering controversial rural matters the BBC has to provide output that is distinct from that which people can gain from commercial news providers rather than play it safe and stick with the media pack as other studies have shown (Cushion et al., 2018).

2. The Badger Cull

Before examining the BBC’s performance it is worth providing some background to the cull in England (for a fuller overview see McCulloch and Reiss, 2017). Cassidy (2012) observes that ‘badgers occupy a significant position in British society, whereby they benefit from extensive legal protection and a highly visible and enthusiastic network of local support groups (the Badger Trust)’ (Cassidy, 2012, p. 193), yet at the same time their activities also lead them into conflict with parts of the rural community, this is the case in relation to the spread of bTB (see Cassidy, 2012, p. 200). The last fifty years have witnessed the growing spread of bTB in the UK (McCulloch and Reiss, 2017). Although the source of this infection is contested, wild badgers have been seen as the main source and periodically culled in an effort to control the spread of infection (Cassidy, 2012, 2017; Dyer and Packham, 2016; McCulloch and Reiss, 2017). In the mid-1990s, UK government commissioned scientists found that evidence of the effectiveness of culls was far from conclusive and recommended further research. The result was a randomised cull trial which concluded that ‘badger culling cannot meaningfully contribute to the future control of cattle TB in Britain’ (Independent Scientific Group, 2007, p. 14, cited in Cassidy, 2012, p. 193).’ While the 2005–2010 Labour government followed scientific advice, the Coalition and Conservative governments from 2010 onwards pursued a culling policy in England against that advice (McCulloch and Reiss, 2017). Despite a lack of evidence of ‘effectiveness and humaneness’ of culls from periodic further trials, culls continued and were rolled out to some 40 areas (McCulloch and Reiss, 2017). However, there has been no UK wide policy, the position in England has differed from the national parliaments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Indeed, ‘distinct policies developed’ based on the ‘same substantial evidence base’ (Spencer, 2011, p. 91). Wales, following scientific evidence adopted a vaccination programme, in Northern Ireland there is a combination of vaccination and a targeted cull, while Scotland maintains its bTB free status but monitors cattle herds (Spencer, 2011). In 2020, with a lack of evidence of cull effectiveness, the UK government announced it would phase out culling, switching to a vaccination policy in England.

3. The Media and the Badger Cull

The limited research that has been conducted on media coverage of the badger cull draws our attention to the often highly polarised nature of coverage of the debate with strong passionate

opinions on both sides (Cassidy, 2012, 2019; Naylor, 2017). These studies have almost exclusively examined the frames deployed by those involved, including the media, in the debate (Cassidy, 2019; Naylor, 2017).

Cassidy (2019) in an examination of UK newspaper coverage, notes that since the 1990s badgers and bTB have been framed in one of two ways, either as an 'agricultural' issue, or an 'environmental risk'. The former frame emphasises the impact on rural communities and livelihoods, especially on farmers, and places this in the context of increasingly marginalised rurality (pp. 248-9). The latter frame is focused on risk containment through the culling of wild badgers (p. 250). This frame, the author notes, downplays the disease problems, seeing it as largely absent, and plays up the consequences of culling for environment and public order (p. 250). The central victim is what she terms the 'good badger'. The 'good badger' is 'social (with other badgers), family oriented, and with humanlike attributes' (Cassidy, 2012, p. 195), but also a 'victim' of humans, as an animal subjected to (illegal) practices of baiting and digging' (Cassidy, 2012, p. 197). This 'framing of badgers could be regarded as culturally dominant' (Cassidy, 2012, p. 197). It contrasts, with 'bad badgers'. Cassidy notes, 'bad badgers are more often discussed in the plural, and in a depersonalised way' (p.198). Cassidy (2019) found that agriculture frame and its representation of badgers was most prevalent in the Conservative supporting press and the environmental risk frame in left leaning newspapers. Interestingly, in areas where there is no cull policy, such as in the Netherlands, 'farmers and hunters' are 'absent in the news as voices on badgers while nature conservationists dominate' (Runhaar et al., 2015, pp. 142-3). The outcome is that 'good badger' frames dominate and the press is 'in favour of badgers in terms of tolerating and protecting them' (Runhaar et al., 2015, pp.143-4). Naylor et al. examine newspapers' framing of 'controversies that surround bTB control', with a particular focus on badger vaccination (2017, p. 5). Their study of over 500 news items in the press covering badger vaccination, between 2004 and 2013, identified three 'dualistic framings' (2017, p. 10). The first relates to the 'scientific evidence' for vaccination vs. what they term the practical reality (p. 10). The second dualism concerns 'badger vaccination vs. culling', and the third, humans vs. wildlife in 'spreading/ controlling the disease' (p. 10).

While these studies together provide an important insight into the perspective of different sides in the conflict and the binary nature of the frames that have emerged around badgers and their culling, they focus on newspaper coverage. The press is not subject to the same regulatory requirements around impartiality as broadcasters. These studies shed no light on how broadcasters balanced competing voices and perspectives and in particular in relation to this article, how these voices and perspectives have been covered by the UK's main public service broadcaster.

3.1. The BBC, its reporting, and its critics

The BBC has long been accused of exhibiting political bias with forces on the left and right denouncing it for favouring their opponents (Bourne, 2016; Lewis, 2015; Lewis and Cushion 2019). The accusations are most visible during election campaigns but are not confined to these periods. However, systematic analyses of BBC output on a range of controversies (Downey et al., 2012; Wahl Jorgensen et al., 2012), have tended to give the BBC a largely clean bill of health (Cushion, et al., 2012; Cushion, 2019). The BBC's coverage of the countryside in the UK has come under widespread and sustained criticism too, accused of a range of biases, such as ignoring rural issues having a metropolitan slant or being biased towards London and the south east of England and away from the UK nations (Harvey and Robins, 1994). In particular, its reporting of certain highly controversial matters in the countryside has come in for much criticism, especially from the Conservative leaning press and various countryside and farming advocacy groups such as, the Countryside Alliance, and the National Farmers' Union. In covering the badger cull, the BBC has

been rebuked for siding with those who are against the cull, giving them too much airtime, or too readily giving high profile anti-cull celebrities a voice while ignoring those supportive of the cull policy, and focusing on the killing of badgers rather than the impact of bTB on livestock and farmers. In essence, the criticisms concern three issues. These are: the focus of the BBC news agenda on matters favouring certain people or groups. The uneven attention given in reports to certain voices, certain people and groups, where some are said to be more prominent than others in reports or get to speak on matters when others do not. And, the unfair evaluation of various people and groups by the BBC.

However, what light does the academic literature shed on what is meant by balance and bias. There is a large body of scholarly work on media impartiality and bias, far too extensive to be reviewed effectively here (for a synoptic account see Hopmann et al., 2012). This research is dominated by studies of media election campaign coverage (Hopmann et al., 2012). In this context, bias is seen as the opposite of balance, namely, as the unequal or partial treatment of political actors, the 'the terms 'balance and bias' are seen as 'antonyms' (Hopmann et al., 2012, p. 243). Research suggests the source of bias might be overt partisan or ideological support for one party or candidate rather than another, or other structural factors (Hopmann et al., 2012). For example, research shows that imbalances emerge courtesy of news values or journalistic routines which mean attention is divided unequally, favouring the actions of the powerful sources such as governments (Hopmann et al., 2012, p. 244). Research suggests unequal treatment manifests its self in coverage in a number of ways, namely, the visibility of actors in the news reports; the favourability shown towards actors in reports; and the issues and frames on which reports focus (Hopmann et al., 2012, p. 245). In relation to this study, these factors chime with the criticisms of BBC coverage voiced above.

The criticisms of BBC bias matter, as mentioned earlier, because as Ofcom note, the BBC's output needs to conform to the requirements around due impartiality. Due in this context means 'adequate or appropriate to the subject and nature of the programme' (Ofcom, 2019). When it comes to highly political events such as elections or controversies this has in practice tended to mean the balancing of competing views from different political parties across programmes as a whole, or what has been termed the 'seesaw model' of impartiality (Bridcut, 2007).

These criticisms are also important because of the wider political context and attempts to unduly seek to influence BBC editorial policy and coverage (Lewis and Cushion, 2019). This is especially true in the often febrile environments that accompany controversies and conflicts. As evidence, criticisms of the BBC's rural coverage led to the BBC Trust, its regulating body at the time, to commission extensive research to assess all aspects of that coverage (Hancock, 2014).

Any examination of media performance needs to involve the 'systematic critical analysis of the conduct and content of mass media in pursuing their stated or expected objectives.' (McQuail, 2016). So in terms of due impartiality, the key criteria for assessing BBC performance are, the thematic focus and whether it favoured some actors more than others; the balance of competing voices for and against the cull; and the journalists' evaluation of people, groups, and policies. The above quote from the editorial guidelines adds one additional goal, namely, 'to help people understand and engage with the world around them.' It is this important value added, that enables viewers and listeners to understand the issue at hand and the various perspectives. The next section sets out how performance is measured.

4. Material and Methods

Based on the concerns set out in the previous section this research identified several key questions. These were: (1) in relation to the prominence given to specific themes – what aspects of an issue or

policy are rendered visible, named and promoted? (2) What knowledge and background information is provided to help audiences understand key issues? (3) who speaks and what is the relative prominence and quotation time achieved by competing actors in coverage? (4) what is the distribution of positive or negative treatment of actors?

These questions were addressed via a content analysis of news, current affairs and factual programmes. This method has been adopted by other studies of BBC performance (Downey et al., 2012; Norris et al. 1999; Stanyer et al., 2014; Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2012). Content analysis is 'is a systematic, quantitative approach to analyzing the content or meaning of communicative messages' (Allen, 2017). It is a widely used method to interrogate media content with a well developed series of procedures (for a synoptic account see Deacon et al., 2007). To address each question the study used specially designed coding manual and schedule.

In relation to question one (the issue balance), the content analysis documented up to six main themes in an item (editorial themes); and the three of the lengthiest and most prominent visuals used in items (key visuals). The content analysis recorded mentions of policy responsibility in respective national parliaments in journalists' commentary, to address question two.

For question three (the actor balance), the content analysis included measures of: the frequency of actor appearance (presence); and the amount of direct quotation time actors were given in coverage (significance).

To tackle question four (actor treatment), the principal measure concerned the manifest treatment of actors by journalists within the coverage. Four measures were used, the journalists use of manifestly positive or negative evaluative language about the actor (favour); the journalists use evaluative terms to describe, understand or seek to explain events (keywords); the use of any caveats about any claims, statements or motives of a quoted actor (caveats); the journalists challenging of the claims of the speaking actor (queries). These could range from a direct refutation of a claim as wholly or partially false to invoking a counter argument or competing claim to questions as to whether its aims are legitimate or achievable.

4.1. Sample

Any assessment needs to look at a wide sample of BBC programmes and non-BBC outlets to aid comparison and get a fuller picture. The existing critique of the badger cull coverage tends to be based on a narrow range or one or two programmes and criticisms extrapolated from this.

The researchers content analysed a non-randomly selected sample of stories (or items) from news programmes, current affairs and factual programmes over 62 days between September 2012 and December 2013. A total of 345 items were examined, including 85 items from non-BBC sources (see table 1). The sample period was chosen because it was the peak period of media interest (Cassidy, 2019) and included the roll out of culling zones (August 2013 saw the culling of badgers in Gloucestershire and Somerset). The sample days were selected purposively to ensure the necessary material was gathered and to maximise the amount of potential output to analyse. This reflects the highly episodic, rather than sustained character of coverage. The days when the issues were in the news were identified in a scoping exercise before coding began. While the sample, does not include all BBC network output, it included a broad cross section of BBC programmes, this was to deal with the criticism of many studies that they generalise on BBC performance by focusing on output of one or two programmes. The sample excluded BBC Scotland, BBC Wales, BBC Northern Ireland as there was no cull policy at the time. To allow comparisons with non-BBC output online newspapers were included.

Table 1: Programme sample

	N	Percent
BBC 1 Breakfast	22	6.4
BBC 1 News at Six	4	1.2
BBC 1 News at Ten	4	1.2
BBC 2 Newsnight	6	1.7
BBC News Channel 5-6pm	8	2.3
BBC 1 Points West 6.30	12	3.5
BBC 1 Newslime 6.30	1	.3
Radio 2 Jeremy Vine programme	12	3.5
Radio 4 Today	15	4.3
Radio 4 World at One	9	2.6
Radio 4 Six O'Clock News	7	2.0
Radio 5 Live Breakfast	9	2.6
BBC Radio Gloucestershire, Breakfast	9	2.6
BBC News Online bbc.co.uk/news	71	20.6
Radio 4 Farming Today	39	11.3
BBC 1 Panorama	1	.3
BBC 2 Autumn Watch	1	.3
Radio 4 Material World	1	.3
Radio 4 Inside Science	1	.3
Telegraph.co.uk	56	16.2
DailyMail.co.uk	15	4.3
Guardian.co.uk	14	4.1
BBC Radio Gloucestershire, Drive	4	1.2
BBC Radio Somerset, Breakfast	12	3.5
BBC Radio Somerset, Drive	8	2.3
BBC Radio Somerset Phone in 9am	4	1.2
Total	345	100.0

4.2. Reliability testing

Intercoder reliability is an important aspect of all content analyses. To ensure high levels of agreement were achieved the following steps were undertaken: rigorous coder training, a close monitoring of coders during the analysis, and conducting reliability tests. The Average Pairwise Percent Agreement was calculated for each variable (Stanyer et al., 2014). There are different tests that can be employed to calculate inter-coder reliability. Average Pairwise Percent Agreement was deemed most suitable for calculating reliability amongst 3 or more coders with nominal data (Stanyer et al., 2014). The aim was to attain a minimum of a 70 percent agreement level and if possible, exceed an 80 percent level (Stanyer et al., 2014). Those variables where the reliability score fell below a 70 percent level were re-examined, and the coders were given further training where necessary. The overall reliability level stood at 73 percent with no variable below 70 percent (Stanyer et al., 2014).

5. Issue balance: a conflict or a disease?

In examining the issue balance, the research identified two main themes and a number of connected subthemes. The two main themes identified in BBC coverage were very much in line with those identified by Cassidy (2019) as dominating the UK press, namely the cull to eliminate risk, and bTB and its spread in the countryside. These, of course, are connected but are not the same thing. The cull is one of a number of ways to reduce risk of bTB, whereas bTB is a disease that kills cattle. In addition, there were 37 subthemes that appeared a total of 650 times (see tables below). As noted

earlier, the cull was a government policy in England at the time, but not supported by scientific evidence as the most effective way to control the spread of bTB, something not replicated in the other UK nations. It was opposed by a range of cause groups and celebrities. In covering the cull we see the focus is divided between a number of sub themes including: assessing the efficacy of the cull; the claims and actions of those involved, particularly protesters; and the costs and impact of this policy. Bovine TB (bTB) is a disease that has a devastating impact on livestock and on farmers livelihoods in the UK. Badgers are possibly one of several ways the disease is spread but this is contested. In coverage of bTB we see certain sub themes emerge such as the costs and impact of bTB and how best to mitigate its effects.

The key issue here is whether the cull and its subthemes were the main element emphasised across output or whether the main issue was bTB and allied themes, as De Vreese observes, 'by virtue of emphasizing some elements of a topic above others, a frame provides a way to understand an event or issue.' (De Vreese, 2005, p. 53). One of the big criticisms, mentioned earlier, was that the main focus of coverage was on the cull of badgers rather than the spread and impact of bTB. However, this needs to be established.

If we take all BBC output of the 650 thematic occurrences identified nearly 80 percent focused on the cull, its efficacy, its consequences and reactions. Bovine TB and its spread accounted for just over 20 percent of occurrences (see tables 2 and 3). So while the spread of bTB is crucial part of the story, given this was why the cull was introduced, the focus of BBC, taken as a whole, was on the cull and its efficacy.

Table 2: The issue balance across BBC output: the disease (subtheme frequency)

Bovine TB	N	%
Preventing spread of bTB - badger vaccination	37	5.7%
Impact of bTB on farmers	31	4.8%
Spread of bTB	30	4.6%
Bovine TB the path of infection (badgers to cows; cow to cow etc)	15	2.3%
Preventing spread - cattle vaccination	9	1.4%
Preventing spread - biosecurity of infected farms discouraging bTB	6	0.9%
Preventing spread - cattle slaughtered (numbers)	6	0.9%
Other costs	6	0.9%
Cost of vaccination	5	0.8%
	145	22.3%

Column percentages. More than one theme per item possible.

Within stories on the badger cull table three shows the efficacy of the cull; the cost of the cull; developments on the ground in terms of the protest and conflict were the most popular subthemes.

Table 3: The issue balance across BBC output: the cull (subtheme frequency)

The Cull	N	%
Effectiveness of cull (timescale/targets achieved)	91	14.0%
Protester actions/tactics	58	8.9%
Cull zones - general size, location	35	5.4%
Cull numbers - badgers killed	35	5.4%
Scientific evidence on effectiveness of cull	34	5.2%

other badger cull issue	34	5.2%
Badger numbers	33	5.1%
Government - English policy/ position	30	4.6%
Humaneness of cull	22	3.4%
Cost of cull	21	3.2%
Scientific opinion on cull	17	2.6%
Threat and harassment of farmers/companies	13	2.0%
Scale of protest (numbers)	13	2.0%
Previous culls/evidence from	11	1.7%
Legal action by protesters/others to stop activity	10	1.5%
Economic benefits	9	1.4%
Parliamentary (legislative) debate	5	0.8%
celebrity speaks out	5	0.8%
Government - local council policy/ position	4	0.6%
comparisons with non-UK	4	0.6%
Comparisons of UK nations	3	0.5%
other historical context	3	0.5%
Legal action by authorities	3	0.5%
Protester arrest/removal	2	0.3%
other media's coverage of events	1	0.2%
Threat and harassment of public	1	0.2%
Crime/Policing	1	0.2%
other	7	1.1%
	505	77.7%

Column percentages. More than one theme per item possible.

However, was the BBC, in striking this balance, in line with other non-BBC outlets? The two main themes identified were also present in the online press sample. Here there were 41 sub themes that appeared a total of 237 times. If we take all thematic occurrences identified, over 80 percent focused on the cull, its efficacy, its consequences and reactions. The spread and impact of bTB accounted for under 20 percent of occurrences (see tables 4 and 5). Here too the efficacy of the cull and reaction to it became a major dynamic in reporting.

Table 4: The issue balance across online newspaper output: the disease (subtheme frequency)

Spread of Bovine TB	12	5.1%
Impact of bTB on farmers	11	4.6%
Bovine TB the path of infection (badgers to cows; cow to cow etc)	5	2.1%
Preventing spread - badger vaccination	4	1.7%
Farming methods encouraging bTB	3	1.3%
Preventing spread - cattle slaughtered (numbers)	2	0.8%
Preventing spread - cattle restrictions	1	0.4%
Preventing spread - cattle vaccination	1	0.4%
Impact on tourism	1	0.4%
Agriculture/farming	1	0.4%
	41	17.3%

Column percentages. More than one theme per item possible.

Table 5: The issue balance across online newspaper output: the cull (subtheme frequency)

other badger cull issue	28	11.8%
Government - English policy/ position	21	8.9%
Protester actions/tactics	19	8.0%
Effectiveness of cull (timescale/targets achieved)	15	6.3%
Scientific opinion on cull	12	5.1%
Scientific evidence on effectiveness of cull	10	4.2%
Cull numbers - badgers killed	9	3.8%
Humaneness of cull	8	3.4%
Celebrity speaks out against cull	8	3.4%
Threat and harassment of farmers/companies	7	3.0%
Badger numbers	7	3.0%
Cull zones - general size, location	7	3.0%
Cost of cull	7	3.0%
Parliamentary (legislative) debate	4	1.7%
Cost other	4	1.7%
Scale of protest (numbers)	4	1.7%
Government/parliament other	3	1.3%
Previous culls/evidence from	2	0.8%
Government other	2	0.8%
Legal action by authorities	2	0.8%
other historical context	2	0.8%
Economic benefits	2	0.8%
Public disorder	1	0.4%
Legal action by protesters/others to stop activity	1	0.4%
Hunting	1	0.4%
celebrity other	1	0.4%
other media's coverage of events	1	0.4%
comparisons with non-UK	1	0.4%
other comparison	1	0.4%
Government - local council policy/ position	1	0.4%
Planning process	1	0.4%
Other	4	1.7%
	196	82.7%

Column percentages. More than one theme per item possible.

5.1. Visual balance

Cassidy (2019) has shown that press coverage was dominated by images of badgers, often cute, while images of sick cows were largely absent. Taking this divide between the cull and the disease affecting cattle the study examined the balance in the visuals used. The study examined the key visuals used to illustrate stories on television programmes and websites to see how they were balanced and whether there was a similar emphasis on badgers and the cull and any subthemes rather than cattle and bTB. Of the visuals coded, badgers accounted more than 50 percent in BBC items. Cows and cattle by contrast had far less prominence (see table 6 below). Protests and demonstrations also achieved a sizeable minority presence in coverage. Again, BBC coverage was in line with coverage provided by the press. The visual balance combined with the issue balance, served to reinforce the impression that this was a story about the culling of healthy looking ‘good badgers’ rather than helping sick cows. This emphasis make sense in news value terms. It involves a protected, much loved, species; the UK government; a range of protestors; and celebrities, in contrast, how a complex disease, that cannot be seen, impacts on livestock and farmers is a more difficult story to tell and sell (see Table 6).

Table 6: Key visuals in coverage of the badger cull on BBC and non-BBC output

	BBC	Non-BBC
badger(s)	53.0%	51.9%
anti-badger cull protestors/demonstration	24.8%	37.0%
cows, cattle general	19.5%	11.1%
badgers(s) being vaccinated	2.7%	0.0%
Total	149	27

Column percentages. More than one visual per item possible.

5.2. National policy differences

As noted earlier, the editorial guidelines suggest that coverage should ‘help people understand and engage with the world around them.’ Did the BBC make the viewers aware there was no UK wide policy, and the cull was happening only in England? Table 7 below shows this happened to a limited extent on the BBC but slightly more frequently than non-BBC sources.

Table 7: Reference to Any Devolved Nations’ Policy Differences in Coverage of the Badger Cull on BBC and non-BBC output

	Differences in devolved national government stance/policies mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
BBC	36	224	260
	13.8%	86.2%	100.0%
Newspaper Online	8	77	85
	9.4%	90.6%	100.0%

Row percentages based on number of items and programmes

In sum, the emphasis of BBC coverage was very much tilted toward the cull of badgers and away from bTB and its impact. Within coverage of the cull a number of subthemes dominated, namely, the efficacy of the cull and reactions to it. This emphasis was also seen in the choice of visuals. The BBC’s coverage was not awry from online newspapers in focusing on the cull as the main story and being less concerned with bTB and its impact. All this is perhaps not that surprising given the newsworthiness of the cull compared to the impact of bTB. News values are criteria employed by

journalists in the selection news across the profession (Donsbach, 2004). Perhaps the most well-known of many studies of these criteria is Galtung and Ruge's 1965 study of news values in the Norwegian press. While the general application of their criteria has been criticised (see Harcup and O'Neill, 2001) they have been adapted to specific national contexts. In a UK context, Harcup and O'Neill, (2001; 2017) put forward a set of 14 requirements that are used by the journalists when determining what is news worthy. The badger cull fulfils many of Harcup and O'Neill's requirements. As noted earlier, it concerns: 'powerful individuals, organisations or institutions' in the form of government; 'people who are already famous', namely celebrities; 'conflict such as controversies, arguments, splits, strikes, fights', as in the activities of protest groups; 'arresting photographs, video, audio', specifically in this case, of badgers; a 'human interest, animals, an unfolding drama' it is a dramatic story involving a protected species; and it is 'about issues, groups and nations perceived to be relevant to the audience' (2001, p. 279; 2017, p. 1482).

6. Actor balance

Given the thematic context we now turn to the coverage given to the people and groups who inhabited the reports (here termed news actors or actors). As noted earlier, this was assessed through examining appearance frequency (presence); and the amount of actor's quotation time (significance). The two tables below show the balance of actors who appeared by category. Table 8 shows that on the BBC actors who were supportive of the cull policy appeared slightly more frequently than those opposed, just over 42 percent compared to just under 36 percent, with 21 percent where the stance was not overt. This was very much in line with online newspapers as shown in table 9. The reason cull supporting actors appeared more frequently can, in part, be explained by the fact that the UK government was driving this policy, and acting as a 'primary definer' (Hall et al., 1978) shaping the agenda. There is a well documented reliance of journalists on authoritative sources such as government (Donsbach, 2004; Gans, 2011). Indeed, for Hall et al., (1978) the news media plays a subordinated role, 'reproducing' the definitions of the powerful primary defining sources (Hall et al., 1978, p. 59). However, journalists also provide space for positions to be contested (Miller, 1993), in this context a range of cause groups and anti-cull protestors frequently appeared in reports.

Table 8: Actor appearance and balance - BBC (frequency)

<i>Actors opposed to the cull</i>	N	% of total
Cause Groups	123	18.8
Protestors	66	10
Celebrities	18	2.7
Politicians	22	3.4
The Public	6	0.9
Total	235	35.8
<i>Actors supportive of cull policy</i>		
Government	154	23.5
Cause Groups	64	9.7
Farmers	49	7.5
Politicians	9	1.4
The Public	5	0.8
Total	281	42.8
<i>No overt stance</i>		

Experts	67	10.2
Law/Police	21	3.2
The Public	15	2.3
Media Professionals	12	1.8
Businesses	10	1.5
Government	8	1.2
Other political parties	4	0.6
Cause Groups	2	0.3
Total	139	21.4
	655	100

Column percentages. More than one actor per item possible.

The same tables also show the type of actor who appeared. The most frequently appearing were UK government, causes groups, and protestors for both BBC and non-BBC output. Actors from the national governments in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast were absent reflecting that this was very much an 'English' story. Scientific experts appeared less frequently, but the BBC made more use of them percentage wise compared to the online newspapers.

Table 9: Actor appearance and balance - online newspapers (frequency)

<i>Actors opposed to the cull</i>	N	% of total
Cause Groups	56	19
Politicians	25	8.4
Celebrities	20	6.7
Protestors	14	4.7
Total	115	38.7
<i>Actors supportive of cull policy</i>		
Government	86	29
Cause Groups	24	8
Farmers	15	5
Politicians	5	1.6
Total	130	43.8
<i>No overt stance</i>		
Experts	24	8.1
Civil Society Actors (not cause groups)	8	2.7
Business	7	2.4
Law/Police	6	2.0
Media Professionals	4	1.3
The Public	2	0.7
Politicians	1	0.3
Total	52	17.5
	297	100

Column percentages. More than one actor per item possible.

Table 10 below shows actor quotation time for BBC output. Quotation time is a measure of news access – i.e. a higher level of media exposure than just appearing. Quotation time was not measured for text items in online news outlets. Overall, the balance of quotation time roughly mirrors appearance. Actors who were supportive of the cull policy spoke for longer than those opposed, around 45 percent of overall speaking time compared to 32 percent, with the remaining time belonging to those with no overt stance.

Table 10: Actor quotation time and balance - BBC (Hours, minutes, seconds)

Actors opposed to the cull	Hrs, Mins, Secs	% of total
Cause Groups	43.16	16.9
Protestors	10.53	4.3
Celebrities	15.27	6.0
Politicians	10.37	4.1
The Public	2.11	0.9
Total	1.22.24	32.2
Actors supportive of cull policy		
Government	51.31	20.1
Cause Groups	31.53	12.5
Farmers	24.34	9.6
Politicians	4.23	1.7
The Public	2.10	0.8
Total	1.54.31	44.7
No overt stance		
Experts	43.53	17.2
Media Professionals	8.03	3.1
Law/Police	2.31	1.0
The Public	1.38	0.6
Government	1.24	0.5
Businesses	1.23	0.5
Cause Groups	0.15	0.1
Total	59.07	23.1
	4.06.02	100

Excludes BBC Online

Table 10 also highlights how long each type of actor spoke for. The UK government took around 20 percent of quotation time, cause groups and protestors opposed to the cull policy, over 20 percent. If cause groups supporting the cull policy are added, then the main actors involved in the conflict accounted for more than half the total quotation time. Scientific experts spoke for less time in comparison. The selection of actors and the quotation time given to them reinforced the dominant narrative of conflict in the countryside, placing the UK government and its opponents at loggerheads over the cull policy.

7. Actor treatment

This section examines the manifest treatment of actors within coverage, and whether certain actors were treated more or less fairly than the other. This was assessed through the measures mentioned earlier: the use of evaluative language about the actor (favour); the use of any caveats about a quoted actor (caveats); the journalists questioning the claims of the speaking actor (querying).

What is immediately striking in the table below was how rarely overtly negative or positive treatment of actors occurred within BBC and non-BBC coverage. In terms of balance, on the BBC, actors supportive of the cull policy received marginally more unfavourable coverage but such instances were too infrequent to draw any meaningful conclusions about whether the BBC manifestly favoured or disfavoured to a particular side (see table 11).

Table 11: Actor treatment and balance - BBC (frequency)

<i>Actors opposed to the cull</i>	N	Unfavourable	Favourable	Claims queried	Caveats
Cause Groups	123	1		8	
Protestors	66	1	1	2	
Celebrities	18			3	
Politicians	22			2	
The Public	6			1	
Total	235			16	
<i>Actors supportive of cull policy</i>					
Government	154	2		13	2
Cause Groups	64			8	
Farmers	49		1	3	2
Politicians	9			1	
The Public	5			1	
Total	281			26	
<i>No clear stance</i>					
Experts	67			3	
Law/Police	21				
The Public	15				
Media Professionals	12				
Businesses	10	1			
Government	8				
Other political parties	4				
Cause Groups	2				
Total	139			3	
	655	5	2	45	4

One area worth noting is the querying of actors claims through questions and by presenting the claims of opposing actors (either indirectly through the journalist outlining the competing position or directly through the news presence of a competing actor) (Stanyer, et al., 2014). Table 11 and 12 show that this was more prevalent than the use of either evaluative language or caveats but not

widespread for either BBC and non-BBC outlets. The tables show that the appearance of the UK government and anti-cull cause groups prompted the most queries (See Table 11 and 12).

Table 12: Actor treatment and balance - online newspapers (frequency)

<i>Actors opposed to the cull</i>	N	Unfavourable	Favourable	Claims queried	Caveats
Cause Groups	56	1			1
Protestors	14			1	
Celebrities	20	3		2	1
Politicians	25	1			
Total	115				
<i>Actors supportive of cull policy</i>					
Government	86	11	1	2	3
Cause Groups	24		1		
Farmers	15				1
Politicians	5	1			
Total	130				
<i>No clear stance</i>					
Experts	24		1		
Law/Police	6				
The Public	2				
Media Professionals	4	1			
Businesses	7	1			1
Politicians	1			1	
Civil Society Actors	8				
Total	52				
	297	19	3	6	7

8. Key words

Finally, the research examined the analytical, descriptive and evaluative terminology used by journalists in reporting these issues (see Table 13).

Table 13: Key Words in Coverage of the Badger Cull on BBC and Non-BBC output

	BBC National News Bulletin	BBC Discussion and Talk	BBC National Specialist News Bulletin	BBC Other National Current Affairs	BBC Regional and UK nations	BBC Online	Newspaper Online	Total
	ghastly disease						1	
						100.0%		
marksmen	21	2	8	1	24	19	28	103
	20.4%	1.9%	7.8%	1.0%	23.3%	18.4%	27.2%	
slaughter (cattle)	11		1	3		8	19	42
	26.2%		2.4%	7.1%		19.0%	45.2%	
humane	9	1	6		2	5	12	35

	25.7%	2.9%	17.1%		5.7%	14.3%	34.3%	
inhumane	6	2				6	4	18
	33.3%	11.1%				33.3%	22.2%	
eradication (TB)	0	1				4	4	9
	0.0%	11.1%				44.4%	44.4%	
slaughter (badgers)	2					1	3	6
	33.3%					16.7%	50.0%	
extermination		1				1	3	5
		20.0%				20.0%	60.0%	
reservoir of disease	3						1	4
	75.0%						25.0%	
bloody war						1	2	3
						33.3%	66.7%	
gunmen	1		1					2
	50.0%		50.0%					
scapegoat (badgers)							1	1
							100.0%	
saving (badgers)							1	1
							100.0%	
saving (cattle)	1							1
	100.0%							
Total	54	7	16	4	26	46	78	231

Row percentages. More than one word per item possible.

As the numbers are small it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions apart from saying that there is little evidence that journalists used emotive and obviously evaluative language in a way that favoured either side when reporting. One of the most frequently used terms, slaughter, was applied mainly to cattle although it was used in relation to the culling of badgers. The term humane was used more frequently than inhumane in relation to the cull. The term marksmen to describe the people tasked with shooting the badgers was used much more frequently than the more emotive term 'gunmen'.

The research reveals the use of manifestly favourable or unfavourable terms in either direction was rare, BBC journalists made few caveats, and infrequently queried actors claims through posing questions. If we relate this back to actor appearance, in the previous section, then opposing claims were set out with little journalistic qualification or challenge. This is very much in line with the so called 'seesaw' idea of impartiality as balance between two opposing sides (Bridcut, 2007). The scientific evidence and views of scientific experts might have been used to challenge the views of protagonists and opponents of the badger cull policy.

9. Conclusion

This article represents the first systematic examination of BBC performance in covering one of the most controversial rural issues in a generation in England. Set against a background of criticism it used a series of established measures to assess extent to which the BBC provided 'impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with the world around them' (BBC Editorial Guidelines). This research showed coverage was problematic in certain ways. There is certainly no evidence of BBC coverage being overtly biased against or for certain rural communities, pursuits and businesses. That said the selected indicators did reveal coverage was imbalanced in certain ways and could have made a more distinct contribution to understanding developments. .

In terms of addressing question one on issue balance, overall, BBC coverage was very much focused on the cull of badgers and much less on bTB and its impact, something that was apparent in the choice of visuals too. Within cull coverage the conflict between protagonists and opponents of the

badger cull policy dominated. The key visuals reinforced the narrative of killing of healthy badgers rather than saving sick cows. It is not surprising perhaps that coverage was cull centred rather than disease focused. After all, the emphasis on the controversial cull, make sense in news value terms while explaining the science behind the disease is complex. In this regard the BBC's coverage was very much in line with the online newspapers in this study, and that identified in previous studies of the press (Cassidy, 2019). In terms of the provision of background information, the BBC did not regularly make the viewers aware there was no UK wide policy, and the cull was only happening in England. The central role of the UK government might have generated a different impression.

In relation to the question on the balance between competing actors, the decision to see the story as mainly one of countryside conflict shaped the selection of actors. Although the actor balance was tilted slightly in favour of supporters of the cull policy, this was less than in the online newspapers and could be explained by the dominance of UK government sources in the process. The most frequently appearing opponents were the legion of cause groups, protestors and the occasional celebrity. These actors together dominated the quotation time. This was the case for both BBC and non-BBC output.

The voice of other actors, including experts, while present was comparatively much less visible, brought in to arbitrate on matters. Overall, a narrow set of actors were used, reflecting the two sides in the conflict. This idea of impartiality as balance has been criticised by academics, media practitioners and policy makers, who have variously argued that journalism needs to adequately represent the diversity of views in multi-polar and multi-cultural contemporary societies, instead of always focusing on two sides in a debate (see Sambrook, 2012; Wahl-Jorgensen, et al., 2016). Indeed, Bridcut noted, in 2007 that the 'seesaw' idea of impartiality as balance between two sides of an argument should be replaced by a 'wagon wheel' capturing a diversity of perspectives 'bringing extra perspectives to bear, rather than limiting horizons or censoring opinion' (Bridcut, 2007, p. 6). The BBC's Editorial Guidelines suggest that impartiality means that the BBC must consider 'the broad perspective and ensuring the existence of a range of views is appropriately reflected'.

Finally, in relation to the question on the distribution of positive or negative treatment of actors, the research found that the manifest positive or negative treatment was extremely rare by both BBC and non-BBC journalists. That said, so was the querying of claims. We might have expected more claims from actors on both sides to be held to scrutiny rather than being set out with little journalistic qualification or challenge.

All too often criticisms of BBC bias are simplistic and miss more nuanced assessment of performance in comparison to other news media. Overall, the issue emphasis, actor selection and treatment was not that distinct from online newspapers and from that shown in other analyses of the UK press (see Cassidy, 2019). This is perhaps not surprising given BBC's sensitivity to criticism, professional and structural constraints, and a tendency to play it safe and stick with the story the news media pack has (Cushion et al., 2018). However, given the BBC performance criteria, set out above, opportunities to makes its contribution distinct could have been made much more of. For example, the agenda could be broadened through greater comparison of England with the other UK nations and with countries with different policy positions on vaccination of badgers to control bTB. This broadening of issues covered might have extended to the inclusion of the history and context of the government policy for England. In terms of widening the selection of actors, given the nature of the disease more scientific experts on bTB might have been included and the insight brought by these experts used to assess and challenge the claims made by government and cause group actors.

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to the editor, anonymous referees and colleagues for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this article. This publication is based on research supported by the BBC Trust, UK.

References

- Allen, M. (2017) *The sage encyclopedia of communication research methods*(Vols. 1-4). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc doi: 10.4135/9781483381411
- BBC (no date) Editorial Guidelines <https://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidelines>
- Bourne, R (2016) The Problem of Bias in the BBC. In P. Booth (Ed) *The Case for Privatizing the BBC*. London: IEA
- Bridcut, J (2007) *From Seesaw to Wagon Wheel: Safeguarding Impartiality in the 21st Century*. BBC Trust.
- Cassidy, A. (2012) Vermin, Victims and Disease: UK Framings of Badgers In and Beyond the Bovine TB Controversy. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 52: 192-214. doi:[10.1111/j.1467-9523.2012.00562.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9523.2012.00562.x)
- Cassidy, A. (2017) 'Badger-Human Conflict: An Overlooked Historical Context for Bovine TB Debates in the UK' Catherine M. Hill, Amanda D. Webber and Nancy E.C. Priston (Eds)*Understanding Conflicts About Wildlife: A Biosocial Approach*. Berghan <http://www.berghahnbooks.com/title/HillUnderstanding>
- Cassidy, A. (2019) *Vermin, Victims and Disease: British Debates Over Bovine Tuberculosis and Badgers*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Cushion, S. (2019) *The Range and Depth of BBC News and Current Affairs: A Content Analysis*. London: Ofcom
- Cushion S, Lewis J, Ramsay GN. (2012)The impact of interventionist regulation in reshaping news agendas: A comparative analysis of public and commercially funded television journalism. *Journalism*. 13(7):831-849. doi:[10.1177/1464884911431536](https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884911431536)
- Cushion, S., Kilby, A., Thomas, R., Morani, M. and Sambrook, R. (2018) Newspapers, Impartiality and Television News, *Journalism Studies*, 19:2, 162-181, DOI: [10.1080/1461670X.2016.1171163](https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2016.1171163)
- De Vreese, C. (2005) News Framing; Theory and Typology. *Information Design Journal*, 13 (1), 51-62
- Donsbach, W. (2004) Psychology of News Decisions: Factors behind Journalists' Professional Behavior. *Journalism*, 5(2), 131–157. <https://doi.org/10.1177/146488490452002>
- Downey, J., Stanyer, J., Deacon, D., and Wring, D. (2012) *Impartiality and Accuracy Review of the BBC's Coverage of Events Known as the Arab Spring: A Content Analysis*. A report produced for the BBC Trust, UK.
- Deacon, D., Pickering, M. Golding, P. and Murdock, G. (2007) *Researching Communications* (2nd Ed) London: Bloomsbury
- Dyer, D. and Packham, C. (2016) *Badgered to Death: The People and Politics of the Badger Cull*. Canbury Press, Kingston Upon Thames
- Eldridge, J. (2005) (Ed) *The Glasgow Media Group Reader, Vol. 1: News Content, Language and Visuals*. Abingdon: Routledge
- Gans, H. J. (2011) Multiperspectival news revisited: Journalism and representative democracy. *Journalism*, 12(1), 3–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884910385289>

- Galtung, J. and Ruge, M. (1965) "The structure of foreign news: the presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus crises in four Norwegian newspapers", *Journal of International Peace Research* 1, pp. 64–91. Hall, S., Critcher, C., Jefferson, T., Clarke, J. and Roberts, B. (1978) *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, London: Macmillan.
- Hancock, H. (2014) *BBC Trust Impartiality Review: BBC Coverage of Rural Areas in the UK*. London: BBC Trust.
- Harcup, H. and O'Neill, D. (2001) What Is News? Galtung and Ruge revisited, *Journalism Studies*, 2:2, 261-280
- Harcup, T and O'Neill, D. (2017) What is News? News Values Revisited (Again), *Journalism Studies*, 18:12, 1470-1488, DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2016.1150193
- Harvey, S. and Robins, K. (1994) Voices and Places: the BBC and Regional Policy. *Political Quarterly* 39-52.
- Hopmann, D. N., Van Aelst, P., and Legnante, G. (2012). Political balance in the news: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings. *Journalism*, 13(2), 240–257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884911427804>
- Lewis, J. 2015. "BBC Bias Revisited: Do the Partisan Press Push Broadcasters to the Right?" In *The BBC Today: Beyond the Crisis?*, edited by John Mair, Richard Tait, and Richard Lance Keeble. London: Abramis
- Lewis, J. and Cushion, S. (2019) Think Tanks, Television News and Impartiality, *Journalism Studies*, 20:4, 480-499, DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2017.1389295
- Lodge, M. and Matus, K. (2014), Bovine Tuberculosis Policy in Britain. *Policy Stud J*, 42: 367-390. doi:[10.1111/psj.12065](https://doi.org/10.1111/psj.12065)
- McCulloch, S.P. and Reiss, M.J. (2017). Bovine Tuberculosis Policy in England: Would a Virtuous Government Cull Mr Badger?. *J Agric Environ Ethics* 30, 551–563 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10806-017-9687-2>
- McQuail, D. (2016). Media Performance. In G. Mazzoleni (Ed.). *The International Encyclopedia of Political Communication*, Wiley doi:[10.1002/9781118541555.wbiepc095](https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118541555.wbiepc095)
- Miller D. (1993) Official sources and 'primary definition': the case of Northern Ireland. *Media, Culture & Society* 15(3): 385-406. doi:[10.1177/016344393015003004](https://doi.org/10.1177/016344393015003004)
- Naylor, R., Manley, W., Maye, D., Enticott, G., Ilbery, B. and Hamilton-Webb, A. (2017) The portrayal of badger vaccination in the media. *Sociol Ruralis*, 57: 3-22. doi:[10.1111/soru.12105](https://doi.org/10.1111/soru.12105)
- Norris, P., Curtice, J., Sanders, D., Scammell, M. and Semetko, H. (1999) *On Message: Communicating the Campaign*. London: Sage.
- Ofcom (2019) *The Ofcom Broadcasting Code*. https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/132073/Broadcast-Code-Full.pdf
- Ofcom (2019a) *Review of BBC News and Current Affairs*. https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/173734/bbc-news-review.pdf
- Runhaar, H., Runhaar, M. and Vink, H. (2015) Reports on badgers in Dutch newspapers. *Mammal Review*, 45: 133-145. doi:[10.1111/mam.12040](https://doi.org/10.1111/mam.12040)

Sambook, R. (2012) *Delivering Trust: Impartiality and Objectivity in the Digital Age*. Oxford: Reuters institute for the Study of Journalism.

Spencer, A. (2011) One Body of Evidence, Three Different Policies: Bovine Tuberculosis Policy in Britain. *Politics*, 31(2), 91–99. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9256.2011.01407.x>

Stanyer, J., Deacon, D., Downey, J., and Wring, D. (2014). *Rural Areas in the UK Impartiality Review: A Content Analysis for the BBC Trust*. London: BBC Trust.

Wahl-Jorgensen, K., Sambrook, R., Berry, M., Moore, K., Bennett, L., Cable, J. Garcia Blanco, I., Kidd, K., Dencik, L., and Hintz, A. (2012) *BBC Breadth of, Opinion Review Content Analysis*. BBC Trust

Wahl-Jorgensen, K., Berry, M., Garcia Blanco, I., Bennett, L. and Cabe, J. (2016) Rethinking Balance and Impartiality? How the BBC Attempted and Failed to Change the Paradigm. *Journalism*, 1-20.