

Cite as: Caple, H. (2016). 'Inventory of visual devices constructing newsworthiness', available at: www.newsvaluesanalysis.com

Inventory of visual devices that often construct newsworthiness in English-language news (general guide to the analysis, as further discussed in Chapter 5 of Bednarek & Caple 2017)

News value	Visual devices
<i>Aesthetic Appeal</i> (aesthetically pleasing)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The depiction of people, places, objects, landscapes culturally recognised for their beauty. <p>Capture:</p> <p>Composition: Balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic, asymmetric composition, making use of diagonal axis; Balanced, symmetrical images where the symmetry is momentarily interrupted. <p>Technical affordances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movement: blurring and freezing of action; Noise: high level of graininess; Focus: lengthening or reducing depth of field within the image.
<i>Consonance</i> ([stereo]typical)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants/Attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The depiction of people and their attributes that fit with the stereotypical imagery of a person/country etc (e.g. beer and breasts for Germany's Oktoberfest). <p>Activity sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staged/highly choreographed depictions of typical activities associated with a person/group/nation.
<i>Eliteness</i> (of high status or fame)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing known and easily recognizable key figures, e.g. political leaders, celebrities. <p>Attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing people in elaborate costumes, uniform or with other regalia of officialdom; Showing self-reflexive elements like microphones/cameras. <p>Activity sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing people flanked by military, police or bodyguards or in a media scrum; Showing people using the specialist equipment associated with elite professions (e.g. surgeon performing an operation). <p>Setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing context associated with an elite profession, e.g. books, lab, police station.
<i>Impact</i> (having significant effects or consequences)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants/attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing the after-effects (often negative) of events, e.g. scenes of destruction, injuries, damage to property; Showing emotions caused by an event.

<i>Negativity</i> (negative)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants/attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing negative events and their effects, e.g. the aftermath of accidents, natural disasters, the injured/wounded, the wreckage/damage done to property; • Showing people experiencing negative emotions. <p>Activity sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing people being arrested or (as defendant) with lawyers/barristers/police; • Showing people attempting to hide their identity, e.g. using an item of clothing to cover the head, or showing aggression towards the camera, e.g. putting a hand up in front of the lens; • Showing people engaging in norm-breaking behaviour, e.g. fighting, vandalising, stealing, attacking. <p>Capture:</p> <p>Technical affordances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement/blurring involving negative content, resulting in poor quality images; • Noise: dramatizing and intensifying negative content; • Focus: where extreme circumstances mean unable to provide sharp and detailed image content, e.g. water/rain on the lens; • In moving images: blurring and movement caused by camera-people moving around, running, ducking to avoid projectiles etc (suggesting unstable situation, i.e. danger).
<i>Positivity</i> (positive)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants/attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing people experiencing positive emotions. <p>Activity sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing people engaging in positively valued behaviour, e.g. being successful at red carpet events, award ceremonies; • Showing actions associated with reconciliation or praise, e.g. shaking hands, hugging.
<i>Personalisation</i> (having a personal/human face)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants/attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing 'ordinary' individuals, especially when singled out and standing in for a larger group; • People dressed in informal/everyday clothing; • Carrying items such as rucksacks, handbags, shopping bags; • Showing an emotional response. <p>Setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the home/domestic setting; • On the street. <p>Capture:</p> <p>Composition: Salience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positioning individuals in unequal relation (in terms of textual composition, NOT in terms of social power dynamics) to others in the image frame, e.g. singling out one individual through foregrounding or backgrounding. <p>Composition: Shot length</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a close-up shot (to focus on a person's emotion, for example). <p>Technical affordances: Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing depth of field so that the focus remains on the individual.

<i>Proximity</i> (geographically or culturally near)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants/Attributes/Setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing well-known or iconic landmarks (Tower Bridge, Sydney Opera House, Golden Gate Bridge), natural features (Uluru) or cultural symbols (flags, national colours/distinctive uniforms). <p>[Verbal text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing verbal text indicating relevant place/cultural connection, e.g. signage.]
<i>Superlativeness</i> (of high intensity/large scope)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing the large-scale repetition of participants in the image frame, e.g. not just one house but an entire street affected; Showing extreme (positive or negative) emotions in participants. <p>Capture:</p> <p>Composition: Shot length</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of very wide angle to exaggerate differences in size/space; Magnification (larger than life representation) through use of extreme close-up or macro lens. <p>Technical affordances: Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camera movement and blurring, combined with camera-people moving around, running, ducking to avoid projectiles etc (suggesting seriousness/high danger, etc).
<i>Timeliness</i> (recent, ongoing, about to happen, new, current, seasonal)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural phenomena that indicate time, e.g. the season may be implied in flora or environmental conditions; Inclusion of cultural artefacts, like Christmas trees that are representative of a particular time of year. <p>Activity sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing the revealing of an item, to be seen for the first time. <p>[Verbal Text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including verbal text indicating relevant time, e.g. signage.]
<i>Unexpectedness</i> (unexpected)	<p>Content:</p> <p>Represented participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing people being shocked/surprised; Showing unusual happenings that would be considered outside an established societal norm or expectation. <p>Capture:</p> <p>Composition: Salience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juxtaposition of elements in the frame that create stark contrast.