

Credibility in Comedy is No Joke

A multimodal study of the credibility of, and communication campaign manifested in, the political satire program *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*.

By: Emma Andersson

Supervisor: Walid Al-Saqaf
Södertörns högskola | Institute of Social Science
Master thesis 15 hp
Journalism | Spring term 2018
International Master's programme in Journalism



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Abstract

Research into political satire programs show that they can be informative in the same way traditional news inform citizens and that the audience trust the information told by satirists. The political satire program *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* has inspired the phenomenon ‘the John Oliver Effect’ due to comedian John Oliver’s ability to influence the world of politics and beyond with his in-depth investigations in serious subjects. In the author’s previous research *Last Week Tonight* has been portrayed by the media as being a credible source despite being the work of a comedian. This study therefore aimed to research what it is that makes Oliver and *Last Week Tonight* a credible source and whether some aspects of the reporting can be seen as communication campaign. With the theory of source credibility as part of its core, this study used the method of multimodality to ascertain that the main aspect that spoke to Oliver’s credibility was his perceived *trustworthiness* rather than his *expertise* or *attractiveness*. Using the same method but with the theory of communication campaign as part of its core, the study also ascertained that the program in general possessed some characteristics of a communication campaign but to be completely successful an episode had to possess all characteristics of a communication campaign. Merging this with previous research would indicate that subjectivity – Oliver’s authenticity and honest opinions and feelings – play an important part in his perceived credibility.

Keywords

Communication campaign theory, Last Week Tonight with John Oliver, multimodality analysis, source credibility theory, subjective news

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1. Introduction

In 2009, *Time* (Poniewozik, 2015) held an online poll that asked its audience who they considered the most trusted newscaster in America after the death of veteran newscaster Walter Cronkite. Who was then voted the most trusted – a well-known investigative reporter or political pundit with many accolades under their belt? Not quite. Veteran faux newscaster and comedian Jon Stewart of *the Daily Show* was voted the most trusted newscaster in America. Nine years later, and the question of trust – and credibility – in the media is more important than ever, especially when the media in question isn't traditional news programs but rather satirical news programs.

As one of Stewart's many protégés, British comedian John Oliver branched out from the typical satirical program structure and created something new with his satire program *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (Carter, 2014). *The Daily Show* has been a starting point for many comedians who set out to host their own programs; not only the most well-known *the Colbert Report*, but also *the Nightly Show with Larry Wilmore*, *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee*, *the Opposition* and, as mentioned, *Last Week Tonight* (Gonzalez, 2016; Tani, 2017). Yet in comparison to the other branches from its predecessor, *Last Week Tonight* has gained a reputation as an atypical influence on the world of politics and beyond.

A call to arms to internet trolls to protect their playing field and consequently aiding in crashing the Federal Communications Commission's website, being sued for defamation by a coal tycoon while featuring a man dressed as a squirrel proclaiming 'Eat shit, Bob', being credited as inspiration for a state senator to propose a new bill that would allow citizens to comment on new legislation submitting videos online and collecting thousands of dollars to LGBTQIA-organisations by producing a top-selling children's book about the vice-president's rabbit Marlon Bundo meeting his soulmate in another boy rabbit (Geurrasio, 2017; Hawkins, 2017; Brownstone, 2015; Desta, 2018). As absurd as it is unconventional, these kinds of persuasive antics that has generated varied results has been labelled 'the John Oliver Effect' (Luckerson, 2015). Oliver and his show is having an impact on the world around him, but is the trust put in the comedian based on more than popularity? Can the program even be called a funny kind of communication campaign?

With previous research into the subject of satire (Andersson, 2016), to analyse the relationship between the genres of news and satire, this study aims to be a continued

development of that previous research. The aim of the previous research was to study whether American news outlets portrayed *Last Week Tonight* as a credible source or as humour without substance and whether public actors were portrayed as being affected by the program's reports. The result showed the relationship between satire and news to be blurring; the program was portrayed as a mix of a credible source and satire and that the two did not contradict each other and public actors were also shown to be affected by the program, going as far as issuing statements concerning the episodes.

With this result in mind, the aim of this study is to analyse what it is that makes *Last Week Tonight* and John Oliver – a self-proclaimed comedian; denier of any journalistic ambition – a credible enough source to, not only be used by the media but also affect the world of politics and beyond. Or can the credibility of his program rather be found in the process of how he addresses a subject; the sense of campaigning that his program sometimes emanates? Through comprehensive multimodality analyses of four of the episodes said to have had an impact beyond bringing its audience laughter, this study aims to define what makes John Oliver a credible source as well as question whether Oliver's satire is more than just poking clever fun at politics and closer to communication campaigning. With Oliver being able to affect the world around him with jokes and thorough research could this be the future of trusted news; a personal – more subjective – approach to hard news?

2. Research Questions

To ascertain the nature of the satire delivered by Oliver – what makes that satire credible and if it bears the features of a communication campaign – these research questions will be answered:

RQ 1. What makes Last Week Tonight with John Oliver a credible source? How is the program constructed?

RQ 2. What makes John Oliver a credible source? How does he address an issue?

RQ 3. What aspects of Last Week Tonight can be described as a communication campaign?

3. Background

First, to provide the reader with an understanding of what *Last Week Tonight* is, a description of the program and more importantly Oliver's thoughts on the program will be provided. This

is important as it shows the intent of the program and can be put in contrast to what effects it actually has. And finally, five sections consisting of a summary of each episode that will be analysed – ‘Net Neutrality’, ‘Charter Schools’, ‘Chickens’ and ‘Journalism’ – will be presented as well as a description of how they were written about in the media and how they made an impact.

3.1 Last Week Tonight With John Oliver

After eight years as the Senior British Correspondent on *the Daily Show*, John Oliver took on the role as host of his own show; doing satire in his own way and on his own terms. Without advertisement interruptions, restrictions on who or what to criticise and without any need to censor coarse language (Carter, 2014), *Last Week Tonight* became something different from its predecessor. In an interview with *the New York Times* (Carter, 2014), Oliver stated that, unlike *the Daily Show*, the program would not be a faux newscast and neither would it consistently criticise cable news but rather focus on the stories not being told. And rather than producing new stories every day like *the Daily Show*, *Last Week Tonight* would be a weekly program. In the interview, Oliver also expressed a desire to carve out his own space rather than repeat what had already been done. The team behind the program – and behind the extensive research into the either complicated or particularly boring subjects – consists of eight writers, four researchers, four footage producers and four research assistants (Brockes, 2018). In an interview with the *National Public Radio*, Oliver explains how the process of creating a segment is done:

“We have researchers, we have footage producers. And they go away to look at a story and to check that it has been reported accurately, or whether the story has shifted in any way... and whether there is footage through which we can tell the story. Then once we feel like the basic foundations are solid, then we can kind of bring comedic writing to that process and work out how we’ll tell the story – what elements of it we want to use, what kind of story arc we want to employ – and then we write jokes. So jokes come late.” (Gross, 2018)

In another interview with *NPR* (2016), Oliver once more mentions the research and points to the fact that the research is done in service of the jokes. He explains that the fact-checking, the rigorous research is to make sure the jokes are structurally sound, saying “You can’t build jokes on sand. [...] You can’t be wrong about something – otherwise that jokes just disintegrates” (NPR Staff, 2016). As mentioned earlier, being on *HBO* offers a lot of freedom and this freedom to criticise anyone and anything is part of what separates *Last Week Tonight* from other satire programs:

“You can do 12 minutes on General Motors' corporate malfeasance, which can be a problem on network television. ... If you're going to go after GM, there are a number of GM cars that would be sponsors for your show, so it's going to be difficult. There are going to be consequences [for] doing that. The exciting thing is that [HBO] let[s] you do whatever you want. They don't say anything. They're amazing. It's almost a confusing amount of freedom.” (NPR, 2014)

For *HBO*, however, this is a calculated risk as the more buzz a segment creates, the better marketing it is for the network, according to chief executive officer Richard Plepler. Plepler says it's not only about viewership but rather that the program ‘... become not only part of the cultural conversation, but part of the political conversation. You see that reverberation months and months later in op-eds, in news coverage’ (Krashinsky, 2016).

The program has been dubbed ‘investigative comedy’ (Hiatt, 2017) as well as part of a class of *new political satire* programs (Becker & Bode, 2018). Oliver has also been called a journalist, or had his show been likened to journalism more than once (Poniewozik, 2014; Steinberg, 2018). Oliver, however, maintains that he neither is a journalist nor produces journalism:

“We are making jokes about the news and sometimes we need to research things deeply to understand them, but it's always in service of a joke. If you make jokes about animals, that does not make you a zoologist. We certainly hold ourselves to a high standard and fact-check everything, but the correct term for what we do is ‘comedy.’” (Carr, 2014)

3.1.1 Summary of and media's reaction to ‘Net Neutrality’

“Yes, net neutrality. The only two words that promise more boredom in the English language are ‘featuring Sting’ (‘Net Neutrality’, 2014)

With the quote above setting the tone for the episode Oliver explained how net neutrality is an important part of keeping the internet fair. He described net neutrality as basically meaning that all data has to be treated equally – regardless who creates it. However, at the time the FCC was endorsing new rules that would allow so called fast lanes that cable companies could buy their way into – leaving those not able to afford it in the slow lanes. According to Oliver, one of the major issues was that cable companies have Washington in their pockets which he exemplified by using the close relationship between former President Obama and the CEO of Comcast, as well as Obama's choice of chair of the FCC – former top lobbyist for cable companies Tom Wheeler. The other major problem is that the subject of net neutrality is incredibly boring which is also part of why it's allowed to happen; people don't care even

though they really should. Oliver ended the segment with saying there is something people can do as the FCC is taking public comments and then urges his audience – or rather implores the internet trolls watching – to tell the FCC how they feel about net neutrality (‘Net Neutrality’, 2014).

This fifth episode of the very first season of *Last Week Tonight* can rightly be referred to as the episode that cemented Oliver’s place as the comedian taking boring subjects and making them fun and understandable. After the episode aired there was a variation of headlines: *John Oliver’s Net Neutrality Rant Crashes FCC Servers* (Aamoth, 2014), *How John Oliver Transformed the Net Neutrality Debate Once and for All* (Brody, 2015), *John Oliver’s army of internet trolls broke a government website* (Casti, 2014), *John Oliver’s cheeky net neutrality plea crashes FCC website* (Holpuch, 2014), *John Oliver Helps Rally 45,000 Net Neutrality Comments to FCC* (Hu, 2014), *John Oliver’s net neutrality rant may have caused FCC site crash* (McDonald, 2014). They all had the same point; Oliver was part of the reason the FCC’s website crashed. The FCC, however, made a statement saying that they did experience technical difficulties the day after the episode aired but that it was not clear whether it was due to Oliver (Romm, 2014).

In an in-depth article in *the Washington Post*, Brian Fung (2015) explained why the head of the FCC had just proposed the strongest net neutrality rules ever. The article brought up reasons for this change of heart and at the top of those reasons were former President Obama and Oliver’s segment. Fung also added a quote from an industry (FCC) official who said:

“Oliver and the President were probably the two most prominent [turning points] and then a series of ongoing drip, drip, drip every day for several months by grassroots protesters” (Fung, 2014)

The organisation Free Press even rented a Jumbo Tron to play testimonials on net neutrality as well as Oliver’s segment across the street from the FCC’s headquarters. Other organisations – such as Consumers Union, the New America Foundation’s Open Technology Institute, Demand Progress and Fight for the Future – took advantage of the increased attention and mobilized their opposition (Bolieck, Byers & Duryea, 2015). There was also a statement made by FCC chairman Tom Wheeler who Oliver indirectly called a dingo by saying that FCC being made up of former lobbyists who are basically overseeing themselves is the “equivalent of needing a babysitter and hiring a dingo” (‘Net Neutrality’, 2014). During a press conference a reporter asked Wheeler what he thought of the segment to which he

replied that he found it creative but that it overlooked some important aspects and added: “I would like to state for the record that I am not a dingo” (Risen, 2014).

3.1.2 Summary of and media’s reaction to ‘Charter Schools’

“And look, when Pitbull has a charter school it seems like it might be worth taking a look at them.” (‘Charter Schools’, 2016)

The quote above is part of the introduction into the subject of charter schools, as Oliver explained that in the last 25 years the number of charter schools has increased to over 6,700 that educate nearly three million students – and some have celebrity backer such as musician Pitbull. Before this, Oliver showed various clips of both Republicans and Democrats praising charter schools showing that this is one of the rare issues that are bipartisan. Oliver explained that charter schools are basically public schools that are taxpayer funded but privately run. For this segment Oliver set aside whether charter schools are a good idea in theory and rather looked at how they work in practice as they exist in 42 states. One of the major issues is that some charter schools don’t make it through the year as Oliver provided several examples of. Oliver pointed out that these aren’t just isolated incidents either; in Philadelphia at least ten executives of charter schools have plead guilty in the last decade to fraud, misusing funds and obstruction of justice, Pennsylvania’s charter school laws has been called the worst in the U.S. and Ohio’s charter laws were so slack for decades that even advocates have called it the Wild West (‘Charter Schools’, 2016).

Compared to the ‘Net Neutrality’ episode, this one did not create as big a buzz in the media but rather had an effect on those somehow connected to the subject. The episode had the media publish its usual reviews of the program – with headlines like *John Oliver Hysterically savages charter schools – and charter supporters aren’t happy about it* (Strauss, 2016a) and *Watch John Oliver Expose Shocking Flaws of Charter Schools* (Reed, 2016) as well as more neutral reviews summarising the episode (Locker, 2016; Huddleston, 2016). However, the biggest effect came from the charter schools themselves.

The non-profit organisation the Center for Education Reform felt Oliver’s segment was misrepresenting charter schools. In response to the segment they announced a ‘Hey John Oliver, Back Off My Charter School’ video contest aimed at students, with the winner getting a \$100,000 prize for their school (Klein, 2016; Strauss, 2016b). In the episode Oliver showed a clip from a press conference where state Auditor General Eugene DePasquale said

Pennsylvania had the worst charter school law in the entire United States making Pennsylvania's State Senator Anthony H. Williams write an open letter to Oliver addressing his segment. In the letter Senator Williams criticised the segment for claiming Pennsylvania's charter schools were the worst (Brown, 2016).

3.1.3 Summary of and media's reaction to 'Chickens'

"We eat so much chicken it has become the reference point for what every other meat taste like [...] But think about that, that's amazing! There is no parallel for the other senses. If I said to you 'everything looks like tables' or 'everything feels like Kush balls' you'd think I was insane!" ('Chickens', 2015)

Oliver stated that because Americans, as mentioned in the quote above, love eating chicken they also have to produce a lot of it – 160 million chickens a week. Oliver continued to explain that the poultry industry is dominated by four major companies: Pilgrim's, Sanderson Farms, Tyson and Perdue. He used clips from the companies' promotional videos – that always used jangly guitars as soundtrack – where it seems like chicken farmers have it made. However, the testimonies of many chicken farmers show that they do not agree. In fact studies have shown that many chicken farmers live below or near the poverty line. One of the major reasons for this is due to contract farming, something Oliver simplified as: farmers own everything that costs money (buildings and equipment) and companies own everything that makes money (chickens). Oliver pointed out another factor that adds to the farmers problems which is that they are payed by a tournament or gladiator system; farmers are ranked against each other and those in the bottom half will get a deduction. Oliver explained that one of the reasons we have not heard about this situation is because farmers are being punished for speaking out. Oliver explained that protective regulations for farmers exist but that they are not currently being enforced. However, the same committee that had turned regulations down in the past was going to meet again and Oliver ended the episode saying – over jangly guitar – that if any Representatives votes against the amendment to protect chicken farmers it is because they are chicken-fuckers; an accusation he urged his audience that chicken companies cannot stop them from screaming at the top of their lungs if anyone votes against the amendment ('Chickens', 2015).

Much like 'Charter Schools', this episode did not make that big of a buzz in the media. There were some articles that merely did a traditional review of the episode (Mazza, 2015; Schwartz, 2015; Locker, 2015), however, in an in-depth article in *Politico* with the headline

John Oliver vs. Chicken (Haas, 2015) a more detailed description of the aftermath is presented. “His segment on his HBO comedy show could help chicken farmers who feel victimized by poultry processors” is the hook and the article then explains how this could be a possibility. Haas (2015) brings up the fact that the National Chicken Council made a statement in response to Oliver’s segment saying that the program offered a “completely one-sided view of U.S. poultry production and... not an accurate reflection of the overwhelming majority of the 25,000 farm families who partner with chicken companies” (NCC, 2015).

The article, however, also brings up those in favour of Oliver’s message. Some Democratic lawmakers – such as Congress Representative Chellie Pingree and Representative Marcy Kaptur – expressed hope and belief that Oliver’s segment would aid ‘beyond the farm’ (Haas, 2015). There has been an ongoing political stalemate over additions to bills that prevent the U.S. Department of Agriculture from taking action to make sure that chicken farmers are treated fairly by the chicken companies. Rep. Chellie Pingree is quoted as saying “Last time we had a vote on it, we lost by only six votes. If it comes up for a vote in the committee, we’ll be more likely to prevail” (Haas, 2015). Rep. Marcy Kaptur also agrees that the program could have an impact on future policy, saying “We’ve never had publicity like this in the 16 years I’ve been working on this issue” (Haas, 2015). Both lawmakers believe that through the program, Oliver gave them a fighting chance to change things for chicken farmers, something Bill Bullard, CEO of the Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund agrees with, saying “I think it is perhaps the single best opportunity the U.S. livestock and poultry sector has had in many, many years...” (Haas, 2015).

3.1.4 Summary of and media’s reaction to ‘Journalism’

“And it is not just news outlets, stupid shows like ours lean heavily on local papers. In fact, whenever this show is mistakenly called journalism it is a slap in the face to the actual journalists whose work we rely on.”
(‘Journalism’, 2016)

Oliver introduced the main topic as concerning journalists – the heroes we root for in films such as the 2016 Oscar winner for Best Picture, *Spotlight*. Oliver argued that one thing that made *Spotlight* so powerful is the knowledge that the newspaper industry today is in trouble. The number of newspapers has diminished for years and this is something that affects us all – regardless if you only get your news from Facebook or Twitter as that news is often repackaged news from newspapers. Oliver, as seen in the quote above, also mentioned that

even satire programs rely on printed media. One of the problems concerning printed media is that printed ads are less popular with advertisers than they used to be. Many newspapers, like *the Oregonian*, have become a digital-first company and thereby putting extra digital demands on their journalists who are often required to write, edit, shoot videos and tweet which is the cause of mistakes being made. While it is clearly smart to expand online it does bring with it the danger of news outlets gravitating towards what gets more clicks. Oliver reminded the audience that it is important to recognise that there are those producing great news in local newsrooms but that they are doing it *despite* their current situation. Oliver also stated that one of the big reasons for the current situation is on us, the readers and our unwillingness to pay for what journalists produce. Oliver ended the segment with saying that if we don't start paying for our news the journalism films of the future will look a lot different and then ended the show with a spoof trailer to their made-up film *Stoplight* about a journalist who wants to produce an important story on political corruption but is told that they just don't know how many clicks it will get ('Journalism', 2016).

The episode 'Journalism' differs from the other episodes as it didn't have a direct impact but made quite a big buzz all the same, as its subject was of great interest for journalists. While some articles (Borchers, 2016; Gabbatt, 2016) were more neutral in their review of the episode, some journalists were in clear favour of Oliver's description of what's threatening journalism (Khan, 2016; Parker, 2016; Sullivan, 2016), with some going so far as to use the headlines *John Oliver is spot on about what's killing journalism* (Khan, 2016) and *John Oliver has given us the best defense of newspapers ever* (Parker, 2016).

However, chief executive of News Media Alliance – formerly the Newspaper Association of America – David Chavern explained in a statement that he was not impressed with Oliver's segment as he considered it much too pessimistic (Sullivan, 2016; Rutenberg, 2016). According to Chavern, Oliver's "making fun of experiments and pining away for days when classified ads and near-monopolistic positions in local ad markets funded journalism is pointless and ultimately harmful" (Sullivan, 2016).

4. Previous Research

In this section a description of the author's previous research into the subject of satire will give the reader valuable information of what this study is a continued research on. A short description of political satire programs will be presented as well as research into objective

versus subjective news and how it's connected to satire. Other studies concerning satire programs, how they have affected the media and the world around them as well as the audiences' trust in them will be presented.

4.1 Characterisation of political satire programs

Lubeck (2009) describes satire as either a literary genre or a journalistic genre. In journalism satire is used to make fun of news and is defined by its comedic nature. However, its objective is not only to make jokes but also to 'make statements about real people, events, and trends, often with the intent of influencing change' (1246). Satire programs or more specifically, political late-night television comedy has been put into categories such as *new media* (Davis & Owen, 1998), *non-traditional media* (Moy, Pfau & Kahlor, 1999) and *soft media* (Baum, 2002). When it comes to research into political late-night television comedy the two programs that constantly show up are *the Daily Show* and *the Colbert Report* (Compton, 2011). It is important to mention that there are a lot of programs that fit into the characterisation of 'political late-night television comedy'. However, scholars differentiate between programs like *the Daily Show* and *the Colbert Report* and late-night programs that consist of political humour, like late-night talk-shows that joke about current events but that are aimed at a broader audience. *The Daily Show* is for example more influential (Baumgartner & Morris, 2008) and it is more political (Young, 2004) than other late-night programs while *the Colbert Report* served as a parody of self-indulgent, conservative talk-shows to point out the ridiculousness of political news (Baumgartner & Morris, 2008). Although it differs rather heavily from both *the Daily Show* and *the Colbert Report*, this distinction also fits *Last Week Tonight* as it has more in common with those kinds of programs than it does late-night talk-shows.

4.2 Objective news vs. subjective news

There is a part of the journalistic community that questions the ideal of objectivity when it comes to news and some who even argue that a subjective approach could be a more informative way to present news (Johansson, 2015). There are different arguments behind this critique of objectivity. Some are based in the idea that objectivity does not really exist – it is a myth. No story is without a perspective that is more important than another and some like Gitlin (1980) argue that by leaning on objectivity, journalists help confirm the status quo in

society as well as existing societal structures. The underlying point is that journalists can never only report facts. Others like Carey (1999) argue that the practice of objectivity by journalists demobilises the citizens rather than create engaged citizens. By only presenting the knowledge of experts and present arguments for or against something *without* involving themselves that is also the message they send to the audience. Others like Glasser (1992) argue that the objectivity ideal undermines journalism's role as society's examiner. According to him, a proper examination of an issue demands both activity and to take a stand. By always – and automatically – demanding a balance there is a risk of social injustice being disregarded, or that falsehoods are presented just to keep the balance and present the 'other side's' opinion.

Some like Kramer (1995) take it a bit further and argues that subjectivity is preferable to objectivity. These advocates of a more literary journalism argue that the objectivity ideal does not contribute to an increased understanding of how society works. To increase this, a journalist's subject – their experience – should be more prevalent in news reports. Advocates of subjectivity over objectivity argue that reports that include humour, opinions and experience can be more informative than direct news reports. Reports that include humour and opinion are the very cornerstone of satire and it can be said to be a short but accurate description of the concept behind *Last Week Tonight*.

4.3 Trust in political satire programs

The author's previous research into *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (Andersson, 2016) concerns the genres of satire and news. Four episodes ('Net Neutrality', 'Charter Schools', 'Chickens' and 'Journalism') were analysed to research how they were portrayed by four American news outlets (*the Washington Post*, *the Huffington Post*, *Politico* and *the New York Times*). The aim of the study was to analyse how these four news outlets portrayed the program as well as how they portrayed the impact connected to the four segments. This was done to show whether the news outlets portrayed the program as a credible source of information or as humour without substance and if public actors were shown to be affected by the program's segments, thereby giving the program the power to influence the world beyond satire.

By using the method of framing, it was shown how the journalists chose to portray Oliver and his program – what kind of words they used, whether they presented him as a comedian or not

etcetera. The results of the analyses were that the program was not generally portrayed as one or the other but rather a little bit of both; a credible yet humorous source of information. A lot of the articles concerning each subject reported responses from public actors, thereby showing the program to have an impact on actors such as government agencies, politicians and organisations. Not only was the program shown to have an impact on serious public actors but when put against each other, the public actors were the ones portrayed as being wrong while Oliver was portrayed as the one who was right. These results indicate that the distinction between the genres news and satire is blurring and making it harder to differentiate between the two (Andersson, 2016). As this previous research answers the question *how* Oliver is portrayed, this study will rather take it a step further and try to give insight as to *what* makes this foul-mouthed comedian a credible source.

‘... much of the American political coverage is inauthentic (fake) and that the programs of Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert both represent authentic (real) discourse that breaks through the shell of the real (fake) news revealing layers of social construct, empty symbolism, and simulacra – thus positively affecting the traditional coverage and political discourse.’ (McBeth & Clemons, 2011, 81)

Although programs such as *the Daily Show* and *the Colbert Report* are sometimes referred to as ‘fake’ news, McBeth and Clemons (2011) argue that they are rather more ‘real’ than the real news and current political coverage. They, along with many other critics, argue that there is no longer any substance in the American political discourse; substance has been replaced with soft news, popular culture references and heated, moralistic arguments that are mostly for show. An example of this is the coverage of political campaigns. Rather than focusing on meaningful, in-depth examinations of issues and a candidate’s policies, the focus is on ‘who’s ahead?’, ‘who’s exceeding expectations?’, or ‘who has raised the most amount of money?’.

In one part of McBeth and Clemons’s (2011) study they used the pastor Jeffrey Wright – who married Barack and Michelle Obama and made many controversial remarks – as an in-depth case study. A mix of politically conservative, moderate and liberal students were shown clips from *ABC*, *the Daily Show*, and *the Colbert Report* regarding the subject and then asked which one they felt they learned the most from, which one was the most informative and which one explained the complexity of race relations the best. The students felt they learned the most from the clips from *ABC*. Moderates felt that they learned more from the satire programs than conservatives and liberals. The students also found the *ABC* clips the most informative, yet compared to conservatives, moderates and liberals found the satire programs more informative. However, when it came to dealing with the complexity of race relations,

the students believed *the Daily Show* dealt with the issue the best. McBeth and Clemens were surprised that the students learned the most from *ABC*, as previous research had found no difference between coverage of ‘real’ and ‘fake’ news. McBeth and Clemens argued that it could be explained by the findings of Baumgartner and Morris (2008) that showed that to appreciate the purpose of satire program you would have to be ‘in on the joke’ – explaining for example why conservatives did not feel that they learned from the satire programs. Because the students found that *the Daily Show* dealt best with the complexity of race relations, McBeth and Clemens (2011) believe their hypothesis that ‘fake’ news may be more real than ‘real’ news was partially confirmed. Rather than discuss ‘the false shell’ of a subject, Stewart reframed the debate by putting the more urgent issue on the table.

Crittenden, Hopkins and Simmons (2011) argue that the platforms to deliver satire has changed dramatically just in the past few years allowing anyone with access to the internet to shape public opinion. Therefore professional satirists ‘will have to evolve in keeping up with the changing media platforms so as to maintain the true intent behind the creation of political satire’.

Becker and Bode (2017) compared the effects of exposure to political satire versus traditional news on the subject of net neutrality. They compared *Last Week Tonight*’s coverage to that of *ABC News* and looked at knowledge gain, issue importance and perceived issue difficulty. Their study found *Last Week Tonight* to be equal to traditional news content as a resource for learning. However, those exposed to traditional news were more likely to find net neutrality more important than those exposed to *Last Week Tonight*. The study also suggested that viewers were similar in how they perceived the difficulty of the issue. They point out that the fact that both traditional news and *Last Week Tonight* are both good for learning about an issue such as net neutrality is of great importance as Oliver’s segment has over 11 million views of YouTube; a much larger viral spread than traditional news about net neutrality.

In a study by Brewer and McKnight (2017) they use a segment from *Last Week Tonight* as a case study to research how its coverage of global warming might affect viewer’s perception of the issue. In the segment Oliver criticised the U.S. television news for making it seem like there is an equal debate between climate change believers and sceptics rather than show the accurate representation where 97% of all scientists believe in climate change. Their results showed that by watching the segment, viewers’ belief in global warming as well as their perception that scientists believe in global warming increased. The result concerning the

perceptions of scientists also showed that those who were effected the strongest were those with a low level of interest in the environment and global warming – this mean that satire programs such as *Last Week Tonight* might be specifically effective in promoting understanding such a topic among inattentive audiences. Brewer and McKnight end their study by stating that their study aid the notion that satire programs can possibly be ‘an alternative route to traditional news media for communicating about climate change to members of the public’ (2017, 178).

“Laughter performs a very important role in setting a tone through which genuine democratic exchange can occur.” (Jones & Baym, 2010, 282)

In a dialogue with Jones and Baum (2010) they discuss the importance and effect of *the Daily Show* and *the Colbert Report*. They argue that even though Stewart always insisted that he was no journalist and rather a host of a fake news show, it ‘should not prevent us from seeing the significance of his program’ (279). They both also argue that satirical programs engage people in discussions that are of importance to promote a democratic system as well as provide their audience with the resources of *how* to get engaged in society. While some critics argue that Stewart and Colbert represented infotainment that has corrupted serious news, Baym would rather argue that the result of these programs – that believe in fact, accountability and reason in discourse – is ‘a powerful, emergent kind of journalism that has the potential to reinvigorate broadcast journalism...’(281).

Jones and Baym (2010) also discuss Baym’s description of the convergence of entertaining talk and political talk on satire programs as ‘discursive integration’. Discursive integration acknowledge that traditional news formats are adoption entertainment as a part of their techniques but it also acknowledges that satire programs are adopting the ‘focus and form’ of news. It is about more than genre or form; it is about how we create meaning and make sense of the political world, not only about how we talk about it. All aspects of interpretive frames – genres, language, etc. – have become interwoven. Baym argues that the discourse of satire programs look more like the way we discuss politics with our friends and family and is therefore more accessible; the sometimes up-tight and constricted way journalists are allowed to express themselves in can be seen as inauthentic to the audience.

Another term discussed is Baym’s (2010) description of satire programs as ‘antidote to bullshit’. Bullshit can be described by its typical description as nonsense meant to deceive people as well as speech that ‘display complete disinterest in the very concept of truth’ (286).

Colbert and Stewart worked as antidotes of this kind of bullshit that has seeped into all parts of the media – political communication, advertising and television news; they ‘call bullshit’ on the actual bullshit.

5. Theoretical Framework

These two theories – source credibility theory and campaign theory – will be used as bases for the analyses of the five episodes. If one or either of the theories can be applied to the program and Oliver’s behaviour, it could help explain why *Last Week Tonight* is treated as a dependable and believable source.

5.1 Theory of source credibility

Source credibility, often used in research concerning marketing and advertising, is a term used to address a ‘communicator’s positive characteristics that affect the receiver’s acceptance of a message’ (Ohanian, 1990). Fogg (2003) explains credibility as *believability* and points to the fact that credibility is a perceived quality. He compares it to beauty; much like beauty, credibility is in the eye of the beholder. Credibility is not something that can be touched or seen but rather only exists after an evaluation has been done. However, Fogg explains that “much like agreement in evaluating beauty, people often agree when evaluating a source’s credibility” (2003, 122). For this study the theory of source credibility, and mainly two of the three factors that will be discussed below, will serve as a tool for the analysis. Although the theory of source credibility is used in research into communication it is, as mentioned earlier, also prevalent in a lot of research into advertising and marketing. As *Last Week Tonight* differs from regular satire programs in that it is trying to convey a message about a particular subject, for example that something that is happening is bad for a lot of people or that the audience should get involved, it is applicable to this study.

Research into the subject usually rest one of two general models: the source-credibility model and the source-attractiveness model. The source-credibility model was a result from a study by Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953) and it suggests that two factors – *trustworthiness* and *expertise* – are most likely to affect a communicator’s perceived credibility. Their definition of *expertise* was ‘the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions’ (Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953) and their definition of *trustworthiness* was ‘the degree of confidence in the communicator’s intent to communicate the assertions he considers

most valid' (Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953). According to Griffin (1967), what Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953) called 'source credibility' is the same concept that Aristotle crowned 'ethos' a long time ago; the level of trust a listener has in a speaker. The source-attractiveness model originated from social psychological research and is a part of McGuire's 'source valence' model. The source-attractiveness model suggests that the main factors for perceived credibility are a communicator's *attractiveness*, which is their likability, similarity and familiarity (McGuire, 1985). However, there are some like Fogg (2003) that argue that *trustworthiness* and *expertise* are the only two key parts of credibility. As these two factors are also easier to analyse in relation to each episode's subject the focus will be on them. The three factors *trustworthiness*, *expertise* and *attractiveness* will be explained in more detail below.

In communication *trustworthiness* is considered the 'listener's degree of confidence in, and level of acceptance of, the speaker and the message' (Ohanian 1990). In a study by McGinnies and Ward (1980) concerning a source's capability to change attitudes, the results pointed to something interesting. Not only did a source that was considered both an expert and trustworthy generate the most attitude change, but a trustworthy source was persuasive regardless if they were an expert or not. This was also the result in another study where it was concluded that celebrities who are liked will also be trusted by the listeners (Ohanian, 1990). Ohanian (1990) summarises the *trustworthiness* of a celebrity (the source) as being 'an important construct in persuasion and attitude-change research'. For their study, Cho, Kwon, and Park (2009) defined *trustworthiness* as "the degree to which an information source is perceived as providing information that reflects the source's actual feelings or opinions" (3753).

According to Fogg (2003) *trustworthiness* is the key factor in credibility. He defines *trustworthiness* as the perceived goodness and morality of a source. For a source to be trustworthy they would then have to be perceived as truthful, fair and unbiased. Fogg states that there are three cues that lead to *trustworthiness*. The first is if a source, as mentioned, is fair and unbiased. Secondly, sources who argue against their own interest are also seen as trustworthy as they have nothing to gain yet they have something to lose; one could say that perceived honesty makes a source more trustworthy and thereby credible. Finally, people are more likely to trust sources they feel are similar to themselves. Similarities could be for example background, language or opinions; similarities needn't be significant to have an effect.

According to Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953) *expertise* is the second aspect of source credibility. Depending on which researcher you ask, the same idea can be defined differently; *authoritativeness*, *competence* and *qualification* are some examples. To measure *expertise* adjectives such as ‘trained-untrained’ and ‘educated-uneducated’ are often used (Ohanian, 1990). In general, the results of research into a source’s *expertise* demonstrate that it is more likely to impact attitude changes. For example, in a study by Crano (1970), those exposed to a source that was an expert agreed with the source’s standpoint more than those who were exposed to a source with less *expertise* on the subject. For their study, Cho, Kwon, and Park (2009) defined *expertise* as “the extent to which an information source is perceived as capable of providing correct information” (3753).

According to Fogg (2003) *expertise* is the second key factor of credibility and it can be defined as the “perceived knowledge, skill, and experience of the source” (124). As with *trustworthiness* there are certain cues that lead to perceived *expertise*. First and foremost are labels that acknowledge someone is an actual expert. This can be a title such as professor or doctor. Secondly there can be cues in one’s appearance, such as a white lab coat; even if we don’t know who that person is we associate the lab coat with experts. Finally a source with perceived *expertise* can have a documentation of accomplishments, for example a source can have been presented with an award.

When it comes to *attractiveness* there is a lot of research in communication as well as advertising that point to physical attractiveness as an important part of the first impression of another person. According to Ohanian (1990), *attractiveness* is also an important factor when it comes to using celebrities to endorse a product or a social cause. However, this aspect is rather hard to get a clear-cut definition of as *attractiveness* can be defined in many ways. Some researchers rather refer to *sexiness*, or *chicness* or *likability* instead of *attractiveness*, although the idea is the same. For example, in a review of experimental evidence of the impact on attitude change in regard to a source’s *attractiveness*, Joseph (1982) concluded that ‘attractive (versus unattractive) communicators’ are more liked and have a more positive impact on the products they are associated with.

As presented above and according to Ohanian (1990), the research into source credibility provides evidence that a credible source is more persuasive than a source of low credibility. But Ohanian also emphasises that this is not always the case. For example, if an audience is already in favour of a message, a source of low credibility can be more persuasive than a

credible source. Even back when Ohanian conducted her study in the beginning of the 90s, celebrities were used to endorse a product and the obsession with celebrities and fame has only increased (Uhls & Greenfield, 2011) and some researchers go as far as calling it a new religion (Weinstein & Weinstein, 2003). This makes the theory of source credibility even more suitable to this study as Oliver can rightfully be called a celebrity. And the concept of *Last Week Tonight* fits with Ohanian (1990) explanation of advertisers' primary goal which is to persuade their audience and advocate an attitude change concerning their offerings.

5.2 Theory of communication campaign

Rice and Atkin (2002) defines communication campaigns as '(a) purposive attempts; (b) to inform, persuade, or motivate behavior changes; (c) in a relatively well-defined and large audience; (d) generally for non-commercial benefits to the individuals and/or society at large; (e) typically within a given time period; (f) by means of organized communication activities involving mass media; and (g) often complemented by interpersonal support' (427).

Throughout history there has been a development of this sort of communication used to shift the public opinion. There have been health campaigns, for example in Boston in the early 1700s during a smallpox epidemic. Pamphlets were distributed to promote the effectiveness of immunisation. Print media was used throughout the nineteenth century, for example by the abolition movement that sought to end slavery by changing people's beliefs (Paisley, 1989). Communication campaigns have often been used as a political aid, for example in electoral campaigns and to organise political action to otherwise change public opinion (Southwell & Yzer, 2007). Cho et al. (2009) explain that political campaigns – that often come through media – can have 'important social and political consequences'. Such campaigns are often categorised by a high-intensity information flow that reach a large part of the general public – many who have no interest in politics in general.

Communication campaigns can be separated into either public service campaigns or advocacy campaigns. Public service campaigns are distinguished by goals that are generally supported by many different stakeholders while the goals of advocacy campaigns are more controversial and often challenged by some stakeholders. What campaigns belong to each category may change over time as the public opinion changes with it (Paisley, 2001). However, according to Paisley (1998; 2001) there are five other ways that can distinguish a campaign:

Objective or methods: Either campaigns are seen as a strategy of social control to achieve a certain objective or campaigns are seen as a genre of communication that has its own methods, communication channels and its own results.

Strategies of change: A campaign can work as a strategy for change in three ways. Either by focusing on educating or providing information about how to change behaviours or attitudes, focusing on the negative consequences that are connected to not abiding by the accepted behaviour or by designing social systems with the intent to prevent bad behaviour or bad consequences.

Individual or collective benefits: A campaign can either focus on individual or social changes.

First-party and second-party entitlement: Campaign sources can either be directly connected to the issue presented by the campaign and thereby pays the direct consequences for the campaign or they are not directly connected and rather represent stakeholders not able to present the case themselves.

Types of stakeholders: Different types of stakeholders, or campaign actors – associations, government agencies, foundations, trade unions, corporations, or mass media – have a different effect on the public agenda, campaign design, and sources connected to the campaign. They also have a different access to the media and the audience

For a campaign to succeed it needs to become an important part of the public agenda, and it needs to be able to endure the passage of time. Some campaign topics – such as global warming, HIV/AIDS and civil rights – come and go (Paisley, 2001). According to Paisley (1998), for a campaign to be truly successful it cannot only urge the public, it must inform, advocate, reinforce and give advice as well.

Both Cho et al. (2009) and Southwell and Yzer (2007) point out that there is a controversy regarding communication campaigns – specifically that uses the media – as there is a long-standing debate on whether they can actually have any effect on its audience. There are those who argue that television and Internet as well as political advertising make citizens passive and destroy citizen engagement. The shift in patterns of media – from newspapers as the main source of influence to television, to digital media – is said to be blamed for the current lack of engagement and social and/or political participation (Putnam, 2000; Nie, 2001). One example of this is research into campaign effects by Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) who found that negative advertisement suppress turnout by close to five percent. However, there are those that disagree with this notion. Research by Wattenberg and Brians (1999) show the exact opposite result regarding negative advertisement: people who recollect negative presidential campaigns

display a higher turnout and Wattenberg and Brians therefore concluded that the so-called dangers of negative advertising are exaggerated. Cho et al (2009, 69) also ‘strongly contest the simplistic position that media – television, the Internet, and campaign ads – are the culprits reducing participations’. In their opinion, there has been research pointing to mass media as a possible source to increase peoples’ engagement in politics. Holbert (2005) found that informational and dramatic content on television actually encouraged participation as well as communal attitudes.

6. Methodology

In this section the process of choosing which episodes to analyse will be presented as well as the method of multimodality used in said analyses. The methodological concerns of reliability and validity will also be discussed in this section.

6.1 Selection of material

The main reason these specific episodes were chosen instead of other episodes said to have made an impact was because these four were used in the previous research (Andersson, 2016). By analysing the same episodes for this study it was possible to gain a deeper understanding and get a more interesting discussion as the result from the previous research – how these episodes were portrayed by the media – could be taken into account. All episodes have been credited as having an impact but for different reasons. The episode ‘Net Neutrality’ was chosen as it can rightfully be said to be the most well-known episode and it has been credited as such by many lists concerning the impact of *Last Week Tonight* (Kowitt, 2015; Boboltz, 2015; Luckerson, 2015). Two of the lists (Boboltz, 2015; Kowitt, 2015) also contain the episode ‘Chickens’. The episode ‘Charter Schools’ was chosen due to the previous awareness of the contest created by charter school advocates. The last episode ‘Journalism’ was chosen because there had been a lot written about it in the media as it’s a subject of interest for journalists. It is also of interest as it provides more information on how Oliver sees himself and the program in relation to journalism.

6.2 Multimodality

Multimodality is a theory of communication and refers to how events, objects, practices, processes and various ways of communicating (semiotic resources) all play a part in creating meaning (Jewitt, 2014a). Multimodality is also a method consisting of a range of approaches

that identify both communication and representation as being about more than language and instead looks to the all communicational forms people can use to communicate and the relationship between these forms. These forms are modes. Mode is a ‘socially shaped and culturally given resource for making meaning’ (Jewitt, 2014a, 12). Examples of a mode can therefore be images, writing, layout, music, gestures, speech, moving images, gaze, posture, and so on.

There are four theoretical assumptions that underpin the general idea of multimodality. The first assumption is that language is a part of a multimodal ensemble. Even if language is not considered the most important mode of communication in multimodality it still plays a role alongside other modes to create meanings. However, the distinction is that language plays *a* role and not the central role as multimodality ‘proceeds on the assumption that representation and communication always draw on a multiplicity of modes’ (Jewitt, 15). The second assumption is that each mode in a multimodal ensemble is understood as fulfilling different communicative work. In other words, the concept of something will differ depending on what mode is used to describe it. Multimodality assumes that modes are shaped through their cultural, historical and social uses to fulfil social functions, and also that images and non-linguistic modes take on certain roles in a certain context and moment in time. Therefore, using an image to describe an object compared to using written text will change how a person perceives said object. This is closely connected to the third assumption as it asserts that people create meaning through both their selection as well as their arrangement of modes. This is important when it comes to meaning-making as the meaning of one mode is interwoven with the meanings of other modes present. The fourth and final assumption is that meanings of signs created from multimodal semiotic resources are shaped by the norms and rules that are present at the moment of the sign-making. The social context the sign-maker exists in, as well as their motivation, can influence the meanings of signs (Jewitt, 2014a).

For the multimodal analysis, Kress’s (1993) social semiotic multimodal analysis and Norris’s (2004) multimodal interactional analysis has been drawn upon. Both of these approaches focus on the social actor – something that is of value for this study as it aimed to analyse the actions of Oliver. As is described further on, the two approaches differ in what they put emphasis on beyond the actions of the social actor; opening up for a more comprehensive analysis with more aspects included.

For the social semiotic multimodal analysis the main focus point is about outlining how modes are used with regard to the sign-maker's interest. The choices made by the social actor – the sign-maker – and the relationship between language and social context are vital. To express a certain meaning, people bring together modes that will allow this meaning to be made and understood (Jewitt, 2014b). In his earlier work with Hodge (1988), Kress put a strong emphasis on the social character of text and later he also developed the concept of the motivated sign (Kress, 1993). This approach treats signs (such as speech, gestures and text) as a product of a sign-maker's interest. The analytic part is about trying to understand the patterns in the interpretations and what help shape it. Having developed this concept of motivated signs, Kress (1993) became interested in what motivates someone to use one semiotic resource over another. He then developed the idea of *interest* which 'connects a person's choice of one resource over another with the social context of sign production' (Jewitt, 2014b, 34). In other words, it is a person's 'interest' that motivates them when they choose what semiotic resource to use to get their meaning across (Jewitt, 2014b).

In the multimodal interactional analysis approach, much like in the social semiotic multimodal analysis approach, the focus is on the action of a social actor. Those utilising multimodal interactional analyses try to understand as well as describe what is happening in a specific interaction. Multimodal interactional analysis differs from social semiotic multimodal analysis as it puts emphasis on context and situated interaction rather than the interest of the sign-maker (Jewitt, 2014b). In Norris's definition of interaction she includes communication:

'Communication is interaction if one person conveys a message and another person perceives it. The modes utilized for interacting do not create a communicative moment as an interaction, but rather the process of doing something to or for or with people allows us to understand a communicative moment as an interaction.' (Norris, 2004, 149)

A modal system is not a primary concern in the multimodal interactional analysis approach as the focus on interaction makes mode, sign-maker and context too closely connected to be able to separate. Instead of outlining how modes are used the focus is shifted to try and understand modes in action and what kind of patterns can be found among modes used in a specific social interaction. As mentioned, the emphasis on the sign-maker is high in both approaches but unlike the social semiotic multimodal analysis approach, the multimodal interactional analysis approach allows for the sign-maker to communicate without a certain intention in mind (Jewitt, 2014b).

To transcribe the modes into a code scheme, inspiration was taken from Baldry and Thibault's (2006, 5) code scheme for 'space and hand-arm movement in a car advertisement'. The same concept – phases and subphases for the actions – was used to create the code scheme used for transcribing the program (see figure 1 for example). The majority of modes, talk/information, gesture, gaze, text, joke, sound, visual aid, and other media used were in the code scheme from the beginning with practical aid being added after the transcription of the first episode.

Action	Talk/Information	Gesture	Gaze (movement and expression)
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'			
<i>Subphase 1.1</i>			

Figure 1. Example of code scheme used for transcription

6.2.1 Methodological concerns

As with any method there are limitations. To ensure that the research in this study was done correctly, that the result of the research actually concerned the aim of the study and that it was believable, both the validity and reliability of the study were actively pursued.

6.2.2 Reliability and validity

Reliability usually refers to replicability; a study has to be transparent enough that another researcher could repeat the same research project and thereby produce the same result (Silverman, 2014). The study will follow Moisander and Valtonen's (2006) two ways to satisfy reliability criteria of qualitative works. The first way to make the research process transparent is by describing the strategy behind the research as well the describing the method in an adequately detailed manner. When it comes to the method of multimodality – and many other qualitative analytical methods – the biggest limits is that it can seem impressionistic in its analysis (Jewitt, 2014a). How does one for example know for certain what one gesture means? To safeguard against any uncertainty concerning the result, the analyses will be presented with a high level of transparency to allow the reader to understand how the interpretation was made thereby making the reasoning behind an interpretation clear.

Moisander and Valtonen's (2006) second suggestion concerns the theoretical transparency. By clearly and transparently presenting the theoretical framework from which the result and conclusions are made it shows how those results were made and how the author drew certain

conclusions and excluded others. When it comes to the theory of source credibility, the three factors *trustworthiness*, *expertise* and *attractiveness* can appear to be hard to ascertain without actually researching those affected by the person's message – the audience. This study recognises this argument but as the aim was to research what contribute to Oliver's *perceived* credibility, the focus was rather on how he presents himself and how that might be regarded in relations to source credibility rather than the audiences' feelings on the program and Oliver.

Validity refers to whether a study actually researches the subject it sets out to research; whether the method used is the one best used to measure the chosen material (Silverman, 2014). The issue of validity was first considered during the choice of method. As the aim of the study was to research what aspects of *Last Week Tonight* were perceived as credible and whether some aspects could be deemed a communication campaign, a method that analysed more than just one part was needed. As the method of multimodality takes all modes – gesture, speech, pictures, expression etcetera – in account this offered a broader understanding of what aspects could play the biggest part in Oliver's perception of credibility.

7. Results and Analysis

The results have been separated into five parts: the construction of the show, the three credibility factors *trustworthiness*, *expertise* and *attractiveness* as well as a section about aspects that could be described as communication campaigns. As the construction is the same for each episode, with only minor changes, it will be presented first for the reader to have in mind when continuing with the presentation of the results.

7.1 How is the program constructed?

These observations are based on the four episodes analysed ('Charter Schools', 2016; 'Chickens', 2015; 'Journalism', 2016; 'Net Neutrality', 2014) however, there are exceptions to this construction. There are, for example, interviews of guests that take up some of the time. However, this is an uncommon occurrence. As the episodes used in the analyses only differ in the number and frequency of segments used, the construction of the program will be presented as to how it is in general.

Last Week Tonight with John Oliver has the same visual concept as its predecessor: the host sits behind a desk, not in the centre of the screen but rather to the right to make room for the visual aid to the left. Although, as mentioned earlier, Oliver said this would not be a faux

newscast like its predecessor (Carter, 2014), it still relies on the same visual concept. Crittenden, Hopkins and Simmons (2011) makes the argument that – to keep up with new platforms that make it possible for new forms of satire and new forms to shape public opinion – professional satirists will have to evolve. However, considering the popularity of *Last Week Tonight* this does not seem to extend to the actual visual part of a program's construction. The similarity to its predecessor could also be seen as an advantage; as the source-attractiveness model (McGuire, 1985) suggests that one of the main factors for perceived credibility is 'familiarity', the argument could be made that the familiarity can be found in the program's settings. People previously familiar with *the Daily Show* could associate the newer program with its predecessor and thereby accredit *Last Week Tonight* with the same sense of trust and credibility.

In broad terms the program can be said to be separated into two parts – a summary of what has happened during the week and the main story. There are, however, a few smaller segments as well. The episodes itself start off the same with 'A quick recap of the week' where Oliver discusses the biggest news that happened that week or news of less newsworthiness that, because of its ridiculousness, was included. Depending on how much happened, or how important some news has been, the number of minor news-stories varies. Another segment that is part of an episode is 'And Now'. As the show has no commercial breaks this segment works as a break in-between the other segments. 'And Now' can either be connected to something that has happens currently or it has its own mini-segments, such as 'Other countries' President of the United States' or 'How is this still a thing?'. These segments are, like the program as a whole, use to make fun of news, people and events.

The main segment can take up most of the program's airtime or it can be a bit shorter but still longer than the other segments – it all depends on the subject. This is where the program differentiates the most from its predecessor and where it can be related to McBeth and Clemons (2011) argument that satire programs are more 'real' than the real news of political coverage. This as the one doing the meaningful, in-depth examination of an issue is the comedian rather than – according to McBeth and Clemons – the current political news coverage. Depending on how long the main segment has been, or depending on the seriousness and depressiveness of the topic there can sometimes be a last segment to end the program on a happier note. Or like in the episode of 'Journalism' where they ended the program with their spoof trailer for a new film about journalism ('Journalism, 2016).

7.2 Trustworthiness

As, Cho, Kwon, and Park (2009) defined *trustworthiness* – as whether a source is “perceived as providing information that reflects the source’s actual feelings or opinions”(3753) – there are certain modes that are the most suitable to measure if Oliver’s trustworthy or not. First it is what he actually says, the mode labelled as talk/information, but this is also strongly connected to the two other modes gesture and gaze/expression. All four episodes showed that Oliver lived up to this kind of definition of *trustworthiness*. For example, when trying to instil in the audience just how boring net neutrality is (‘Net Neutrality’, 2014) Oliver played a clip from *C-SPAN* of a politician talking about the subject. When the clip was over Oliver, motioning to his head as if it is about to explode, expressed how that was the most boring thing he had ever heard followed by a verbose description of all the boring things he would rather do than sit in on that policy meeting. That gesture combined with his long-winded rant and eyes wide with bafflement over how something could be that boring is a good example of how people bring modes together to allow a meaning to be made and clearly understood (Jewitt, 2014b) but it also makes Oliver’s feelings on the matter crystal clear. Another example is when, in the episode ‘Chickens’ (2015), Oliver shows a clip of a woman who, with tears in her eyes and a broken voice, explains how one farmer, being ranked in the lower bottom of the tournament system and about to lose everything put a gun to his head and ended his life. Oliver stared at the camera in silence for a beat before saying:

“At this point you may be angry at the chicken industry but careful, you need to leave a little room cause you’re about to get even angrier. A chicken industry spokesman was actually asked why so many farmers live below the poverty line and this was his response. [...] What the fuck are you talking about!? It doesn’t matter! The poverty line is like the age of consent; if you find yourself passing exactly where it is you’ve probably already done something very, very wrong.” (‘Chickens’, 2015)

In the middle of the quote the response from the spokesman was shown where he asked which poverty line they meant as the local differs from the national. Oliver’s outrage at this response starts off with an incredulous laugh before it turns to thinly-veiled anger. Oliver’s perceived authentic feeling of disbelief at the insensitivity of it all is only strengthened by the combination of his angry words and matching gesture and expression.

Another definition of *trustworthiness* is that it is the perceived morality and goodness of a source (Fogg, 2003) which has three cues to ascertain whether a source is trustworthy or not;

being fair and unbiased, argues against their own interest (perceived honesty) and thought of as similar by the audience. All episodes showed that the general, vaguer description of a source as a moral and good person was applicable to Oliver. For example, a person who argues for the betterment of children's education or for the rights of a group in society – 'the little guy' – that is being used by a big industry, can be perceived to possess both goodness and the right morals.

When looking at the more specific cues, however, all results were not as one-sided. In each episode Oliver displayed fairness in his reporting, for example in 'Charter Schools' (2016) where he pointing to the fact that both Democrats and Republicans praise charter schools and treating it as a bipartisan subject. He also pointed out that that neither advocates nor critics of charter schools would be satisfied with the segment's focus on how charters schools are run in practice instead of in theory. There is a sense of fairness in not pointing out one side as the correct one in a complicated issue, but rather let the audience get the information and then make the decision themselves. This also speaks to his perceived honesty; admitting a subject is complex makes it harder to explain it than if there is a right side and a wrong side. It is important to point out that even though Oliver does not directly take a side, it is clear that he thinks that those in charge of charter schools need to do better. Another example of fairness is Oliver's tendency to allow those connected to the segment's subject to speak for themselves, with their own words. An example of this is from the episode 'Net Neutrality' (2014) where Oliver brought up the point that cable companies are becoming monopolies in the U.S. as about 96 percent of the American population has access to two or fewer cable broadband providers:

"It is almost as if they have agreed to stay out of each other's way like drug cartels. Hold on; hold on, no, no, no. That's not fair, that's not fair. I mean, if hypothetically a cable company like Comcast were planning to merge with a company like, let's say Time Warner, it's not like their CEO would sit down and mark-out who had which turf, right?" ('Net Neutrality', 2014)

Next is a clip from an interview with the CEO of Comcast, Brian L. Roberts, admitting to doing exactly that. Therefore, in all *fairness*, he allows the one accused of wrong-doing to explain something they don't consider wrong to then point out the transgressions being made; moral or otherwise.

The cue 'argue against their own interest' can be seen as either literal or as perceived honesty (Fogg, 2003) If using the literal definition it is not directly applicable to Oliver in the episode

‘Journalism’ and it goes hand in hand with the cue concerning being unbiased which also could not be applied for the episode ‘Journalism’. In general Oliver, as mentioned earlier, has a ‘confusing amount of freedom’ (NPR, 2014) to go after whoever and whatever, as neither he nor HBO seem concerned about any consequences. This speaks towards him being unbiased as Oliver has no obligation to treat, for example, companies connected to HBO any different than those without connections. This unbiased and argue against their own interest cue cannot however, be fully applied to the episode ‘Journalism’ (2016) as Oliver admits that *Last Week Tonight* leans heavily on printed sources. This gives him a reason for informing on this subject other than it being of value for the society at large; he cannot be said to be completely unbiased as his program’s success is partly reliant on the continued existence of printed sources.

For three of the four episodes – ‘Net Neutrality’, ‘Chickens’ and ‘Charter Schools’ – the cue of similarity can be difficult to give a definite answer to as it speaks to the audience’s perceived similarity with the source. However, even though Oliver claimed this program is not a faux newscast (Carter, 2014) it still bears resemblance to one; possibly allowing the media to see similarities with their own way of working or connect it to its predecessor *the Daily Show*. This is best exemplified by when Oliver, in ‘Charter Schools’ points out that the IVY Academy’s application plagiarised parts of another schools application. The findings were presented as research made by his team: “weirdly, we found this application [...] which predates that one by two years [...] it’s basically identical but for a few small differences” (2016). This could make the work they do to be perceived as more similar to that of real journalists. This is, however, more obvious in the episode ‘Journalism’. As the audience this study is concerned with is the media they can be assumed to agree with Oliver’s stance as they are the ones directly affected by the current situation in the journalism industry and would have something to win by it not being the way it is. Even though Oliver could not be said to be completely unbiased in ‘Journalism’, something that should speak against Oliver’s *trustworthiness*, from what could be seen from the previous research into this episode (Andersson, 2016) the media viewed the reporting of it as trustworthy and agreed with his judgement. This would indicate that the sense of similarity with the source weights heavier than possible bias.

Ohanian (1990) also pointed out that it has been found that celebrities who are liked are more likely to be trusted. If one disregards the positive reactions to the program it is hard to argue that Oliver does not have a likable personality. His mixture of cynical straightforwardness and

bouts of giggles at one of his own bad accents, or over-the-top jokes amounts to an endearing personality as will be explained more in the section *attractiveness*.

7.3 Expertise

As there were certain modes that were the most suitable to analyse Oliver's *trustworthiness*, the same can be said of his level of *expertise*. Cho, Kwon, and Park (2009) define *expertise* as "the extent to which an information source is perceived as capable of providing correct information" (3753). This could be hard to ascertain if one only looked at what Oliver is saying; the modes that are most suitable are therefore not only talk/information but also visual aid and other media used. As it is a part of the general construction of the program all four episodes used other media – such as *MSNBC*, *CBS*, *CNN*, *Bloomberg*, *Al Jazeera*, *FOX*, *ABC* as well as clips from documentaries and local news – to either back up what Oliver was saying or as an example of something. Besides the usual visual aids manipulated to create a funny picture or stills from various clips, all four episodes also used headlines and texts from source such as the USDA, *the Washington Post*, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, and statistics and results from various studies. As Oliver does not claim information without backing it up with proof from actual journalists or other experts – plus the fact that his team consists of researchers – the perception is that he provides correct facts and information. That perception could possibly be higher for the episode 'Journalism' (2016) as the members of media that are watching can be assumed to have a higher sense of trust towards their colleagues in the same business and therefore the use of well-known as well as lesser-known local sources could bolster the perceived expertness of the program. The variety of modes – news clips, articles, clips from interviews and studies – all ads to the perceived *expertise* as the combination of modes make the meaning of a message clearer (Jewitt, 2014b). An example that speaks for Oliver providing correct facts and information is the fact that, in 'Chickens' (2016), he offered both the poultry industry's claim that they did not punish farmers who spoke out as well as the fact that farmers they had spoken believed that it was true. As seen from the message of the episode, Oliver did take the side of the farmers and could just as easily not have included the industry's response, making the audience think they hadn't made one.

Just like with *trustworthiness*, Fogg (2003) argues that there are three cues that lead to *expertise*: labels, appearance and documentation of accomplishments. In short, Oliver cannot

be said to follow these three cues; his title is comedian, he does not wear clothes that distinguish him as an expert and he does not have documentations of accomplishment in relation to the subjects he reports on. However, in the case of *Last Week Tonight* the *expertise* does not necessarily lie with Oliver but rather with the sources he makes use of. By looking at it like that – Oliver as the second-hand source handing out primary sources; much like a researcher uses the work of other researchers – still makes it about Oliver’s perceived credibility. Appearance is a hard cue to follow for the primary sources as well as, more often than not, it is their results or opinions that are being presented. Labels, or titles, are easier as the names of most sources are well-known such as Bloomberg and Al Jazeera and thereby giving them the label journalist, or documents from studies that labels them as researcher. Documents of accomplishments go hand in hand with labels as for example news networks that are well-known for their journalistic work are used as sources.

The fact that Oliver himself cannot be said to follow these cues applies to all four episode but the sources from each episodes can be said to follow two out of the three cues. As all four episodes were portrayed as credible from previous research (Andersson, 2016) this could be a case of a trustworthy source being persuasive regardless if they are perceived to be an expert or not (McGinnies & Ward, 1980) as the cues that lead to *trustworthiness* could weight heavier than the cues that lead to *expertise*. For example, in ‘Journalism’ (2016) Oliver clearly states that what he and *Last Week Tonight* do is not journalism, which should make his perceived *expertise* be weaker than if he were a journalist. However, that same honesty about what he does, adding that “we tried to add new information to our stories, our researchers work incredible hard” (‘Journalism’, 2016) could make his perceived *trustworthiness* to be higher. This could explain why someone who is clearly not an expert in a subject is still seen as a credible source.

7.4 Attractiveness

As Ohanian (1990) points out, it can be hard to define what *attractiveness* really is as there are many definitions of the term. Physical attractiveness is hard to not be seen as subjective even if we’re only talking about the perceived *attractiveness*. For this analysis, the most suitable definition would perhaps be likability, or attraction in regards to personality. One aspect that separate Oliver from other hosts of satire programs is the fervour with which he addresses each subject. Whereas Jon Stewart can be said to have had a somewhat laidback,

cool demeanour, the same cannot be said of Oliver as he rather displays a constant impatience to explain what is going on; throughout all four episodes he physically leans forward on his forearms evoking a sense of urgency that is part of why his persuasiveness is as effective as it is. As an audience you are pulled in by his authentic intensity and enthusiasm. Jones and Baym's (2010) argument that journalists are sometimes perceived as inauthentic due to the up-tight and constricted way they are allowed to express themselves in also speaks to Oliver's genuinely excited and engaging personality to be more authentic and thereby more accessible to the audience.

Yet again we have an example of how many modes – gestures, speech, and expression – allow a meaning to be made and understood in a way only speech or only text could not (Jewitt, 2014b). The assumption that he is liked could also be based on Ohanian's (1990) study that concluded that celebrities who are liked will also be more trusted, as the result from this research, as well as previous research (Andersson, 2016), indicate that he is trusted as well as credible. If assumed that Oliver possess a likable personality this could – based in Joseph's (1982) study which concluded that attractive communicators are more liked and have more of a positive impact – help explain why people are affected by Oliver's segments to the extent that they are. As well as help explain why, for example, his plea and encouragement in 'Net Neutrality' has the effect it had.

However, it is important to remember that some researchers, like Fogg (2003) mean that *attractiveness* is not one of the key factors to source credibility and should therefore not be given as much attention as *trustworthiness* and *expertise*.

7.5 Similarities to a communication campaign?

Rice and Atkin (2002) argued there are seven points that define a communication campaign. The first four points – there has to be a *purposive attempt to inform or persuade change* in a *relatively well-defined and large audience for non-commercial benefits to the individual and/or society* – are applicable for all four episodes. Even though, as mentioned earlier, Oliver claims that the rigorous research and fact-checking is done in service of the jokes (NPR, 2016) the research in itself still makes it clear that there has been a *purposive attempt to inform or persuade change*. As Oliver said about his research team "... they go away to look at a story and to check that it has been reported accurately [...] whether there is footage through which we can tell the story"; even though the intent is to make people laugh, the

presentation of a well-researched story could still inform change in either attitude or behaviour.

The last three of Rice and Atkin's (2002) points – campaigns usually occur *within a given time period by means of organised communication activities that involve mass media* and they are often *complemented by interpersonal support* – can be applied to some episodes. As Oliver ends the episode 'Chickens' with urging the audience to callout the Representatives who do not vote for the bill to protect chicken farmers as 'chicken-fuckers' it is not clear whether this fits the last three points. Rather than say directly what people should do at once this concerns what they maybe should do in the future – depending on the result of the committee's vote. This is somewhat at odds with the fifth point that campaigns are often *within a given time period* as the committee meeting is in the future and therefore risk that the hype from the episode might diminish causing people to forget about it. The last two points – that a campaign happens by *means of organised communication activities that involve mass media* and that they often are *complemented by interpersonal support* – are not obviously followed as the urging from Oliver is still only in a potential position. If the audience were to follow Oliver's plea if some Representatives voted against the amendment they would use communication that involve mass media; whether the rest of the media would follow suit is hard to say, leaving the last point unclear. However, as the impact of the episode had little to do with the plea at the end it could be argued that it is a stretch to call it a successful campaign. The episode 'Journalism' could, however, be said to apply the seventh point of a communication campaign (Rice & Atkin, 2002) – *complemented by interpersonal support* – as the points Oliver was making in the segment were recycled through the media as many journalists spread his message through their own media.

The one episode where all seven of Rice and Atkin's (2002) points could be applied was 'Net Neutrality', which was also the episode that had the most notable impact. For example, in Oliver's passionate speech to the internet trolls to send their comments to the FCC, he applies the first three points as he persuades the audience to take action with a clear purpose:

"This is the moment you were made for. Like Ralph Macchio, you've been honing your skills, waxing cars, and painting fences, well guess what? Now it's time to do some fucking karate. [...] And I'm talking to you RonPaulFan2016, and you OneDirection4Ever, and I'm talking to you OneDirectionSucksBalls. We need you to get out there and for once in your lives focus your indiscriminate rage in a useful direction. Seize your moment, my lovely trolls! Turn on caps-lock and fly my pretties! Fly! FLY! FLY!" ('Net Neutrality', 2014)

The fourth point is that a campaign is generally for *non-commercial benefits to the individual and/or society*, something that also fits with the segment as Oliver pointed out that this would mean wealthy cable companies would basically take control over the internet – something that only benefits the cable companies. The fifth point concerns the fact that campaigns most often are *within a given time period*; before Oliver made his speech he played a clip from a news report that said the FCC would be taking comments for 120 days. The last two points are that communication campaigns happen by *means of organised communication activities that involve mass media* and that they often are *complemented by interpersonal support*. Whether or not, Oliver's call to action could be called organised, it did involve mass media as he posted the website through his television program urging people to take to the internet to voice their concerns. As seen in the section concerning the impact of this episode the media was quick to jump on the bandwagon and support Oliver's plea meaning that not only did the encouragement come from the television program but also through other kinds of communication.

Even though Oliver's intent in 'Net Neutrality' might not have been to get people to possibly crash the FCC website, he did get people involved. This would support the argument made by Holbert (2005) that informational and dramatic content on television can many times encourage participation. Another aspect that might have been part of why Oliver's plea worked so well can be explained by Paisley's (1998) argument that a campaign cannot only urge the public to do something but first it must inform the public, advocate and give advice. Oliver did inform about what net neutrality actually meant and he advocated for why it was important before he made a plea to people to try and protect it. Paisley (1998; 2001) also argued that a campaign could work as a strategy of change in three ways – provide information to change attitudes, focus on negative consequences and design social system to prevent bad consequences – and 'Net Neutrality' can be said to do two of these. It provided thorough information to make it clear that net neutrality is important for society and thereby possibly changing some of the audiences' attitudes. It also focused on the negative consequences were these new rules about fast lanes to go through making it seem like an unwanted possibility. The episode 'Net Neutrality' is therefore the only episode that can be considered to have performed a successful communication campaign through Rice and Atkin's (2002) definition of a communication campaign as well as by the standards put forward by Paisley (1998). The other three episodes could be said to work as a strategy of change in the same way as 'Net Neutrality' as they informed as well as provided information

of what could happen if things did not change. However, even though they might match two out of Paisley's examples of campaign as strategy of change, they cannot be said to be communication campaigns as they did not follow Rice and Atkin's (2002) seven points, nor did they have an as clear intent as the episode 'Net Neutrality'. Nor did they urge its audience to work for change or give clear advice; key factors if a campaign is truly to be successful (Paisley, 1998).

8. Discussion and Conclusion

In theory, a thirty minute program that jokes about subjects such as net neutrality, infrastructure or multilevel marketing might not sound like something that would hold for five seasons but to Oliver and his team's credit they have created something that resonates with the audience – and with the media. McBeth and Clemons (2011) argue that 'fake' news programs such as *the Daily Show* are more 'real' than the current real news and political coverage. This study cannot back up this statement, however, *Last Week Tonight* does fit McBeth and Clemons's (2011) description as to why satire programs are more real as they focus more on the urgent issues than the 'false shell' of a subject that might be more accessible to the audience, or gain more clicks. With Oliver's detailed and thoroughly research segments on subjects that on paper could be said to be mind-numbingly boring neither he, nor his team, can be accused of only being interested in the shell of a subject. This also speaks to their credibility.

As the results show the strongest reason for Oliver's credibility as a source is his *trustworthiness* while the *expertise* would be more connected to the sources he himself uses. It is a sense of osmosis; by using experts as sources their knowledge and *expertise* is employed by and giving credit to Oliver. The idea of *trustworthiness* without clear *expertise* fits the basis accordingly to McGinnies and Ward's (1980) study that pointed to a trustworthy source as being persuasive regardless if they are an expert or not. Even though this study's result correlates with that of McGinnies and Ward's (1980) study, it is still interesting to look at Fogg's (2003) three cues that lead to *expertise* – labels, appearance and documentation of accomplishments – as it all depended on who one applied the cues to; Oliver or his sources. When applied to the sources used, both labels and documentation of accomplishment could be found but Oliver, quite simply, does not live up to these cues which is not particularly surprising as he does not aspire to be, or be perceived as, an expert. To quote the man himself, "If you make jokes about animals, that does not make you a zoologist" (Carr, 2014). When it

comes to something like a label of *expertise*; a title that distinguishes someone as a person knowledgeable in their area of expertise, the traditional idea is that it comes from either years of education or experience. However, as mentioned in the background section, some journalists do consider Oliver a journalist or liken what he does to journalism (Poniewozik, 2014; Steinberg, 2018), which makes the title of journalist more of a perceived than acquired characteristic. As media helps shape reality, Oliver's objections might not make a difference to the perception about his role. Those objections are, however, important as they speak to a dedication to fact and reason in discourse similar to the dedication Jones and Baym (2010) describe as fundamental in satire programs, which in turn allows them to be 'a powerful, emergent kind of journalism that has the potential to reinvigorate broadcast journalism...' (281). An important aspect as well is that being 'just a comedian' is beneficial for Oliver and *Last Week Tonight* as it allows him to get away with more mischief than any kind of investigative quasi-journalist would; the title of comedian comes with a freedom to do almost anything for the sake of comedy. By not claiming any journalistic connection, Oliver cannot be blamed for violating any of the journalistic rules but as this study has shown, he can still reap the advantages that come with journalistic connections; he is a trusted source and has the power to influence. Oliver can create ripples in the world of politics with the use of the worst put-downs and outrageous taunts one could think of but because it is a joke and because he is 'just a comedian' he is bound by no rules; he can have the cake and eat it too.

When it comes to Fogg's (2003) cue of appearance it is a bit difficult as many jobs do not require a specific type of uniform, or at least nothing as distinctive as the white coat of a doctor or scientist. Seeing as the media is one of these jobs with a less distinctive dress code, it also caused that cue to be left unfulfilled by Oliver as well as the sources he used. However, the fact that there is no official uniform of a journalist or media commentators also opens up for various speculations. Especially due to Oliver's similarity to the perceived dominating features of the common reporter: white and male. Except for Oliver's inclination to use explicit language and his bursts of anger, delighted giggles or indiscriminate insults, his appearance isn't that distinguishable from most white male news anchors – faux or not – sitting in a suit behind a desk, talking about news. This, in combination with the source-attractiveness model that suggests that one of the main factors for perceived credibility is 'familiarity' (McGuire, 1985), could bolster the sense of credibility and perceived *expertise*, or at least the perceived *trustworthiness*.

Of the three factors – *trustworthiness*, *expertise* and *attractiveness* – that play a part in inspiring source credibility (Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953; Griffin, 1967; Fogg, 2003; McGuire, 1985) the one hardest to apply was also the one that could be considered the closest to the cue appearance as well as the most subjective; *attractiveness*. The *attractiveness* of a comedian can be said to be based on their perceived likability as being funny is an appealing characteristic. Add then that satirists also ‘make statements about real people, events, and trends, often with the intent of influencing change’ (Lubeck, 2009, 1246) which speaks to a sense of what is right and wrong and how to go about ameliorating society. As Ohanian’s (1990) findings show that celebrities who are liked are also more likely to be trusted, this speaks for Oliver being likable as he is both perceived as a credible source (Andersson, 2016) and, as this study shows, trustworthy. Oliver’s ever-existing forward lean; reaching towards the audience, drawing them in with his contagious outrage and well-researched arguments are undoubtedly part of his persuasiveness.

As Becker and Bode (2017) found in their study, *Last Week Tonight* is equal to traditional content as a resource for learning, which is consistent with previous research (Andersson, 2016) that indicates that the media indeed sees it as a credible source to use for their more traditional content. This would then indicate that Oliver and *Last Week Tonight* are credible for both the audience at home and audiences that are members of the media. However, one point made by Becker and Bode (2017) was that those exposed to traditional news found net neutrality to be a more important subject compared to those exposed to *Last Week Tonight* which indicates that the interest created by *Last Week Tonight* could be more of a hype; a seductive action that people want to get in on but once a new episode comes around the hype switches focus. It could be said to be a clear manifestation of our society’s current relationship to news; we care about that which catches our eye until something else, something more gruesome, incredible, or heart-breaking takes its place.

Another study indicated similar results as Becker and Bode (2017) as Brewer and McKnight (2017) showed that *Last Week Tonight* was a good source for learning about science. They ended their study by saying that when it comes to communicating climate change to the public, satire programs such as *Last Week Tonight* could be an alternative route to traditional news media. Results like these add to the notion that Oliver is perceived as a credible source and are also somewhat along the lines of the argument made by Kramer (1995) that subjectivity in news is something to prefer. This study does not – and has no ambition to – exclude objectivity as a good practice but it does speak for the positive aspect of using

humour and opinions to establish trust with the audience. If one uses the episode ‘Net Neutrality’ as an example, Oliver can be said to disturb the status quo of the net neutrality debate, inspire engagement of the audience as well as providing the issue with a wrong and a right side; something objectivity is claimed not to do by critics of the journalistic ideal (Gitlin, 1980; Carey, 1999; Carey, 1999). It is important to point out that Kramer’s (1995) argument that subjective news can be more informative than objective ones are contradicted by the findings of Becker and Bode (2017). Their result showed that those exposed to traditional news found net neutrality to be more important, implying that they conveyed the urgency of the topic to a higher degree. Therefore, instead of being a substitute for traditional and objective news, satire and subjective news should rather be seen as something complementary.

The idea of subjectivity being more informative could also go hand in hand with the use of more than one mode – often speech – as a way of getting a message across more clearly. The theory and method of multimodality embody a similar message as that of Jones and Baym (2010). As Jewitt (2014a) explains that the meaning in one mode is interwoven with the meanings of other modes and thereby increases the benefit of a multimodal analysis to truly understand a message being conveyed. Jones and Baym (210) discuss Baym’s description of the convergence of entertaining talk and political talk on satire programs as ‘discursive integration’; how satire programs are adopting the ‘focus and form’ techniques of traditional news. As Baym described it, it is about all techniques and thereby about all *modes* that are used to create meaning and make sense of the political world and how they have become interwoven. The ‘realness’ of satirists like Oliver; the authenticity; the persuasiveness can be explained by their use of a wide variation of modes. As researchers into multimodality will argue; the concept of something will differ depending on what mode is used to describe it (Jewitt, 2014a). Therefore the use of several modes to create meaning – as indirectly promoted by advocates of subjectivity – increases the understanding of the conveyed message and would help explain the persuasiveness and credibility of satirists.

As the results showed, only one episode, ‘Net Neutrality’, could truly be said to be a communication campaign – and a successful campaign at that. The success; that all of Rice and Atkin’s (2002) seven points of what constitutes a communication campaign could be attributed to it, could also explain why this episode had such a big impact as it did. The other three episodes lived up to some aspects - *a purposive attempt to inform or persuade change in a relatively well-defined and large audience for non-commercial benefits to the individual or*

society (Rice & Atkin, 2002) – and can therefore not be defined as campaigns but rather only possess some feature of a communication campaign. However, it is important to point out that those three episodes did not contain the same clear encouragement as ‘Net Neutrality’ did. The episodes ‘Charter Schools’ and ‘Journalism’ had no actual encouragement for the audience to do except be informed and entertained, while the episode ‘Chickens’ encouragement was enveloped in a scenario of what might happen. This lack of *a given time period* (Rice & Atkin, 2002) could possibly explain why that episode did not create the same hype that ‘Net Neutrality’ did as it included a direct plea from Oliver concerning what the audience could do immediately. In general it can be said that *Last Week Tonight* possess some characteristics of a communication campaign but it was only when a segment possess all of Rice and Atkin’s (2002) characteristics that it was successful and had a major impact. Even though the analysis of this study concerns only four episodes with the latest being from two years ago, the features of communication campaigns are a continued part of *Last Week Tonight*. As mentioned in the introduction, earlier this year Oliver helped collect thousands of dollars to LGBTQIA-organisations by producing a children’s book in response to a book made by the family of Mike Pence about the family’s rabbit. As the vice-president is widely known to be strongly anti-LGBTQIA the book created by Oliver’s team was about a gay rabbit meeting his soulmate and living happily ever after (Desta, 2018). Every now and then a prank such as this; a practical joke mercilessly mocking but also intending to bring good, provides the program with a clear objective concealed in the frivolity. In short, it campaigns with a certain purpose in mind; be it to have people add comments to a government website or donating money to LGBTQIA-organisations by buying a children’s book.

What aspects can then be said to make John Oliver – the trustworthy non-expert with a likable personality – a credible source? As with multimodality, there is no single answer to that question; no aspect alone is enough, the correct answer rather requires a combination of aspects. At its worst it is a trusted comedian using expert sources to explain serious issues and at its best it is a comedian creating a successful communication campaign able to crash a government website and be credited as having equal effect to that of the head of state (Fung, 2014). A comedian providing efforts rivalling the watchdog purpose of the fourth estate, while stimulatingly cursing like a sailor and mockingly tearing down anyone guilty of wrongdoings is probably one of – if not *the* – best example of a successful, subjective approach to hard news. In a time characterised by a sense of ‘fakeness’ the need for an

authentic voice that cuts through the meaningless discourse is more understandable – and possibly more important – than ever.

9. Further Research

To strengthen these results a possible further study would be to interview the journalists who have used *Last Week Tonight* as a source. Those answers would then be compared to the perceived credibility results amassed in this study; if they are similar that would strengthen these results and if not it would show if there is some aspect to the credibility of political satire program that has not yet been taken into account. As this study focuses on what makes Oliver and *Last Week Tonight* a credible source it would also be interesting to follow that with problematizing the fact that a comedian is a credible source and what affect this could have on the credibility of the media as a whole.

Another interesting aspect would be to focus on those episodes that have a clear intention behind them, like in ‘Net Neutrality’ where Oliver urge the audience to take action. Research into whether the audience listened – even to the smallest pleas – would contribute to a more definite answer of whether *Last Week Tonight* can be considered a type of communication campaign or not.

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11. Empirical Material

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12. Appendix

12.1 Code scheme for ‘Net Neutrality

Action	Talk/Information	Gesture	Gaze (movement and expression)
Phase 1: Introduction, ‘Quick recap of the week’	Welcoming the audience to program	Rubbing hand together, grasping hands; leaning forward in his seat	Straight into camera, addressing the audience at home
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> European parliament election	Surge of far-right parties	Leaning forward, right hand gesturing towards camera; index finger used to indicate he has a point to make	Straight ahead; worried facial expression
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.2</i> Greece’s Golden Dawn Party	Example of far-right party gaining seats	Holding up hands to express a need to pause; ‘measuring a lama’; pointing his thumb over his shoulder to gesture towards the picture on his right; index finger to thumb as he makes a point	Looking off into the side as if having to think about what he heard, expresses disbelief in what Michaloliakos is saying; worried about the situation in Europe
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.3</i> Hungary’s Jobbik Party	Golden Dawn won’t be alone in EU	Pointing at camera as if to indicate ‘have a look’; playing an air-saxophone; covering mouth with hand as he laughs at own joke; leaning far across the table	Straight ahead
<i>Subphase 1.2</i> Ukraine choose a new leader	Talking over the video; “With millions of voters heading out to the ballot boxes”	Leaning forward; index finger to thumb as he makes a point	Straight ahead
<i>Subphase 2</i> Afghanistan	An American soldier being held captive is coming home, Obama’s plans for the other troops in the country	Leaning forward	Straight ahead
Phase 2 ‘And Now’	And now, after resigning, Jay Carney tells one last pack of lies to the White House press room	Pointing to the camera, indicating ‘have a look’; index finger to thumb as he makes a point	Straight ahead
Phase 3 Net neutrality	Main story concerns the internet; concerning stories about internet changing, net neutrality means that all data has to be treated equally no matter who creates it; start-ups can supplant established brands; the internet is not broken yet FCC tries to ‘fix it’ by endorsing new rules to allow fast lanes; big companies would be allowed to buy their way	Leaning forward; shaking his pointed index finger as if dismissing the audience laughter while laughing at his own joke; after hearing politicians talk about net neutrality gesturing to his head as if it was about to explode from boredom; angrily points as he bursts out screaming at Kaiju; index finger to thumb as he makes a point; intertwines his fingers; moves his shoulders up and down and	Straight ahead; looks to his right to the picture of Kaiju; expresses mirth at how boring politicians are; turns serious as he explains how important it is to care about

	into fast lanes leaving everyone else in the slow lane; cable companies claims they would never slow down a website's speed but a graph shows that exact thing happening with Netflix during negotiations with Comcast; the activists are on the same side as corporations such as Google; cable companies have Washington in their pockets, President Obama golfing with the CEO of Comcast, President Obama picked Tom Wheeler, a former top lobbyist for cable companies to be the new chair of the FCC; Comcast CEO explains deal with Time Warner where they do not compete with each other; cable companies are becoming monopolies; U.S.'s download speed lags behind Estonia's even though they pay among the most in the world for internet; in a recent customer satisfaction survey Comcast and Time Warner came in last; makes a point in showing how boring it is to hear about and that's why it is being allowed to happen; Oliver points to the fact that there might still be something the audience could do, the FCC will take public comments;	gestures his hands in a stereotypical Italian way to resemble a mobster; arms open wide when talking about how it is even possible, fingers to thumbs, to make a point; counting on fingers; hand to chest to indicate to himself; bracing himself with one arm as he makes a speech to incite the internet commenters; gets up from chair and walks over to open space with a screen in the background; points at the camera; jumping up and down, imploring internet commenters to comment on FCC's website;	net neutrality; expresses strong disbelief as he exclaims "bullshit"; smirks at own joke; laughing and smiling at his own Australian dialect; passionate as he makes his speech to internet commenters;
Phase 4 'And Now'	Other countries' Presidents of The United States, Tony Abbott, Prime Minister of Australia;	-	
Phase 5 National Spelling Bee	The week's most entertaining competition; inspiring; one of the officials read from the wrong papers, uplifting historic finish, dual-victory, "Heart-warming to see two children celebrating in a cloud of confetti"; Chris Cuomo ruined the moment as he says they have to figure out a way to decide who's better; in the ending confetti falls down from the ceiling as the children spelt the correct word	Smiling at clips; index finger to thumb as he makes a point; makes the hand motion as to rip a heart out of a chest when talking about Chris Cuomo; shaking his hand like he has forgotten a word; jumping up and down and waving his hands in the confetti; punching the air	Straight ahead

Table 1. Modes: Talk/information, Gesture and Gaze (expression and movement) for episode 'Net Neutrality'

Action	Text	Joke /'Bit'	Sound
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'	-	-	Applauds in the background, excited shouting
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> European parliament election	'European elections' on the visual aid	'Surge of far-right parties' is a bad sign in Europe; "When Europe goes far-right they go far-right-through-Belgium."	Laughing following jokes
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.2</i> Greece's Golden Dawn Party	-	Hand cleanliness is not the biggest issue, "We may do the Hitler salute but that's only to show how tall a lama is. It's about this tall. From my chest it's about that tall."; a jaunty swastika, "If Hitler was a live he would sue them for trademark infringement. And you know he'd do that, he was a real Nazi about intellectual property."	Laughter mixed with groans; laughter throughout

<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.3</i> Hungary's Jobbik Party	The band name 'groove step' on the visual aid	"Just a couple of things, A) That'd terrifying, and B) quick side note, why do neo-Nazis always like metal? Is there anyone into both antizionist conspiracy theories and smooth jazz?"	Laughter; smooth jazz playing in the background
<i>Subphase 1.2</i> Ukraine choose a new leader	'Afghanistan' over the image of the Afghan flag	Ukraine has elected an owner of a chocolate factory, "Ukraine is now in the hands of the Willy Wonka of Eastern Europe. ♪Come with me and you'll be in a world of pure annihilation♪"	Laughter
<i>Subphase 1.2</i> Afghanistan	-	Obama's incapability to stick to the plan he has promised; "That's right, by December of 2015 just under 5000 troops and the plan actually goes beyond that. Uh, by December 2016 it says we'll have a thousand troops, tops, but basically we're out. Not like 'out-out', but you know, pretty much out."; "We are just about to leave Afghanistan and we always will be"	Laughter
Phase 2 'And Now',	After resigning, Jay Carney tells one last pack of lies to the White House press room	Carney expresses joy in having been press secretary – ironic because he did not seem to like the job	A voiceover with a deep male voice; laughter heard over voice
Phase 3 Net neutrality	'Net neutrality' over blue background; "The only thing I haven't done in this house is having Seder dinner" over the White House's website; "...approximately 96 % of the population has a most two wireless providers..." over Broadband.com's webpage; same blue background as in beginning but words change to "Preventing Cable Company Fuckery"; in middle of screen on the bottom "FCC.GOV/COMMENTS"; same website address on screen behind Oliver;	The electronic cat-database; how amazing the internet is, "You can buy coyote urine – do you know how difficult it used to be to obtain coyote urine?"; "Yes, net neutrality. The only two words that promise more boredom in the English language are 'featuring Sting'."; net neutrality is a boring subject; "I would rather sit down with my niece and watch Kaiju, a children's show about a bald, Canadian child who lives a life devoid of any incident. Fuck you Kaiju! Grow some hair and leave the house! Find out what the world's about [pronounces it in the Canadian 'aboot']! Come one!"; "That's how Facebook supplanted Myspace, which supplanted Friendster, which supplanted actually having any friends."; Nutflix, "America's one-stop resource for videos of men getting hit in the nuts."; "If we let cable companies offer two speeds of service, there won't be Usain Bolt and Usain Bolt on a motorbike, there'll be Usain Bolt and Usain bolted to an anchor."; likens Comcast treatment of Netflix to a mob shakedown; activists and corporations are like Lex Luther and Superman working together; likens having Tom Wheeler as chair of FCC "to needing a babysitter and hiring a dingo"; compares cable companies staying out of each other's way to the same way drug cartels do; "The cable companies have figured out the great truth of America: if you want to do something evil, put it inside something boring"; "This is the moment you were made for. Like Ralph Macchio, you've been honing your skills, waxing cars, and painting fences, well guess what? Now it's time to do some fucking karate. For once in your life we need you to channel that anger, that badly spelt	Laughter; groans as relationship between government and cable companies is made clear; as Oliver makes his speech to internet commenters dramatic music plays in the background;

		bile that you normally reserve for unforgivable attacks on actresses you seem to think have put on weight, or politicians you disagree with or photos of your ex-girlfriend getting on with her life. Or non-white actors being cast as fictional characters. And I'm talking to you RonPaulFan2016, and you OneDirection4Ever, and I'm talking to you OneDirectionSucksBalls. We need you to get out there and for once in your lives focus your indiscriminate rage in a useful direction. Seize your moment, my lovely trolls! Turn on caps-lock and fly my pretties! Fly! FLY! FLY!"	
Phase 4 'And Now'	Other countries' Presidents of The United States	Tony Abbott is an unlikable person and a bad politician	A voiceover with a deep male voice; laughter heard over voice
Phase 5 National Spelling Bee	'National Spelling Bee'; in middle of screen on the bottom 'asshole, <i>noun</i> what Chris Cuomo is;	"The Hunger Games of the mind"; "Sorry, the correct sentence is: Kurt enjoyed a dish of Feijoada and bitter greens, hard like a rock, when you make that pussy pop; pop that pussy."; puts together clip of children in spelling bee to spell out 'asshole'	Laughter; awing; long laughing when pretending to read the official's paper

Table 2. Modes: Text, Joke/Bit and Sound for episode 'Net Neutrality'

Action	Visual aid (to the right)	Other media used	Practical aids
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'	-	-	-
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> European parliament election	Image of EU flag with an arm putting a voting ballot in a voting box	Fox News	-
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.2</i> Greece's Golden Dawn Party	Picture of leader of Golden Dawn Nikolaos Michaloliakos; Golden Dawn's flag	CNN footage of Greece's Golden Dawn Party; "We may do the Hitler salute, but at least our hands are clean"	-
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.3</i> Hungary's Jobbik Party	A screenshot from other media used of a crowd of men but centring around a man with shaved head and expressive face; A hippie band with a swastika on their drum set	Footage without a source on screen showing rally/festival for Jobbik, band is playing metal	-
<i>Subphase 1.2</i> Ukraine choose a new leader	A screenshot of men destroying ballot boxes; picture of Poroshenko that then adds clothes of Willy Wonka onto it	Video of men in ski-masks destroying ballot boxes; MSNBC	-
<i>Subphase 1.2</i> Afghanistan	The Afghan flag with the shape of the country on it alongside Obama	Video of speech to remove troops in Afghanistan by Obama from 2011; early 2012; late 2012; The situation room with Wolf Blitzer; Anderson Cooper 360°;	A document meant to be the plan for the troops in Afghanistan, pretends to read from
Phase 2 'And Now'	-	CNN press releases, in colour from the newest one where Carney expresses positive emotions, the older ones in black and white and shows instances where Carney have been negative	-

Phase 3 Net neutrality	Four images of cats; webpage search; blue image of ones and zeroes; blue background and Kaiju; Nutflix, a parody of Netflix with one man kicking another in the nuts; screenshot of telecommunications lawyer George Foot; Usain Bolt on a racing track and then an added anchor; Tom Wheeler and Obama golfing; extract from the White House website; Tom Wheeler; a dingo and a baby in front of a crib; extract from a federal study over webpage from Broadband.com; Comcast's CEO in a Monopoly metal car, wearing a metal top-hat and having won second prize in a beauty contest; picture of Estonia;	Uncredited video of man talking about how a new proposal could change the way we use the internet; various clips of reporters saying the words 'net neutrality'; C-SPAN videos of politicians talking about net neutrality; CBS This Morning; Al Jazeera; Bloomberg; Fox News; CNBC	
Phase 4 'And Now'	Other countries' Presidents of The United States	Uncredited Australian videos	-
Phase 5 National Spelling Bee	The National Spelling Bee's emblem; Chris Cuomo	Uncredited video from spelling bee; CNN;	Pretends piece of paper is the spelling bee official's paper

Table 3. Modes: Visual media (to the right), other media used and Practical aids for episode 'Net Neutrality'

12.2 Code Scheme for 'Charter Schools'

Action	Talk/Information	Gesture	Gaze (movement and expression)
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'	Welcoming the audience	Drumming on the table; arms open as he welcomes the audience then slamming hand together and leaning forward on hands clasped;	Straight ahead;
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> The Olympics	Controversies; presence of Russian team in wake of doping scandal; IOC official arrested for alleged docket scalping; Ryan Lochte claiming he was robbed when he had vandalised a gas station, Lochte was not detained and offered a 'bullshit' apology; a farewell to Ryan Lochte –America's idiot sea cow 2004-2016 – with clips of Lochte saying stupid things;	Resting on left arm while emphasising with right hand; left hand covering mouth as he laughs while slamming right hand on table; using thumb to point towards visual aid; flat hand to emphasise his words; thumb to index finger to further emphasise; crossing his hand over each other and then separating them to indicate disbelief; holding his hands up in exasperation;	Straight ahead;
Phase 2 'Charter Schools'	Charter schools; back to school season; many will return to charter schools; politicians love to praise them; unite both democrats and republicans; charter schools are public schools that are taxpayer funded but privately run; emerged 25 years ago; now more than 6700; educating nearly 3 million; have celebrity backers; when Pitbull has a charter school it seems like a good idea to have a look at them; addresses that it is a controversial area; they have reached results; critics argue they overstate their successes, siphon off talented	Leaning forward on forearms; resting on forearms and using hands to emphasise his words; thumb to index finger to further emphasise; shocked at clip from <i>The Mysteries of Laura</i> ; hands around head indicating he cannot comprehend the stupidity; kisses index and middle finger and point them towards heaven to pay respects; leaning on left arm and tiredly holding up his hand while closing his eyes; holding out hand/s as if to indicate stop; holding up fingers to count numbers;	Straight ahead; laughing at his own joke; exasperation

	<p>student and divert schools resources within school districts; “Now for this piece, and I know this will make some people on both side very angry, we’re going to set aside whether charter schools are a good idea in principle. Because whether they are or not, in 42 states and DC, we’re doing them. So instead we’re going to look at how they operate in practice.”; there are charter school that don’t make it through the year; serious screening of the schools are not always the case; Florida’s IVY academy shut down in part due to a lack of a school; not illegal but unethical; charter schools get paid on a per student basis; Harambee Institute was a school by day and nightclub by night; aren’t just isolated incidents; in Philadelphia alone at least ten executives have plead guilty in the last decade to fraud, misusing funds and obstruction of justice; auditor general says Pennsylvania has the worst charter school laws in the U.S.; Ohio’s charter laws are so lax even advocates have called it the Wild West; charter schools are not allowed to make a profit but they can hire an EMO to run the school for them and they are allowed to make a profit; they are approved and overseen by authorisers, some states limit who can become an authoriser, others do not; online charters; sometimes kids aren’t counted absent until they’ve failed to log on for five days in a row; report attendance as 100 percent;</p>		
Phase 3 ‘And Now’	<p>One final second of Olympic swimmer Ryan Lochte that perfectly encapsulates his entire personality, career and worldview</p>	-	-
Phase 4 Donald Trump	<p>Apologises for having to talk about him again; they’re going to be off the air for a month and some things need to be said; Trump is struggling in the polls, taking advice from Rodger Ails; Trump is at a fork in the road, either he’s hit bottom and will rebound and win or it’s the beginning of the end; losing to Clinton would be brand destroying; winning would be even worse as he would have to run the country; Trump has made four accidental good point during his candidacy, he was criticised for donating to democrats then said that if he donates and later needs something they will be there for him and that that is a broken system; Trump pointed out the flaws of the media while still exploiting them; one could argue he has exposed the</p>		<p>Straight ahead; laughing at own joke</p>

	length to which politicians will go to appease their party's base as top republicans stood by Trump while he did horrible things; also exposed the flaws in the American people ('us'), instruction manual written at the fifth grade reading level, 1996 book for children called The Kid Who Ran for President,		
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Table 4. Modes: Talk/information, Gesture and Gaze (expression and movement) for episode 'Charter Schools'

Action	Text	Joke /'Bit'	Sound
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'	-	-	Applause and screaming; laughter;
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> The Olympics	The Olympics; U.S. Swimmer Ryan Lochte Robbed at Gunpoint in Brazil; "They broke a soap dispenser in the bathroom, damaged a door, tore down a sign and urinated around the premises..."; Game of Thrones;	Silly names for sports; horse dancing to Smooth by Santana and Rob Thomas; Ryan Lochte: "A swimmer who looks like he's about to play the Ron Slattery role in a porn parody of Mad Men"; a soap dispenser being vandalised by 'if Sting was a jock'; Lochte 'the clearest form of the chemical element 'Bro'; Lochte is stupid, thinks Game of Thrones took place in the late 1800s; Lochte ruined himself for the audience, went from being a lovable idiot to an asshole; we say good-bye to the Rio Olympics and must say good-bye to America's favourite idiot;	Laughter; dramatic background music to the farewell video; laughter and applause;
Phase 2 'Charter Schools'	School; Charter Schools; "There are more than 6,700 charter schools..."; "... educating nearly 3 million children."; KIPP; "... charter school quality is uneven across the states an across schools."; Dear mom, is the school going out of bisnose?"; "Since 2008, 119 charter schools have closed..."; "... 14 never finished their first school year"; "Instruction is scaffolded to provide targeted support with the goal of increasing independence. Teachers meet with students individually or in small groups to explicitly model strategies and skills, provide practice and review opportunities with necessary support, and then monitor independent application"; "You will not plagiarize works that you find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours."; Harambee Institute of Science and Technology Charter School; "Hold on, hold, hold, hold! I had a couple a shots of Ciroc. I'm drunk up now!"; "... pleaded guilty today to... two counts of wire fraud..."; "... don't forget to Google any school you're looking at, to make sure they weren't once unexpectedly shut down or run by a CEO who pleaded guilty to theft"; "... charter schools	If Pink Floyd had gone to school they would have known it is "we don't need any education"; Pitbull compares himself to Bill Cosby, saying he also likes Jell-O; "Yes, yes. That does look bad now. But to be fair, it was not commonly known at the time that Jell-O was responsible for dozens of cases of sexual assaults. Turns out Jell-O is a monster, I think I'm OK to say that. The point is, fuck Jell-O."; charter schools have shown to reach results, "Now honestly, any philosophy that can get those kind of results might be worth considering. In the same way that if we found out that they boosted out immunity, we'd seriously consider eating koalas"; kid spelt business 'bisnose'; the TV show <i>The Mysteries of Laura</i> outlasted many charter schools, "That's a threesome joke about her fucking children! It was in the first season and they gave her another one!"; daily field trips; Olsen twins; founder plagiarised another schools yet their handbook say one should not plagiarise; "I know, I know. They named it a long time ago. And it's spelt differently you fucking monsters. Rest in peace"; "It's not like having the worst something is new for Pennsylvania. Remember this is the state that has the worst football fans, the worst bell and the worst regional delicacy. Yes! If I wanted cheese wiz on my steak sandwich I'd eat at Kiddie Cafeteria, the restaurants run by six year olds"; "That doesn't work on any level. First, no one	Laughter; groans; awing at Kasich-joke;

	<p>misspend public money nearly four times more often than any other type of taxpayer-funded agency”; “...spas, jewelery, luggage, plays, veterinary care... and trips to Europe and to see the television show ‘Oprah’...”; “Where there is no vision, the people perish...”; “... but he that keepeth the Law, happy is he.”; Learning; earning; arning; “... each school paying 95 percent – or more – of its state and federal money to White Hat”; “White Hat Management... last year operated 32 of the lowest performers...”; Kids Count of Dayton, INC; “... more than \$1 million went towards management and consulting firms...”; “... the legal minimum oversight required...”; “... serving approximately 180,000 students”; “Students in online charters lost an average of about 72 days of learning in reading”; “... lost 180 days of learning in math during the course of a 180-day school year”; “Be very glad that you have Nevada, so you are not the worst, ‘...’”;</p>	<p>has ever called it a ‘pizza shop’. Second, it’s a little hard to hear the man who just defunded Planned Parenthood talk about the importance of choice. Third, there’s such a thing, there is such a thing as paying for extra peperoni like a normal person. And finally, the notion that the more pizza shops there are, the better pizza become is effetely undercut by the two words: Papa Johns.; “Yes, education first, last and always a business.. Take the L of the word ‘learning’ and what do you got? Earning. Take the E of it, what do you got then? Arning. Yeah, sure, that’s not a word but it could be in one of our English classes.”; compares authorisers to his made up non-profit and made up charter school; “And 180 minus 180 is, as those kids might put it, three”; “It’s like the old saying, ‘give a kid a shitty pizza and you fuck up their day, treat a kid like a shitty pizza you could fuck up their entire life’”;</p>	
Phase 3 ‘And Now’	<p>One final second of Olympic swimmer Ryan Lochte that perfectly encapsulates his entire personality, career and worldview</p>		<p>A voiceover with a deep male voice; laughter heard over voice</p>
Phase 4 Donald Trump	<p>Trump; “Every time I speak of the haters and losers I do so with great love and affection. They cannot help the fact that they were born fucked up!”; Trump suggests ‘2nd Amendment people’ could stop Clinton; Trump encourages Russia to hack into Clinton’s deleted emails; “The First Babe”; “My job, as a candidate for the highest office in our nation, is to come up with good quotes.”; “I have the best words”; “My first official act as President of the United States will be to abolish homework, now an forever! A huge roar of approval went up across the auditorium. It was pandemonium. I paused to allow them to calm down a little. I didn’t want to incite a riot or anything. ‘No more homework! No more homework! No more homework!’ Chanted the school as one. The dumbest guys seemed particularly happy, fist bumping me and saying stuff like, ‘Awesome dude.’”; “I felt like I could tell them that the earth was really flat and they’d agree with me.”; “I have a question for the grown-ups of America... are you out of your minds? Are you expecting me to enforce the constitution? I never even read it. I was absent from</p>	<p>“A racist voodoo-doll made with discarded cat hair”; “I would like to address the rest of this segment directly to Donald Trump. And I know that you’re watching Donald because you watch everything that’s said about you. I’m pretty sure you sleep in a tanning bed made out of TVs, playing cable news talking about you. That is an actual photo taken in an actual nightmare. It seems that you have two really bad options here: if you keep going, you’re going to spend the next eleven weeks ramping up hatred in speeches, injecting poison into the American bloodstream that will take generations to remove, and denying the country the contest of ideas that a presidential campaign should actually be, and after that you’re either going to win or you’re going to lose and I think both those scenarios end pretty badly for you. Which is why, Mr. Trump, Donny, Donial, I would like to propose to you a third option and that is: drop out. Simply drop out and tell America this entire candidacy was a stunt. A satire designed to expose the flaws in the system and the thing is you could actually make a fairly decent case for that. Because although your campaign was the political equivalent of a bigoted clowns blazing funeral pyre, you have accidentally made upwards of four good points during this campaign”; about Trump creating</p>	<p>Laughter; Unsure wooing at the idea of Trump dropping out</p>

	<p>school that day. You want me as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces? What if somebody attacked the United States? Would you really want me in charge? America must be in really bad shape if you elected me president. You better get it together and find some qualified people to run this country or we'll all be in big trouble."</p>	<p>controversies to gain free press "I can't even blame you for that! You're essentially saying 'You seem to like dumpster fires; I'm basically a pile of oily trash and a match, let's fucking dance!'" ; "We found this 1996 book for children called The Kid Who Ran For President, and believe me, this is basically about you."; compares the kid from the book to Trump; "A charismatic, somewhat bored class clown who runs for president as a joke, and some of his character traits might ring a bell."; got Will Arnett to record the books description of the kids first campaign speech; "Come on, the parallels are fucking uncanny here!"; offers to have Trump on the show if he delivers exact speech to the nation and drops our even though he has said Trump will never be invited; built a podium that looks like the one he likes; mic drops the book</p>	
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Table 5. Modes: Text, Joke/Bit and Sound for episode 'Charter Schools'

Action	Visual aid (to the left)	Other media used	Practical aids
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'	-	-	-
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> The Olympics	<p>Black background and the Olympic torch; still of horse and rider from equestrian dressage; Ryan Lochte; DVD of a porn parody of Mad Men called 'Ass Men'; headline and picture from NBC News; still of security cam footage; headline and picture from the New York Times; picture of a nasty gas station bathroom and a broken soap dispenser with a penis drawn on it; zoom in on a periodic table showing an element Broheim with the element name being Bro; black background with Game of Thrones on it; Lochte photoshoped waving at himself in a mirror; Lochte in a pool; still from E! of Lochte;</p>	<p>NBC footage of Olympics equestrian dressage ; NBC News; security cam footage; the New York Times; E! "What would Ryan Lochte Do?" (2013);</p>	-
Phase 2 'Charter Schools'	<p>Row of school desks; still of Mitt Romney; still of old woman dancing; white background with Charter Schools written with the letters in different colours; still from National Alliance for Public Charter Schools with fact about charter schools; still of Puff Daddy; still of André Aggasi; still of Pitbull; a bowl of Jell-O; blue background with KIPP: on it; still of KIPP: student; koala; map of U.S. where there are charter schools; still from credo study; still from KCRA of a child's letter; photo of <i>The Mysteries of Laura</i>; emblem of Florida's IVY academy; man and children in front of the story Marshalls; still of founder</p>	<p>CNN footage of Obama 2008 praising charter schools; uncredited footage of Bush 2007 praising charter schools; CNN footage of Sanders 2016 praising charter schools; CNN footage of Trump 2016 praising charter schools; C-SPAN footage of Romney 2012 praising charter schools; charter schools unite the two sides of the ail the same way the song Hey Ya does at a wedding; footage of Pitbull as keynote speaker on the National Charter Schools Conference 2013; Thirteen footage from 2013 of success stories; local news WKMG 6 from 2015 about charter school shutting down; 25WPBF 2014; KCRA 2012; clip from <i>The Mysteries of Laura</i> (2014) NBC; Sun Sentinel 2014; ABC6 2010; uncredited footage of press conference with Pennsylvania auditor</p>	<p>The application of Franklin Academy;</p>

	<p>Travon Mitchell; Charter Application for IVY Academy; Charter Application for Campus "A" of Franklin Academy; Olsen twins; IVY Academy's handbook; headline and excerpt from an article from Sun Sentinel; emblem of Harambee Institute; still from ABC6 of ; excerpt from article from Philadelphia; still of auditor general; Pennsylvania football fan, Pennsylvania bell, Pennsylvania delicacy; child pouring cheese on a sandwich; state of Ohio; headline and text from article in The Plain Dealer; John Kasich; headline and text from article in Akron Beacon Journal; Lisa Hamm; headline and text from article in Cincinnati.com; The Holy Bible and bible quote; still of David Brennan; headline and text from The Plain Dealer; Billie Joel's Greatest Hits CDs; emblem of John Oliver Academy for Nervous Boys; logo for Johnny's Kids Non-profit; logo for Richard Allen Schools; Jeanette Harris; headline and text from article in Dayton Daily News; still from local footage; online charter school webpage; still from WITI; computer; headline and text from the Washington Post; headline and text from The Plain Dealer; licence plate from Nevada; still of Castellano; child;</p>	<p>general Eugene Depasquale in 2016; footage from 2009 of John Kasich talking about how much he loves choice and competition in schools, comparing them to 'pizza shops'; FOX19 footage of interview with Lisa Hamm (2013); footage from PBS "Frontline: the battle over school choice" (2000); local footage about how one school had 30 students but said it had 400 (2015); WITI 2013; Sun Sentinel 2014 interview with former charter school teacher Krystal Castellano;</p>	
Phase 3 'And Now'	-	-	-
Phase 4 Donald Trump	<p>Trump; Polls showing Clinton leading over Trump; Paul Manafort; Rodger Ails; still of Trump; Charlie Sheen; Hillary Clinton; split screen with Clinton and Trump; poll from the Washington Post that shows 60 percent of registered voters doesn't trust Clinton's trustworthiness; John Mayer trio; The White House; Trump and Angela Merkel photoshopped in Oval Office; Air Force One; Trump and Pence distributing disaster relief; Trump photoshopped naked in a tanning bed made out of TVs; a fire with clown legs sticking out; chaplain at Disney jail; tweet from Trump; picture of eleven top republicans that stood by Trump; Khizr and Ghazala Khan; headline from USA Today and photo of Trump; Headline from PBS Newshour and photo of Trump; Calendar; The Kid Who Ran For President; Will Arnett; split screen with Michelle Obama and Melania Trump;</p>	<p>CNN; MSNBC; FOX News; C-SPAN</p>	<p>The book The Kid Who Ran For President; a podium in front of a big sign that says TRUMP and a lot of American flags</p>

Table 6. Modes: Visual media (to the right), other media used and Practical aids for episode 'Charter Schools'

12.3 Code Scheme for ‘Chickens’

Action	Talk/Information	Gesture	Gaze (movement and expression)
Phase 1: Introduction, ‘Quick recap of the week’	Welcoming the audience	Drumming on the table; arms open as he welcomes the audience then slamming hand together and leaning forward on hands clasped;	Straight ahead
<i>Subphase 1.1 NSA</i>	NSA; spoke to Snowden last month about the section 215 of the Patriot Act which authorises the Phone-Record Program; the senate house passing the USA Freedom Act to stop NSA data collection; not perfect but does put limits in place; opposed by Mitch McConnell; McConnell’s would rather see an extension of the existing law;	Holding up his hands in front of him and looks at them; waving hand as if to indicate moving on;	Smiling at own joke; feigned surprise;
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.2 FIFA</i>	An objectively appalling organisation; upcoming presidential election; Sett Blatter will stand for fifth term; even though FIFA has been a part of so many scandals under Blatter he is expected to be re-elected; Blatter is so sure he will win he has refused to debate;	Holding up right hand when saying “now” as if stopping the audience; gesturing with index finger as he talks;	Snickering at own joke;
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.3 Australia</i>	Australia has weird animals; Australia had international animal drama as Johnny Depp snuck in his two dogs on his private jet; the problem is that Australia has strict customs and quarantine rules to prevent the spread of diseases; minister for agriculture Barnaby Joyce was upset; not wrong to be angry but quickly lost the moral high ground as he gave the ultimatum that either the dogs were returned to the U.S. or they would be euthanized; the dogs were flown back to the U.S on a private jet; Joyce tweeted Dogs gone; Australia has made it personal and America has no choice but respond;	Holding up both index fingers to make a point; holding left hand over mouth as he slaps the table with right hand;	Snickering at own joke; shock at death countdown; holding hand over mouth as he laughs at radio interview,
Phase 3 Chickens	American love eating chickens which means we have to produce a lot of chickens; 160 million chickens a week; doubled in the last 25 years; we compare everything to the taste of chicken; poultry industry is dominated by four major companies: Pilgrim’s, Sanderson Farms, Tyson and Perdue; not going to be another story about how horribly chickens are treated; this is about chicken farmers; going to be a lot less charming than chicken in overall; poultry companies act like farmers have it made; in promotional videos over jangly guitars; despite the positive testimonies in the promotional videos many farmers have another experience; many studies show that	Holding up both index fingers to make a point; leaning forward on forearms; Holding up right index fingers to make a point; resting on left arm as in exhausted; index fingers to thumbs to make a point; pretending to be an angry roommate and angrily points his fingers to the table; hands flat on chest as he denies knowledge; pretending to mic drop; hands over mouth in disbelief; buttons his jacket as he gets up; pointing at screen; doing the same gestures with his hands as sitting down; waves goodbye;	Laughing at own joke; getting increasingly louder when saying the boys are back and staring more intently; amazed by Kaptur’s speech; giggling at Sex and the City joke; snickering at chicken-fucker joke

	<p>poultry farmers live below or near the poverty line; sounds insane, how can the people who make the meat we eat the most barely be making a living?; contract farming; “Contract farming is basically chicken day-care. Companies bring baby chicks to an independent farm, drop them off and pick them off a little more than a month later when they’re fully grown”; farmers own the property and the equipment but the companies own the chickens; farmers own everything that costs money and companies own everything that makes money; farmers typically go into debt to start out; when contract is signed companies have a lot of control over farmers; bad conditions that chickens are held in might not be up to the farmers and they might not like them either; farmers are kept in debt by companies as they demand expansive upgrades; farmers do this because they think they will have a steady income but they are actually paid by a tournament or gladiator system; ex 100 farmers in an area, ranks them against each other, those in the top half will get a bonus payment, those in bottom half will get a deduction; “And what that means is that you’re competing against your neighbours”; farmers can be payed almost half as much as other growers per pound; being labelled a bad farmer has had farmers committed suicide as they lost everything; a chicken industry spokesman Tom Super was asked about why so many farmers live below the poverty line and he asked which poverty line – national or state; the reason people have not heard about the story is because farmers are punished for speaking out; chicken industry claims they do not do that; during research LWT spoke to a lot of farmers who believe it to be real and are terrified of it happening to them; Obama administration tried to add regulations; they held town-hall meetings; farmers said many did not come out of fear of retaliation; one farmer explains when a representative asked why they even got into the business by saying the company lied; good news is that protective regulations for farmers were written, the bad news is they are not currently being enforced; rider has been inserted in bills that prevents USDA from enforcing them; ben championed by Representative Steve Womack</p>		
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	whose home district is the site of Tyson's headquarters, received tens of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from chicken companies; Rep. Marcy Kaptur has fought for farmers rights and tried to get rid of rider; what can people do, not going to stop eating chicken, can't vote against Womack because not all people live there and for the last two elections he has had no major opponent; same committee is meant to meet again next month and Kaptur will try to get rid of rider again;		
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Table 7. Modes: Talk/information, Gesture and Gaze (expression and movement) for episode 'Chickens'

Action	Text	Joke /'Bit'	Sound
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'	-	-	Applause and screaming;
<i>Subphase 1.1 NSA</i>	US appeals court: NSA phone record collection is illegal; Hey babe, can we talk about this when things have died down at work a bit?; "... [Blatter] suggest[ed] female players wear tighter shorts..."; "Blatter... is widely expected to win another term...";	"The most obnoxious record-collector outside of hipsters who insist that vinyl sounds warmer"; "A meaningful bill passing with broad bipartisan support, it's like discovering yourself sexually for the first time. I don't know what this sensation is but I think I like it and I want it to happen again"; likens NSA's illegal data collections to guy giving you a colonoscopy not being a doctor; likens McConnell asking for more time to what you do when you know you're about to be dumped;	Laughing; groans;
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.2 FIFA</i>	-	"The NFL of actual football"; Blatter is Rodger Goodall's asshole; only place worse to host the World Cup would be the actual surface of the sun; "Although, to be fair, the sun does have a much better human rights record than Qatar does"; "... even though a hairless bear would do less damage as president. A hairless bear, who incidentally looks a great deal like Sett Blatter; "Sett Blatter saying I stand by my work is like a puppy standing by the work it did after being left alone in the house for the first time";	Groans; applause and whooping;
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.3 Australia</i>	"What I'm saying is, you sound like an absolute clown, telling the guy to bugger off back to Hollywood or we'll kill his dogs. You sound like an idiot. You're a government minister, not some idiot off the street mouthing off to a news camera. Have some decency"; "That's interesting coming from you, mate, you're the number one—"; "Oh, shut up, Barnaby, you (BLEEP). You're an absolute joke, Barnaby. I'm going off because you sound like an insensitive wanker";	"Not just the country where Russell Crowe lives but very much the Russell Crowe of countries"; Australia has weird animals; "It appears that Johnny Depp, I'm sorry, sorry, that's just a fedora atop a pile of greasy hair. Apparently actor Johnny Depp, sorry that is just a trash bag full of scarfs"; filming another unwanted Pirates of the Caribbean movie; "I gotta say, that's pretty ballsy. Elected officials very rarely risk openly telling puppies to go fuck themselves"; dogs gone could mean Depp's dogs are back in the U.S or that Joyce killed all the dogs; a video telling Australia they have to get everything Australian out of	Laughter; screaming laughter;

		the U.S or else; take back vegemite, shitty music especially Midnight Oil, Rupert Murdoch, Mel Gibson and other garbage Australian actors but America is keeping Hugh Jackman. If this does not happen America will shoot a baby koala in the face;	
Phase 3 Chickens	“... 97 percent of birds [were] raised on contract operations in 2011”; “... none of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to write, prepare, or publish a final rule...”; 	“Basically turkey’s with eating disorders”; says the absurd amount of chicks per week is like the amount of chicks example of handsome men get; “There’s no parallel for the other senses. If I said to you, everything looks like tables or everything feels like Koosh balls you’d think I was insane”; The main ingredient in KFC chicken isn’t cruelty, it’s chicken; cruelty is the main ingredient in; of course easier to understand chickens than humans; people eat chicken in various forms; Mickey Mouse nuggets are legally suspicious, could contain mouse but you cannot sue; “I’m assuming that’s how day-care works”; chicken companies describe everything over jangly fucking guitars; jangly guitars make everything sound plausible; over jangly guitar: “Mickey Mouse nuggets take the finest chicken – no mouse – and cover it with bread crumbs – no mouse. Our nuggets are the epitamy of mouse-less chickens – one mouse”; “Of course chicken companies won’t let you do that. They know that chickens are a like reality stars; the happier they are, the less money they’re worth. There’s a reason that E! cancelled ‘Keeping up with Alan and Arlene Alda, partners and best friends for 50 years’”; compared farming chickens to hooking up with James Franco in trying many new weird things; Hengarry Henross; “The poverty line is like the age of consent; if you find yourself passing exactly where it is, you’ve probably already done something, very, very wrong”; “When controlling assholes threaten their dependence with numerically inferior chicks, that’s not responsible business model, that’s Entourage. That’s what that is! ‘Hey, if you ding my Benz, brah, I’ll have every girl in L.A avoid your dick like it’s a fucking carbohydrate’. Cannot wait for the movie! I cannot wait for the movie. It’s gonna be sick. The boys are back! The boys are back! The boys are back!” (#EntourageMovie); “Why did you let us fuck you over is not a good defence against fucking people over. It just isn’t”; “‘We need rules and we need them quick’. You know this guy is serious because he’s talking like someone who just caught his roommate masturbating in their living room. ‘House meeting! House meeting! I know it’s just the two of us but Greg, this needs to stop! House meeting NOW! Strike four, Greg!’”; 	Laughter; applause; whooping;

		<p>“Why does he do this? Who knows, maybe it’s his home district is the site of Tyson World headquarters, or the fact that he’s received tens of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from chicken companies. Or maybe he’s just sexually attracted to chickens and is jealous that farmers get to spend so much time with them, I don’t know. I’m speculating here”; “That is the most depressing ending since the Sex and the City movie. Big, Carrie?! Big? You’re better than that, Carrie. If anything you should have ended up with Aidan. Yes. Yes, Aidan was boring, Carrie but guess what? So are you!”; eats a piece of chicken and says it tastes like armadillo; Sean Connery voicing people’s opinion saying “Womack! Why am I not surprised, you piece of shit!”; “...jangly guitar music to convince you that everything I’m about to say is true. Because listen to this: there are 51 voting members on the committee. These are their names and their states. If your representatives name if up there and they vote against Marcy Kaptur’s amendment, it is because they, and I cannot stress this enough, are chicken-fuckers. They fuck chickens. That’s what they do. Every day, every-which-way. And unless they want that chicken-fucker label to follow them for the rest of their lives, they might want to think extra carefully about which way they are going to vote. Because chicken-fucker accusations do not come off a Wikipedia page easily. Or if they do, they tend to go right back up. Because chicken companies may be able to retaliate against farmers for speaking out, but they cannot prevent us, as one, from screaming: chicken-fucker at the top of our lungs if any of these votes against the farmers in this tiny, tiny amendment. All potential chicken-fuckers here! Don’t be one of them, that’s all we’re saying”;</p>	
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Table 8. Modes: Text, Joke/Bit and Sound for episode ‘Chickens’

Action	Visual aid (to the right)	Other media used	Practical aids
Phase 1: Introduction, ‘Quick recap of the week’	-	-	-
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> NSA	NSA emblem; USA Freedom Act; Mitch McConnell; Obama; headline and text from the Washington Post article; three men at a hospital; photoshopped name of bill;	Bloomberg; ABC;	-
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.2</i> FIFA	FIFA emblem; Sett Blatter; Rodger Goodall; headline and text from Guardian article; headlines from articles mentioning FIFA’s numerous scandals; still of Blatter; the sun; headline and text from New York Times article; hairless	Al Jazeera; uncredited footage of Blatter presenting Qatar as hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup; uncredited footage of Sett Blatter; Australian 7 News;	-

	bear; split screen with hairless bear and Blatter; puppy and poop on floor;		
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.3</i> Australia	Map of Australia; Russell Crowe; Australian animals; still of footage of Depp's dogs; fedora on a pile of hair; trash bag of scarf; Johnny Depp; Pistol and Boo; photoshoped poster of next Pirates movie; Barnaby Joyce; still of the Guardian's countdown; party; Joyce and map of Australia; Joyce with alpaca; throw pillow with the words Shut up Barnaby you insensitive wanker stitched on it; photoshoped Joyce holding dead dog;	Uncredited Australian footage of minister; radio interview with host Kyle Sandilands and Barnaby Joyce; Australian 9 News; CBS The Morning;	Person next to him playing guitar; screen in background with representatives on it;
Phase 3 Chickens	Chickens; Warren Beatty; Rob Lowe; Leonardo DiCaprio on a boat with women; still from Discovery; still of Pamela Anderson; a child from Child Starz; chicken in an overall; still of farmers from promotional videos; split screen of farmer and chicken; still of farmer from documentary; different types of chicken dishes; headline and text from USDA; Mickey Mouse nuggets; still of person from promotional video; chicken house; chickens as gladiators; still of Leonard; made-up poster of Hengarry HenRoss; still form press conference; still of NCC spokesman Tom Super; still of farmer from town-hall meeting; still of NCC Bill Roenick; two roommates; headline and text from CPO Act; Steve Womack; Tyson headquarters; Steve Womack's top contributors; Womack and chicken; Marcy Kaptur; still of Sean Connery;	C-SPAN 3 about U.S. Livestock Industry; footage from Survivor; Fox 45; MSNBC; Discovery; uncredited footage of Paul McCarthy; uncredited footage of Pamela Anderson; Tyson promotional video; Sanderson Farms Promotional video; Perdue promotional video; "The Sharecroppers" (2010); "Under contract" (2015); Courtesy of Compassion in World Farming; footage of business journalist Christopher Leonard explain tournament system; uncredited footage from press conference; "Cock Fight" (2015); uncredited footage from town-hall meeting; uncredited footage of Marcy Kaptur; footage from movie The Rock;	-

Table 9. Modes: Visual media (to the right), other media used and Practical aids for episode 'Chickens'

12.4 Code Scheme for 'Journalism'

Action	Talk/Information	Gesture	Gaze (movement and expression)
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'	Welcoming the audience	Drumming on the table; arms open as he welcomes the audience then slamming hand together and leaning forward on hands clasped;	Straight ahead;
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> The Olympics	The build-up in Rio has been turbulent; NBC urged to focus on the opening ceremony; historic moment as Bündchen's last catwalk; centre piece is parade of nations; Today show point out everything that's wrong with the contestants countries; first time a team of refugees will be competing;	Leaning forward; flat hand to emphasise his words; thumb to index finger to further emphasise; holding up right hand as if to stop the person in the clip; hands hold head in horror; leaning on left arm outstretched, biting lip;	Straight ahead; closing his eyes in second-hand embarrassment; horrified;

<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.2</i> Turmoil in Brazil	President Dilma Rouseff has been suspended since May following corruption allegations and did not attend the opening ceremony; acting-President Michel Temer is not beloved;	Leaning forward; flat hand to emphasise his words; thumb to index finger to further emphasise;	Straight ahead;
Phase 2 ‘And Now’	And now, newscasters perv out over a shirtless Olympian in national dress	-	-
Phase 3 ‘Journalism’	Journalists are the heroes we root for in movies; Spotlight won best picture; what made Spotlight so powerful is the knowledge that the newspaper industry today is in big trouble; papers have been closing and downsizing for years and it affects all of us regardless where you get your news from; places like Facebook and Twitter are most often just repackaging work of newspapers; TV news cite printed sources a lot; “And it is not just news outlets, stupid shows like ours lean heavily on local papers. In fact, whenever this show is mistakenly called journalism it is a slap in the face to the actual journalists whose work we rely on. I’ll give you just one example, two years ago, we ran a piece on state lottery and a not insignificant portion of it was built on the work of Harry Esteve, a reporter at the Oregonian. Here’s a clip we used of him, talking about his series on camera, here I am quoting one of his Oregonian stories directly, and here I am doing it again [...] but the point is, we used a lot of Harry Esteve’s work in that piece and we tried to add new information to our stories, our researchers work incredible hard but the media is a food chain which would fall apart without local newspapers. And the problem is, print ads are less popular with advertisers than they used to be and online ads produce much led revenue”; between 2004 and 2014 newspapers gained 2 billion dollars in digital ad revenue but they lost 30 billion dollars in print ad revenue; this has led to cutbacks; ex the Oregonian; in 2013 their parent company Advance Publications dropped a bombshell; became a digital-first company; extra digital demands being put on journalists is now being done throughout the industry; Washington Post editor Marty Baron expressed worry of the workload put on today’s journalists;	Leaning forward; flat hand to emphasise his words; thumb to index finger to further emphasise; left hand in a fist while right hand remains flat and punctuates his words; indicating to screen next to him by pointing his finger; pretends to be a high school girl putting his finger in someone’s mouth; holding up hands in defence while going “whoa”; holding up hands in bewilderment; pretending to cram something into a funnel; resting on left arm and holding head with right arm; points at screen to point at audience at home;	Passionate when saying it’s a slap in the face; laughing at his own impression; being unable to speak in in bewilderment; exhausted at stupidity;

	<p>are required to write, edit, shoot videos and tweet and therefore mistakes are going to be made; digital requirements came to the Oregonian as almost a quarter of the newsroom was laid off; what is frightening is that while the Oregonian rebuilt its statehouse team, other papers have been forced to go without; a study with over 200 papers found that between 2003 and 2014 their numbers of fulltime statehouse reporters declined by 35%; there are some good digital local news outlets but not nearly enough to cover what has been lost; David Simon, creator of the Wire, worked at the sun before, says the coming time will be a great time for corrupt politicians; it is clearly smart for newspapers to expand online but “the danger in doing that is to gravitate toward whatever gets the most clicks which is why news organisations badly needs leaders who appreciate that what’s popular isn’t always what’s most important”; not always the case; Sam Zell, billionaire investor who 9 years ago took over the Tribune company; good news is that Zell no longer owns Tribune Company; however tis publishing arm Tribune Publishing was rebranded into something much stupider: tronc; when they talk of tronc it makes no sense, they are basically not saying anything; “But what seems at first like a banal corporate rebranding speech quickly goes off the rails with their next big idea”; according to them AI is going to allow journalists to do their job more efficiently; easy to make fun of tronc but publishers are desperate; no one seems to have a perfect pan to keep newspapers afloat; one option seems to be to pray to be bought by a billionaire benefactor who can afford to swallow losses; Amazon founder Jeff Bezos bought the Washington Post in 2013 and they have done some really good journalistic pieces; concern that a rich founder could meddle with paper’s coverage; Las Vegas Review-Journal was bought by billionaire casino-magnet and Republican mega-donor Sheldon Adelson; his business are in the centre of a lot of what the Las Vegas Review-Journal covers; Adelson and editors deny interfering with papers coverage but editors have admitted that they put any articles about Adelson or his business through a special</p>		
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	<p>reviewing process to make sure that they are fair; former deputy editor James Wright explains that there are changes made because it is known that they are how Adelson like them; important to remember there are those producing great news in local newsrooms but they are doing it DESPITE their current conditions; “a big part of the blame for this business dire strait is on us and our unwillingness to pay for the work journalists produce. We’ve just grown accustomed to getting our news for free, and the longer we get something for free the less willing we are to pay for it [...] but sooner or later we are either going to have to pay for journalism or we are all going to pay for it. Because it we don’t, not only will malfeasants run amok, but the journalism movies of the future are going to look a lot more like this.”; a trailer to a made up film with famous actors;</p>		
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Table 10. Modes: Talk/information, Gesture and Gaze (expression and movement) for episode 'Journalism'

Action	Text	Joke /'Bit'	Sound
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'	-	-	-
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> The Olympics	-	<p>“Wait! Wait! Last catwalk? What’s happening to- oh my God, they’re going to kill Gisele, aren’t they?! Or maybe they’ll send her where all super models go: a farm upstate where they can sassily walk around and grace on tiny amounts of grass”; lucky Today show do not treat the Macy’s Day Parade the same; “Djibouti is a country with a rich cultural history and a multi-ethnic population of over 850 000 people but you are right, it does also sound like a butt”; contestants dressed as flight attendants from shitty airlines; “OK, first I’m almost terrifyingly impressed by that woman. And second, when something goes wrong, I don’t cry like a baby, I cry like a grown man. And I’ll tell you why: it’s louder, it terrifies strangers, and no one comforts me. It’s better”; Thomas Bach held a speech saying in the Olympic world “we are all equal” which is objectively not true;</p>	Laughter; groans; wild applause and screaming;
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.2</i>	<p>“Imagine you’re going to throw a party, you work on it for years, you set it all up and then on the day of the party someone shows up, takes your place and takes over your party. In this story of the Games, I am the Cinderella”;</p>	<p>“Which is absolute bullshit! Not least because Cinderella did not organise the ball, the prince’s publicist Andrea did to distract from the gay rumours surrounding the prince. Come on, think about it, the guest list was every eligible maiden; it was Cinderella or Katie Holmes. Please, PLEASE, it was obvious!”; Temer is a shitty poet;</p>	Applause; laughter

		Temer's wife is a lot younger than him, when "70-something American politicians get creepily handsy with 30-something women, they have the decency to do so with their own daughters";	
Phase 2 'And Now',		-	A voiceover with a deep male voice; laughter heard over voice
Phase 3 'Journalism'	Unfortunately, John Oliver, You Are a Journalist; 'Last Week Tonight' Does Real Journalism No Matter What John Oliver Says; Comedian John Oliver Has Actually Produced Investigative Journalism; "... a digital-first company..."; "... quota of three posts per day"; "On any post of substance, reporter will post the first comment'..."; Ed Reinhold, FBI, says FBI has investifarted about 70 leads already; "... about 22 percent of the newsroom"; "... a decline of 35%..."; "... a gamelike feature that would allow a reader who didn't enjoy an article to pay to remove its vowels";	"And remember, Spotlight actually won best picture at the Oscars this year, meaning newspapers finally received the recognition that we normally reserve for subjects of such importance as the incredible bravery of real-life Hollywood filmmakers, the incredible bravery of fictional Hollywood filmmakers, and the incredible bravery of wanting to fuck your daughter's friend"; "And that affects all of us, even if you only get your news from Facebook, Google, Twitter, or Arianna Huffington's Blockquote Junction and Book Excerpt Clearinghouse"; without printed newspapers TV news would be Wolf Blitzer endlessly batting a ball of yarn around; "You probably didn't notice it at the time cause you were too fixated on my bold choice of shiny grey tie with chequered dress shirt. The tie says Mafia funeral, the shirt says high school debate tournament, and the face says I am not confident enough to carry this look off"; "So that's like finding a lucky penny on the sidewalk on the same day your bank account is by a sixteen year old hacker"; "Now, that level of confidence is almost tempting fate. He's like a citizen of Pompeii saying 'what I love about this city is how volcano-proof it is. Not a year goes by not having to have our horrified reactions captured in ash forever'; digital-first sound like a high school euphemism for seductively sucking on a finger, "I put my finger in his mouth, we totally got to digital-first. It was like ew but it was also like hot"; "What better way to win the trust of your readers than posting 'First!' underneath your own article"; #investifarted; "His work bolstered our lottery piece and now the lack of his work has bolstered this journalism piece, so you can't say that we don't use every part of the Harry Esteve"; "He's right, cause not having reporters at government meetings is like a teacher leaving her room of seventh graders to supervise themselves. Best case scenario, Brittany gets gum in her hair. Worst case scenario, you no longer have a school"; Sam Zell looks like a garden gnome; "Whoa, whoa, whoa! Sam Zell just created an inspiring new motto for the Sentinel's masthead: 'All the puppy news that's fit to print, and maybe some Iraq news too, if we can	Laughter;

		<p>afford it, fuck you””; “Yes, tronc. They have chosen to call themselves tronc. Which sounds like the noise an ejaculating elephant makes or more appropriately the sound of a sack of print newspapers being thrown into a dumpster”; “What they fuck did she just say? They’re going to feed journalism into a funnel? ‘Oh, we’re just going to take content and simply cram it down your throat like you’re an abused goose’. And the corresponding visuals make even less sense. What is happening here? It looks like a bunch of digital sperm impregnating a tronc egg.”; “OK. Ok. Ok. Putting aside the news robots, I would like to take a moment to break down what may be the most meaningless graphic ever created. If you take a look on the left there is the phrase ‘reading habits’ but once those reading habits undergo X, they become increased consumption. It almost feels like a test and the first employee who raises their hand and say ‘that doesn’t mean anything’ becomes king of the news”; taking out the vowels makes everything sound like an app; “There could not be a worse owner in Vegas than Sheldon Adelson with the possible exception of Cirque de Soleil, because they wouldn’t even give you a newspaper, you just have a fist full of glitter thrown in your face by a 90 pound man in a thong”; “And I’m talking to you, the person watching this segment on YouTube using the Wi-Fi from the coffee shop underneath your apartment. You’re killing us! ;”</p>	
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Table 11. Modes: Text, Joke/Bit and Sound for episode 'Journalism'

Action	Visual aid (to the right)	Other media used	Practical aids
Phase 1: Introduction, 'Quick recap of the week'	-	-	-
<i>Subphase 1.1</i> The Olympics	Olympic rings and Rio 2016; still of opening ceremony; still of Gisele Bündchen; parade of nations; still of Shrek balloon; Charlie Brown balloon; Snoopy balloon; map of Djibouti; Yusra Mardini; still of Thomas Bach; winning podium; flag-bearer from Togo; newscaster from NBC	NBC; IOC interview with Yusra Mardini;	-
<i>Sub-subphase 1.1.2</i>	Dilma Rouseff; headline and text from El Mundo; Cinderella; cartoon publicist Andrea; Michel Temer; Temer's book of poems Anonymous Intimates; Temer and younger wife; Trump and Ivanka; Temer's wife's tattoo on her neck;	BBC;	-

Phase 2 'And Now'	-	-	-
Phase 3 'Journalism'	Newspaper with Journalists written over it; still from All the President's Men; still from The Great Muppet Caper; still from Spotlight; cast from Spotlight at Oscars; Argo; The Artist; American Beauty; Spotlight; Journalism; Facebook, Google, Twitter, Arianna Huffington's Blockquote Junction and Book Excerpt Clearinghouse; still from CBS This morning; Wolf Blitzer photoshopped batting a ball of yarn; headlined from newspapers; lottery ticket; still of Harry Esteve from various clips; stills from LWT; data of rise in digital ad revenue between 2004-2014; data of loss of print ad revenue between 2004-2014; man holding a penny; sixteen year old hacker; the Oregonian; Bill Hilliard; still from City Club of Portland; citizen of Pompeii; Advance Publications; headline and text from the Oregonian; two high school girls; Oregonian PowerPoint: Performance Management Process Overview for Employees; headline and text from Willamette Week; comment FIRST!!!!!!; Marty Baron; Live Schreiber and Marty Baron; the Boston Globe; Tweet from the Boston Globe; headline and text from Willamette Week; headline and text from Pew Research Center study; David Simon; still from C-Span; girl with gum in her hair; burnt down school; Sam Zell; Tribune; Los Angeles Times; Orlando Sentinel; Chicago Tribune; photoshopped masthead in Orlando Sentinel ; tronc; still from Tribune Publishing; moving visual from footage of tronc; Jeff Bezos; the Washington Post; headline and text from article form Fortune; Turkey – TRK; Las Vegas Review-Journal; Sheldon Adleson; man in front of computer;	Spotlight (2015) Open Road Films; examples of TV citing printed sources Meet the Press; MSNBC; CNN; Bloomberg; Aljazeera; CBS This Morning; City Club of Portland 1993, press conference with editor of the Oregonian Bill Hilliard; local news clip 2013; WAN IFRA 2015; C-Span 2009;FTVLive footage of Sam Zeel talking to reporters from Orlando Sentinel 2008; footage from Tribune Publishing talking about tronc; "Ralston Live" PBS interview with former deputy editor of Las Vegas R-J James wright;	A fake trailer for a film Stoplight about a journalist who wants to produce an important story on political corruption but is told that they don't know how many clicks it will get and make fun of other things mentioned earlier in the program; "Stoplight – he tried to break the story, he was told to pump the breaks";

Table 12. Modes: Visual media (to the right), other media used and Practical aids for episode 'Journalism'