

**Volume 1**

# **On the Persistence of a Modest Medium**

**The Role of Editorial Illustration in Print and Online  
Media**

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## Abstract

In this thesis I explore the role and significance of editorial illustration, developed in printed publications and evolving within online publishing structures. Editorial illustration has a long tradition of illustrating stories in news publications, but I argue that in current online news websites its particular role has all but failed.

Online publishing has become the driving force within editorial publishing and this raises the question whether, and how, editorial illustration can continue to be a successful constituent in an online publishing environment?

I argue that the continuation of editorial illustration lies within *digitally native* narrative forms, from online *interactive documentaries*, *game-based storytelling*, *data-visualisation* to *memes*: viral images spread through social media. Within these forms the significance and agency of illustration is not only clearly present but evolving, except here illustration is interwoven with the story.

I argue that these forms of illustration, as well as printed illustration, are based on the same conceptual model and articulate editorial illustration's inherent attributes. I propose a *constellation of four attributes* (manifestation, translation, reflection, and engagement) that together give rise to the key quality that illustration offers to the reader, *deliberation*.

Illustration should not be understood as a separate artifact, positioned next to a text, but as a multimodal practice, always related to a story, enabled by the specific qualities of its contextualizing medium.

As practice-led research, the thesis explores this proposition in practice and theory within printed and online forms of editorial illustration and in relation to online media technologies and material properties. Central is the development of a potential method of online editorial illustration that I call *data driven illustration*, a formation employing the material and semiotic expressive potential of live data and code.

The research draws primarily from the ideas of media materiality (Hayles, Kittler, Manovich), but in doing so is supplemented with other relevant theories found in semiotics (Barthes, Hayles, Kress and van Leeuwen) and audience reception (Hall). This interdisciplinary approach is applied to the field of illustration through a historical study of wood-engraved news illustration in the *Illustrated London News*; through my own practice as an illustrator, in this case, work undertaken for the NRC newspaper; and explorations of various examples of online illustration.

This thesis offers a first step in constructing a framework for editorial illustration, to move beyond the print paradigm and provide a language through which to explore illustration as an emergent practice.

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### **Additional Material**

This Volume is the first out of two.

Volume 2 contains additional case study material in support of the doctoral thesis and research presented in this volume.

Further digital material can be found on the USB Drive.







# **1 Introduction**

## **The Role of Editorial Illustration in Print and Online Media**

## 1.1 A Personal Statement

**This thesis has its origins in a lifetime's interest and personal investment in the future of my profession: editorial illustration. In the language of the industry the term 'editorial illustration' refers to the illustration of articles within newspapers and magazines.**

In my experience, this field is often overlooked even though it is very much part of the reader's every day experience of news and magazine culture. Even when it is noticed, its powerful, expressive attributes are frequently underestimated. The American art-critic Harold Rosenberg (1978), in his text for a catalogue of the work of Saul Steinberg, one of the great (editorial) illustrators stated:

'In the lowly cartoon he [Steinberg, ] found a medium susceptible of being transformed into an alphabet of meanings as flexible as that of words but with the additional dimension of the visual sign...the intellectual potential for drawing made for publication lay precisely in their being a modest medium, in which the spectator responds to the artists statement without requiring that it satisfy ideals of aesthetic prestige.' (Rosenberg, 1978 p.34)

The words *lowly* and *modest* are those of Rosenberg, but in my experience they still very much reflect a generally held misconception of what illustration, at its very best, can be. However briefly, an illustration is able to gift the reader a moment of deliberation, not through grand gestures but through an intervention created especially to invite, seduce and stimulate the reader, with humour, cleverness, aesthetics and stealth.

Ever since I began my illustration practice I have been as interested in how illustration functions as much as I enjoy the actual process of the assignment, the creation and the experience of seeing the finished results. As often as I was excited by the enhancement of its expressive powers through layout and written text, I was disappointed by the mistreatment and disregard for the relationship between design, text and illustration.

With the arrival of the Internet and the ability of websites (especially news related) to present images, I was puzzled as to why editorial illustration never seemed to be included in this new format. Rather than creating more opportunities for illustration, it seemed as though the opportunities were closing down. The present situation is not much different as original online illustrations are hardly ever commissioned, something I understood through the many conversations I had with colleagues and other practitioners in the industry. This has been revealed through field interviews with 20 professionals in the publishing industry, including illustrators, art directors and creative directors<sup>1</sup>, through the

workshop Think Editorial Illustration, at the Royal College of Art (Hoogslag, 2012) in which twenty illustrators, illustration educators, art directors and students participated<sup>2</sup>, and through the many conversations I have had with colleagues, students, art directors and clients over the years.

Over the years, in passing conversations there has never seemed a shortage of excuses for this neglect. At first the bandwidth and quality of screens were to blame; then illustration itself, it was just not *Cyber* enough; then it was the financial crisis within publishing, or the increasing speed and volume of news information, meaning that there wasn't enough time to commission. But I have long harboured the suspicion that these justifications camouflaged something else and it was this suspicion that led me to initiate the project titled *Oog* for a major Dutch national daily newspaper, *de Volkskrant*. *Oog* was an opportunity to test *in situ* the role that online editorial illustration could play in communicating and commenting on the news.

*Oog* was a dedicated webpage where artists were invited to become *Visual Correspondents*, where for three years a wide range of makers were invited to explore the possibilities of visual commentary within the online edition of a major newspaper and to test the expressive capabilities of the web. I would argue that the success of this project debunked many of the arguments listed above for illustration's unsuitability to an on-line context, except that the works in *Oog* were not illustrating in the traditional sense, as a picture next to a story. These were independent contributions, yet they very much responded and were related to current events and offered a particular analysis and point of view. So were the works in *Oog* visual commentary? Did they align with fine art or were they to be considered editorial illustration? For the makers themselves this was neither an interesting nor an important question. For myself, however, as a practising illustrator, answering these questions had greater sense of urgency, as the project suggested the beginning of a new set of possibilities; something that could be understood as an editorial illustration, but at the same time was

1. Paula van Akkeren (NRC), 2012; James Bates (Clearleft), 2013; James Brocklehurst (researcher), 2012; Matt Curtis (The Times), 2013; Andrew Diprose (WIRED), 2013; James Fenton (digital art director), 2013; Han Hoogerbrugge, (artist and illustrator) 2012; Andy Hume (Guardian), 2012; Harm Ikink (science journalist), 2012; Simon Ings, (ARC) 2013, Nicola Jennings (Guardian), 2012; Matt Kenyon (illustrator) 2012; Max Kisman (illustrator), 2012, Natalie Lees (The Times), 2013; Sarah Marshall (online journalist) 2012; Dominic Minns (Plugin Media), 2012; Dimitri Nieuwenhuizen (LUST), 2012; Mariana Santos (Guardian), 2013; Tobias Sturt (Guardian), 2014.

2. Think Editorial Illustration Workshop in November 2011, participants were: Paul Bowman, illustrator, educator; Peter Brawn, editorial designer; Yves Francois, MA student; Frazer Hudson, illustrator, educator; Gillian Blease, illustrator; Lee Ford, illustrator, educator; Andrew Foster, illustrator, educator; Jasmin Fung, MA student; Babette Wagenvoort, illustrator, educator; Andy Baker, illustrator, educator; Chris Draper, illustrator, educator; David Garcia, media theorist/ dean chelsea research, professor; Fuchsia Macharee, MA student. Sophie Westerlind, MA student; Judith Asher, illustrator, educator; Sophie Gibson, interaction/ interface designer; Joseph Pielichaty, MA student RCA; Fei Wang MA student / Chinese magazine; Danai Tsouloufa, MA student; Geoff Grandfield, illustrator, head BA illustration Kingston; Catherine Anyango, illustrator, educator; Dan Fern, illustrator, educator, professor; Jo Davies, illustrator, head BA illustration Plymouth; Teawoo Kim, MA student; Ronit Mirsky, MA student; Alexandra Dommert, MA student; Rachel Lillie, MA student.

also somehow different. It was these questions that fuelled an urgent need to ask: what if any illustration could participate in the online environment, what aspects of the field of editorial illustration<sup>3</sup> would remain the same, would be different? If I could find some of the answers to these questions, then perhaps this would provide powerful indicators to the future of my profession.

## 1.2 Introduction

This PhD in practice explores the following question:

**What is the role and significance of editorial illustration within editorial publication and how is this affected by online technologies and expression?**

This research explores the function and functionality of editorial illustration in print and online media and the manifestation of its inherent attributes and key quality; to facilitate the creation of meaning for the reader.

Over the past five years online publishing has become the driving force within editorial publishing. (Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism 2010, 2012; Ofcom, 2014; Newman, 2014) The technologies and networks of online media have instituted new structures of dissemination, material expression and narration. Even though most mainstream editorial websites still present strong traits of print culture, the new structures challenge the validity and even the existence of traditional actors and publishing formats within this domain, among them the editorial illustration. The prevailing practice in news media websites of the (re)use of editorial illustration, based on an understanding of the illustration as a separate picture, but in a manner dictated by informational design structures, has resulted in a situation where illustration simply fails to function as intended.

I argue that editorial illustration should not be understood as a separate referential object, but as an emergent multimodal practice responding to the material context in which it is presented. These characteristics have also always been present in the printed illustration, but it is only now with the arrival of online outputs that these characteristics become visible in forms such as interactive documentaries, game-based storytelling, forms of data-visualisation as well as memes; viral images spread through social media. Here the currency of editorial illustration is maintained through

3. I use the term discipline for: a recognised branch of learning or body of knowledge with its own intellectual history, discourse, and its own community of scholars, teaching and learning. (Repko, 2011). Illustration has its own independent presence within academic teaching as well as it own, be it very young, academic discours, for instance in Peer reviewed journals such as Varoom and the Journal for Illustration, I define illustration as a discipline. Following Repko's destinction, within illustration I consider editorial illustration an applied or professional field..

embracing the online and digitally native materiality. This offers editorial illustration an alternative set of expressive possibilities, not necessarily only visual and often seemingly indistinguishable from the story it illustrates. However I maintain that story and illustration are still distinguishable, but through different modes of expression. It is here that I present the continuation of editorial illustration within online media structures.

Central to this thesis is the proposal and development of a conceptual model based on a description of editorial illustration's inherent attributes. I propose a *constellation of four attributes* that together give rise to the key quality that illustration offers to the reader, *deliberation*.

This proposition is explored in practice and theory within printed and online forms of editorial illustration, in relation to online media technologies and their material properties, framed within the context of printed and online editorial news publishing. As practice led research, it also explores the development of potential methods of online editorial illustration. I call these recent formations *data driven illustration*, formations which employ the material and semiotic expressive potential of live data and code.

The epistemological foundations of this investigation into editorial illustration is drawn from a model of relational materiality, developed within Actor-Network Theory (Latour, 2005) allowing for the complex work that illustration performs to be illuminated from a theoretical grounding that is based in material media theory, (Kittler, 1999; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001; Hayles, 2002, 2005; Manovich, 2002; Galloway, 2012; Fuller, 2008), (Barthian) semiotics (Barthes, 1977; Benjamin, 1992; Hayles, 2005; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) and audience reception, (Hall, 1993) as well as popular understanding of illustration (Crow, 2010; Heller and Chwast, 2008; Male, 2007; Brazell and Davies, 2013, 2011; Kraus, 2009; Zeegen, 2005), research into illustration (Miller, 1992; Grove, 2009) and research into 19th century newspaper illustration (Beegan, 2008; Reed, 1997; Sinnema, 1998)

Key works are *The Language of New Media* (Manovich, 2002), *Reading Images* (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) and *Multimodal Discourse* (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001) *The Photographic Message* and *The Rhetoric of the Image*, (Barthes, 1977b, 1977c) *My Mother Was a Computer* (Hayles, 2005) and *Encoding, Decoding* (Hall, 1993).

These theoretical foundations are further supported and iterated by practice-led research (see methodology- Practice-Led Research), that explores the attributes of editorial illustration through the development, exploration and evaluation of a new method of online editorial illustration, *data driven illustration*.

This research is also supported by interviews with industry members involved in and around editorial illustration practice, in both print and

online news media publishing, (for full list see the interview list, p.159) as well as field research in the form an expert workshop (Hoogslag, 2012); also the exploration of online illustration in a cross departmental research project within the *Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Utrecht*, the Netherlands, involving departments of interaction design, art and management and visual communication as well as illustration (Volume 2 p.72).

Importantly this research is founded on knowledge gained from my own (editorial) illustration practice of nearly twenty-five years, my career as an illustration lecturer and my innovative curatorial practice within the online edition of the Dutch national newspaper, *de Volkskrant: Oog*<sup>4</sup>, in which I commissioned artists and designers to respond to news and current events within the context of online mediality.

In the academic landscape there exists little if any critical discourse on editorial illustration. As such, this investigation represents an important first step in addressing the significance and effectiveness of editorial illustration within editorial publishing as a whole. The research presents a conceptual model of illustration that opens up new ways of understanding the position, implementation and material structure of editorial illustration as well as its position within illustration more generally. The particular value of the research lies in the development of a sustainable future for the field within new and emerging media environments. The thesis findings will therefore be of particular interest for those working in the discipline of illustration, visual communication and fields of editorial publishing, professional practice, research and education.

4. *Oog* (2005-2009) was a visual commentary and opinion platform for the online edition of *De Volkskrant* ([volkskrant.nl](http://volkskrant.nl)) a major Dutch daily national newspaper. During a period spanning more than four years, *Oog* every week presented a different digital artist working in sound, image and interaction to respond to news and current affairs. Artists became *Visual Correspondents* and explored their role creating an alternative insight into current events whilst experimenting with the visual possibilities within an online mass medium.

The *Oog* archive (currently inaccessible) represents a unique collection of works, an historical timeline through visualised events, showing the development of the then cutting edge digital imaging and showing digital art as news commentary exploring the alternative position of the visual with the newspaper environment.

This archive represents close to two hundred and fifty works of internationally renowned artists amongst others: *Angela Detanico and Rafael Lain Br, Annie Abrahams NL/ FR, Berend Strik NL, Broersen and Lukacs NL, Igor Stromajjer SL, Craig Robinson GB, David Reinfurt US, de Geuzen NL/ US, Dick Tuinder NL, Doron Solomon IS, Fucking Good Art NL, Geoff Lillemon (Ooculart) US, Han Hoogerbrugge NL, Graham Harwood GB, Jeroen Kooijmans NL, Jimpunk, Karen Lancel and Hermen Maat NL, Jochem Niemandsveld NL, Jody Zellen US, Kessels Kramer NL, Laure Ghorayeb LIB, Max Kisman NL, Martijn Engelbregts NL, Micheal Magruder GB, Motomishi Nakamuro J, Neasden Control Centre GB and Sylvie Zijlmans NL.*

### 1.3 Methods: Practice-Led Research

Speculations around how digital transformation reshapes illustration, particularly where the issue is hypothesising new methods of illustration, are best addressed from *within*. As an illustrator, educator and curator, I cannot ignore my long-standing experience nor what that brings in terms of extensive tacit knowledge. My professional skills and knowledge create an immediate context for examining new knowledge and new understanding through theoretical studies. Barbara Bolt (2007) argues that the value of the tacit knowledge of the maker is grounded in material practice, through dealing with the tools, materials of production and craftsmanship over time<sup>5</sup> (Bolt 2007 p.30). She points out that this kind of understanding makes practitioners best placed to analyse both process and artefacts<sup>6</sup> as outcomes, where they can make creative use of their *submersion* in the creative process. Equally this thinking needs to be translated into a written form, where the text and the process of writing itself, allows for the potential to be generalised and become part of existing research paradigms (Bolt 2007 p.33).

I agree with Bolt's understanding of the role of practice, which is embedded in Smith and Dean's proposed method of practice-led research, iterated with research-led practice<sup>7</sup> (Smith and Dean, 2009). This method opens up the practice to theoretical and empirical exploration and vice versa in an oscillating iterative process. Findings from a practice-led research report commissioned by the *Arts and Humanities Research Council* (AHRC) point to the uncertainty of outcomes as inherent to a design process and argue that open-endedness should be accepted if the practice within a research setting is to be valid (AHRC, 2007). Within practice-led research the movement of research is from the *unknown to the known* (Sullivan and Dean, 2009 p.28) and emphasises knowledge creation rather than data collection. These and other ways of considering practice-led research will be explored through discussions around my own work and support the theoretical development throughout, particularly in the development of the case study from my own illustration practice in Chapter 3, as well as in Chapter 5 and in the examination of the research project in Chapter 6.

5. Based on Heidegger's examination of the particular form of knowledge that arises from our handling of materials and processes (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 1966 in Bolt, 2007)

6. Central is the question on how issues, concerns and interests can be examined and brought out by process and the production of an artefact. It is important to note that in this setting the knowledge associated with the artefact is more significant than the artefact itself (Schrivener, 20020).

7. The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) defines practice led research as follows: 'Research in which the professional and/or creative practices of art, design or architecture play an instrumental part in an inquiry.' (AHRC, 2007)

## 1.4 Applied Editorial Illustration: the *Guardian* and *NRC* Newspapers

Throughout this thesis the focus is on editorial illustration within two particular established news-publishing titles between 2011 and 2013: the *Guardian* (United Kingdom), and *NRC* newspapers. The *Guardian* has a reputation, especially within the editorial illustration profession, for its attention to high quality visual design and considered image usage, which includes illustration. (King, 2006) The *Guardian* is also known for their innovative web design and bold implementation of digital technologies<sup>8</sup> as well as for advanced development and exploration of data visualisation and data journalism in the *Data blog*<sup>9</sup> (2009 – present). The *NRC* (The Netherlands) holds a similar position within Dutch national newspapers and is known for its quality design and well-considered image usage. My own professional experience is shaped by working for this news title for which I have created many illustrations over the past fifteen years.

In order to contextualise my own experience, but also to examine the significance of these two newspapers within the industry, a brief historical survey in Chapter 2 will focus on British illustrated news periodicals from 1841 to 1910. The *Illustrated London News* will provide a key example for some of the early approaches and attitudes toward the use of illustration.

## 1.5 Actor Network Theory as Framework

Actor-Network theory (ANT) is based on the work of *Bruno Latour*, *Michel Callon* and *John Law*. ANT is a theory of relational materiality (Law, 1999). It presents the material extension of semiotics, which allows for the material and semiotic - objects and signs - to be seen as parts of the same system. In this system each element has its own influence, ‘agency’, on other elements. It is the various levels and degrees of agency coming together that form a constitutive element, *the actor*. Through this actor, the agency is transformed into another actor, in a continuously evolving heterogeneous network. These agencies do not have to be of the same order, they can be technological, semiotic or metaphysical, come from human, abstract or material practices, and in so doing avoid a dualism between technology and society (Latour, 2005, 1998) Latour writes:

‘The new hybrid ‘actor-network’ leads us away from mathematical

8. The guardian.co.uk website won the Best Newspaper category three years running in 2005, 2006 and 2007 Webby Awards, beating (in 2005) *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *Variety*. It has been the winner for six years in a row of the *British Press Awards* for Best Electronic Daily Newspaper. The site won an *Eppy* award from the US-based magazine *Editor & Publisher* in 2000 for the best-designed newspaper online service (The Guardian, 2014).

9. theguardian.com/news/datablog.

10. Translations are ‘local processes of patterning, social orchestration, ordering, and resistance’ that generate ‘ordering effects such as devices, agents, institutions, or organizations. So “translation” is a verb which implies transformation and the possibility of equivalence, the possibility that one thing (for example, an actor) may stand for another (for instance a network)’(Law 1992, p.386) in Boomen 2014 p.21).



properties into a world which has not yet been so neatly charted. To sketch these properties we should now move on from static and topological properties to dynamic and ontological ones. (Latour, 1998)

In short, rather than fixed objects with defined connections, both actor and agency are a continuous series of processes, influencing and influenced by each other.

(ANT) is reducible neither to an actor alone nor to a network...an actor network is simultaneously an actor whose activity is networking heterogeneous elements and a network that is able to redefine and transform what it is made of (Callon, 1987 p.93).

A further notion is that of mediated relationships where the presence of the human and non-human inform each other. Latour (1999) exemplifies this developed interaction through the process of tool making. Tools are designed, selected and built from a particular human framework, which contains notions of political, historical, sociological and semiotic values; this in turn directs the ways the tool works, and in turn creates particular outcomes. By its *weight of associations* (Latour 1999 p.179) the tool then confirms and extends these through the way it is constructed and acts, which Cordella points to as the *concept of circularity* (2010 p.16).

Because of this relational materiality, ANT has proven to be useful methodology for theorising and describing design and information infrastructures in both traditional and new media. Codella discusses the methods for understanding information technologies in the light of *design, deployment and management* and points to ANT as a useful method because it can take into account

‘...the interplay in the intricacy of the set of interconnected hardware, software, and procedural configurations deployed to support and enact pre-determined paths of behaviour in organisations and among users’ (Cordella, 2010; Esnault, et.al, 2006)

ANT is presented as a method that ‘fosters the participation of heterogeneous stakeholders to the design process.’ (Esnault et al., 2006) Raff points to ANT as a useful tool to study the socio-technological relationship of graphic design artefacts, (2013) whilst Cypher and Richardson apply ANT methods to understand computer games as an aesthetic form shaped by both human and technological agencies. (2006) Furthering this understanding was the application of ideas from John Law (1992, 2009) particularly towards approaches to translation<sup>10</sup> and by Boomen, looking at metaphor, materiality and the digital (Boomen, 2014). Of particular interest for this thesis is Bruno Latour’s own application of ANT to scientific drawings

within the context of scientific publication (Latour, 1986).

ANT allows for the complexities of illustration to be illuminated from within complex publishing settings, permitting the emergence of a concept of the illustration as a relational procedural work, which both acts and is acted upon. These settings define the illustration, or as Andrew Baker (illustrator for the *Times* and an academic) remarks, without it ‘the illustration is just a picture.’ (Hoogslag, 2012). He places the editorial illustration central stage, not as fixed object, but as an actor.

## 1.6 Thesis Structure

Following the Introduction, Chapter 2 positions the emergence of editorial illustration within the formative period of news illustration, the wood engraved illustrations in news periodicals that became popular in the latter part of the 19th century. They not only provided visual information and entertainment, but also insight and a capability for ideological and social comment.

The process of wood-engraving was a laborious method of handcrafted image making, based on specific aesthetic and technological processes that presented a unified and particular visual narrative culture. From 1880, with the invention of the halftone process, direct transfer of an image into printed mass media became possible. The halftone reduces production time and costs, but importantly it enabled the reproduction and inclusion of photography, a layout with more relational and bespoke positioning of image and text, and above all, it enabled the illustration to be directly reproduced from the illustrator’s own art work, without translation through the wood engraving process.

Forty years later, technological advances changed the formalised single visual language of wood engraving into two distinct languages: the evidential language of the news photograph and the reflective, interpretive language of columnists, commentators, and analysts which became the area where illustration could further develop. It is through this clear bifurcation of roles that I argue Editorial Illustration come into being.

Chapter 3 investigates the role that editorial illustration plays in the current printed newspaper context. It begins with a brief presentation of the key elements underpinning illustration in terms of the material and semiotic structures of newspaper-publishing. It not only includes printing technologies and the layout of the newspaper, but also the quality of the story and textuality itself. I reveal the fixed nature of the newspaper artefact and the semiotic implications of the linguistic modality that bring a particular manifestation of the editorial illustration into being. Using a case study of an editorial illustration from my own practice I introduce the concept of the editorial illustration’s role as a tool to facilitate deliberation, where deliberation is essential for the formation of knowledge. I establish

the attributes of illustration that support this process, highlight its material, translational, reflective and engaging characteristics and propose these characteristics as the basic elements for a model of the *constellation of four attributes*. Each quality is then described individually. These are set out as follows:

**Manifestation:** The capacity through the materiality of the illustration to refer and reveal the technological and material affordances of a specific platform. The editorial illustration points to the newspaper and all it represents in its final reproduced form, but also the manner in which it plays with and contrasts these affordances and uses them for semiosis.

**Translation:** The ability to translate the essential text (the non materialised story (Benjamin, 1992; Hayles 2002) into a poetic visual language (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006; Hayles 2002, 2005) whilst simultaneously relating to the written story through both a dialectical proximity and a direct textual-visual relationship. (Jacobson, 2000; Barthes, 1977d) To achieve this it uses the readers' own coded language (Barthes, 1977c).

**Reflection:** The ability of the editorial illustration, as a relational object, to reflect all those who have a stake in the value of the image. In this section I discuss the producers of the publication, who contextualise and initiate the illustration, represented by the picture editor<sup>11</sup>, and the journey of the materialisation and dematerialisation of the meaning of the illustration, which I call the *relay of intent*, based on the notions of *preferred reading* by Hall (1980). I discuss the story, represented by the written text and the intertextual relationship (Barthes, 1977d). Finally, I discuss the position of the illustrator, represented through the designated authorship, and that of the reader, who receives the illustration and is presumed to understand and appreciate this in the context of the overall publication.

**Engagement:** is the ability to use visual impact and rhetorical means to arrest the reader's attention and create an ideological bond (Hall, 1973). It is the quality of the Lacanian imagined *ideal* (Žižek, 1997-2007) in which the image is used to establish a bridge and then consolidate the bond between the readers' reality and the underlying ideological message of the publication.

I argue that a successful editorial illustration is the result of a particular constellation of four essential attributes. Where its role is not to provide additional information but rather to invite the reader into a space of deliberation; a space left open that is situated between editorial intent and

11. Within the structure of newspapers there are various positions that directly relate to the reviews, selection and briefing of photographs and/or illustrations for publication. These can vary per newspaper title and their internal structure. Most commonly used titles are picture editor, photo editor or art editor: or art director who tends to be more responsible for the visual style but often also for images or graphic design. But contact can also be directly with the editor or journalist. For the sake of clarity in this thesis in general I use the term picture editor.

the reader's existing knowledge. I present this constellation as having emerged out of a printed context, but question whether its currency is sustainable in the online context that is the dominant driver in the dissemination of editorial news and current events.

Chapter 4 presents a snapshot of current usage, technologies and issues around (visual) editorial content, image usage, presentation and the resulting technological disruptions currently shaping online communication and editorial news media. I describe and discuss a communications ecology that is caught between its technological achievements and its inability to provide space for deliberation, an essential dimension if information is to turn into knowledge. The chapter establishes how this affects the online use of traditional editorial illustration and how the dominant blog structure disables the editorial illustration's ability to function, whilst simultaneously enabling new *digitally native* forms of illustration to emerge, but at present mainly outside the context of news media websites.

In Chapter 5 I first present the key understanding of the illustration as an emergent practice and as a particular manifestation of textuality through extending the notion of material semiotic relationships investigated by Hayles (2002, 2005) in her research into the practice of Illustration. Then I explore the conditions that come from the intrinsic technological logic and materiality of the online communication context and whether, and if so, how, these new formations enable the editorial illustration to function. I present the key aspects of online digitality, which I argue are central in shaping the current horizon for online editorial illustration. (Manovich, 2002) I explore a method of digital manifestation, transcoding, which relates the properties of code and data, to the manifestation on the interface and the multi-mediatic appearance, and finally the key component of *online mediality*, where I describe the Internet, the online network. These are not only methods of structuring information, but also containers of the material properties that offer the aesthetic, experiential and semiotic agency to editorial illustration.

In the second section of this chapter I present four examples that suggest online editorial illustration use, including an emergent mode of data driven illustration, which is central to the research practice found in Chapter 6. In the next section, through these examples, I (re)examine the constellation of attributes investigated in Chapter 3, and explore the way they express these particular attributes through the lens of online materiality.

In the review of the **attribute of manifestation** the multimediality and the affordances of the network present both text and illustration as emergent and use the same material expressions but different modalities.

In the review of the **attribute of translation** I discuss the circulation of the illustration through the Internet, its expression and all the signifying elements, and how illustration can become a language in itself, a language

through which to critique the original story, as well as develop new strands of conversation.

The review of **attribute of reflection** examines a shift in the position of the publisher, the need for a consolidation of the ideological elements within the context of an illustrated work, for instance how the work is presented to the readers, and reveals a shift in the relationship with the reader. The reader has a more active and involved position, which allows different roles, from player, to distributor, to activated instrument used to complete the illustration's narrative.

And finally the review of the **attribute of engagement** equally points to the issues of consolidation of the ideological context, but here I focus on emergent (real-time) illustrated works that do not have the explicit presence of a written or oral text to which they can refer, in particular data driven illustration. This method of illustration, if it is to be understood as editorial illustration, needs to establish a relationship with something outside its frame and does this through using verifiable markers, through the use of streaming data and empathetic image elements. I pose the hypothesis that the continued presence of the four defining attributes suggests that editorial illustration remains a distinct mode, still capable of creating *the incompleteness* necessary for deliberation. Online it has taken new forms, which might warrant an understanding of this type of illustration as a distinct and developing new form of illustration.

Chapter 6 introduces the practice led dimension of this research. It consists of the description and the analysis of a case study, built from three interconnected studies, all of which explore aspects of the key concept of data driven illustration: a method of online illustration based on the creation and activation of illustrations through programmed data sets and/or live data streams, in which data and code act as both material and signifying elements. In the first study, *DataRabbits*, I explore behaviour enabled through live data and automation and the possibilities for narration. In the second case study entitled *Fatcat*, I explore meaningful relationships and behaviour enabled through data and automation. The third and final study, *100 Working Mice*, explores the complexities of multiple objects and various data streams orchestrated as part of a single programmed illustrated work. These experiments present data driven illustration as created through the interplay between the written instructions, external data and visual aesthetics. They extend all the attributes of editorial illustration through particular notions of a procedural aesthetic, in real-time action and duration. They also question the position of editorial ideology, the need for evidential veracity and the demands of presentation and engagement.

The practice brings particular attributes to the foreground through the media specificity of the online environment. It also suggests what needs to be investigated and whether these attributes have always been present, but latent, or whether they are particular to the online conditions. I conclude that this method of illustration has the potential to be successfully applied to a wide range of assignments, particularly where the subject is an ongoing situation determined by states of change and concerns systems that are multi-faceted and references that are data-rich. These subjects are plentiful in areas of socio-economics, environment and health. I also propose that more research is needed to explore the practical implementation of this method.

In the final Chapter 7, I conclude that the constellation of four attributes of editorial illustration is a useful conceptual structure to evaluate the role and current standing of editorial illustration. It brings to the fore the fact that illustration is a multimodal practice in a dialogical relation to the story it illustrates, where the illustration displays nomadic, temporal and durational properties that have become more apparent online, already present in the printed still image but never fully appreciated.

Online mediality can support these extended formations but only if illustration is understood as integrated and fully relational; what is illustrated and illustration is not distinct through materiality, but through the mode of dissemination.

Online editorial illustration might need to be explored as a distinct new form of illustration, born from a long tradition, with an inherent ability to create deliberation and to serve our wish to make sense of the world around us.

