

REJECTING THE FRAME: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTED
POLICE VIOLENCE IN THE CASES OF BUDDY TAVARES AND ROBERT DZIEKANSKI

By

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Abstract

How is police violence framed in emergent forms of social documentation (i.e., news media and social media documents) and has this process altered the understanding and communication surrounding specific cases? This study uses qualitative media analysis (QMA) to answer the proposed research problem. In order to accomplish this, two video recorded, Canadian case studies were selected: Mr. Buddy Tavares and Mr. Robert Dziekanski. First, news media documents were analyzed. Secondly, a progression between news media and social media platforms was noted. This led to the identification of user-generated content (UGC), a result of social media interaction (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). The social media platforms selected for analysis, CBC news¹ and YouTube², allow users to comment/respond to videos and online news media articles. Overall, the findings suggest that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) provide the initial framing of each case in the news media documents, which establishes parameters for how each case is to be understood and discussed. This is evident in both the RCMP claims referenced in the news media documents and the UGC. Furthermore, the data suggests that the online users reject the RCMP frame, through the identification and resistance to specific claims made by the RCMP in the news media documents and portrayal of events in the videos.

¹ www.cbc.ca/news

² www.youtube.com

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1. Introduction

The use of violence is a fundamental aspect of police work (Manning, 1980; Fyfe, 1981; Lawrence, 2000). How violent interactions between police and citizens are framed³ (e.g., acceptable/lawful or unacceptable/unlawful) in documents (e.g., news media) is a symbolic process, producing various interpretations and understandings of these events. Perhaps the most infamous example of documented police violence is the case involving Mr. Rodney King in 1991, in which a 90-second video portrayed uniformed members of the Los Angeles Police Department beating an unarmed Mr. King (Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993). Currently, a version of the video is accessible on YouTube, a video-sharing website, and has over 1 million views. Mr. King's case can be considered unique due to the existence of a video recording displaying the police officers' actions. This case can still be considered relevant today, due to the number of views the video has received, and remains one of the "...most explicit and shocking [examples of] news footage of police brutality ever to be seen on television" (Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993, p. 3). Present day examples of police violence include a University of California Berkeley rally (2011) and the case of Jeff Oatway (2012), who died after being tasered by Edmonton police officers. This project seeks to analyze how police violence is framed in emergent forms of documentation and how this process has impacted the understanding and communication surrounding these cases. In order to present this research, however, a conceptualization of police violence is needed.

³ Goffman (1974) explores the process of 'framing'. According to Goffman (1974) the process of framing represents a "schematic of interpretation...which enable[s] people to locate, perceive, identify and label 'occurrences of information'" (pp. 55). Within the context of my research, the process by which police violence is framed or presented is crucial to its subsequent interpretation or understanding. Indeed, it is this process that forms the foundation of the research problem, seeking to determine how police violence is framed in emergent forms of documentation.

Violence can be defined as, “any form of behaviour by an individual [or institution] that intentionally threatens to or does cause physical, sexual, or psychological harm to others or themselves” (Stanko, 2001, pp. 316). This definition, offered by Stanko (2001), emphasizes the physical nature of violence, a characterization that is of prime importance to the conceptualization of police violence. Violent interactions among individuals have been documented and studied throughout history from social, political, individual and collective perspectives (Muchembled, 2012). In many cases, the spread or existence of violence is a primary concern for any society, often demonstrated by the state’s willingness to control the use of violence or force among citizens. According to Weber (1946), the state represents a “...monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory” (pp. 26). This allows associated agencies (e.g., the police) the legal right to exert violence legitimately in the presence of an identified or perceived threat, rendering “police violence” a subset of state violence.

Presently, how the police are understood as a social institution is changing in Western society. One of these changes involves the proliferation of online social interaction, resulting in large part from the increased prevalence of social media in daily life. Recent advancements in communication technologies (e.g., smartphones and digital cameras) and social media platforms (e.g., YouTube) have allowed people to circulate recorded images of violent interactions between police and citizens. These recordings, when coupled with the capabilities of social media, allow direct user responses and comments. This process yields UGC, which is a basic characteristic of social media (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). Analyzing UGC makes it possible to understand various social phenomena, including police violence.

This research addresses the following question: How is police violence framed in emergent forms of documentation (i.e. news media and social media documents) and has the

process altered the understanding and communication surrounding cases of police violence? Examining police violence from this perspective provides a comprehension of the process by which police violence is understood in social media platforms, and whether or not this is changing as a result of social media. This project builds on the work of media scholars such as Gans (1979), Altheide (1995; 2002), Best (2008) and, more recently, Schneider and Trottier (2012), in order to establish the significance of the mass media in framing social events. In addition, research examining the institution of policing and its use of violence, such as that by Fyfe (1981), Lawrence (2000), and Hirschfield and Simon (2010), is considered for the present conceptualization of “police violence.” While previous literature examining the interaction between mass media and the policing institution has been undertaken (see Doyle (2007) and Fishman (1980)), this project provides an original contribution to the research field by adding social media platforms, UGC, and two selected Canadian case studies resulting from a preliminary pilot study.

Altheide and Schneider (2013) define social media as “...a hybrid of media and interaction” (p. 103). Social media is differentiated from social networking, as the former focuses more broadly on the dissemination format (e.g., video, text, audio) while the latter is concerned with the specific information platform (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). Social media, more generally, will be used to describe the platforms for sharing and accessing user-generated content (UGC). The terms “social media” and “UGC” will be appear throughout this thesis. However, social media will refer to the platforms (e.g., YouTube and/or CBC) while UGC will refer to the social media documents or user-based documentation that was retrieved from these platforms for analysis.

User-generated content (UGC) exists in the form of user posts and is a distinctive feature of social media (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). These posts can occur in video, image, audio, or

text-based formats. UGC is a significant feature of this study as it represents a changing characteristic of social interaction, a reorganization of social activities (e.g., online communication), and a site to examine the framing of certain social phenomena. For these reasons, UGC can be thought of as a primary feature of everyday life, as social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) continue to mediate more and more forms of social interaction. UGC emerging in response to documented instances of police violence were included in this research.

UGC is included as a result of a research progression from news media documents to social media platforms. News media documents are based on the existence of claims— which will be outlined later – given by authoritative voices (i.e., police officers, judges, social experts, etc.) and others (i.e., civilians), all of whom are considered “primary definers” or “authorized knowers” of certain social events (Tuchman, 1978; Doyle, 2003). Baddeley (2013) discusses the notion of “expert opinions” as statements believed to stem from non-biased or rational sources when, in reality, the opposite is often the case. No matter what the subject data (i.e., police violence), these opinions are formed from available data, interpreted by the expert’s subjective bias and then delivered in an attempt to forecast unpredictable future occurrences (Baddeley, 2013). While Baddeley’s (2013) research on social experts applies more to finance and economics, this conceptualization is relevant and will be applied to police violence.

Baddeley (2013) goes on to illustrate the relationship between amateur and expert sources, describing how the latter tends to rely on the former to produce and understand social situations or information. The same can be said of situations involving police violence whereby expert sources (i.e., police officers) deliver authoritative statements surrounding case-specific information. Statements, made by the police, frame the case in a specific manner, influencing how amateur sources interpret and understand the notion of “police violence.” This process in

general can be studied through the identification of news media and social media documents claiming the existence of “police violence.” These two forms of documents are relevant to this research for two reasons: 1) they identify social media platforms, thus producing a progression from news media document to social media platform and UGC; and 2) the aforementioned claims made by members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)⁴, are directly referenced and, in some cases, quoted in the UGC. For these reasons, this study includes both news media documents and UGC.

This first form of document, referred to as news media documents, was selected in order to understand the reporting of police violence in Canada. It was further narrowed to the province of British Columbia (BC). During the preliminary research process, news media documents reporting the existence of documented (i.e., video recorded) police-civilian violence were identified and became the central focus of this project. These specific cases were chosen to allow for the emergence of data that would satisfy the overall research question, how is police violence framed in emergent forms of social documentation (i.e., news media and social media documents) and has this process altered the understanding and communication surrounding specific cases?

In addition, the selection of cases involving the existence of videos allows for the intersection between multiple media platforms (i.e., social media and news media). Using these criteria, then, two case studies were identified in line with the following principles: 1) each of the cases identified occurred in British Columbia, Canada, 2) each case involved video recordings which were subsequently uploaded to social media platforms, and 3) the cases produced UGC surrounding the framing of each case, thus satisfying the overall research problem. The case

⁴ The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) became a focus of this research study during the methodological process. Both case studies selected for analysis involve RCMP, as they contain jurisdictional authority over much of British-Columbia.

studies, which were selected for further analysis, involve Mr. Buddy Tavares and Mr. Robert Dziekanski.

The case involving Buddy Tavares occurred January 7th, 2011 in Kelowna, British-Columbia (BC). Buddy Tavares was involved in an interaction with Constable (Cst.) Geoff Mantler of the Kelowna RCMP detachment. During this interaction, Kelly Hayes, a news reporter with Castanet News, video recorded the event which depicts Cst. Mantler kicking Buddy Tavares in the face. This altercation resulted in head injuries to Buddy Tavares and produced news media and social media documents for analysis. Mr. Robert Dziekanski's case occurred October 13, 2007 at the Vancouver international airport in BC. The interaction between Robert Dziekanski and four uniformed RCMP officers resulted in Dziekanski's death, spawning an independent enquiry – the Braidwood enquiry- and a large degree of news media and social media documents.

Each case study will hereafter be referred to by the name of the victims as the approach to this research stems from their involvement in the cases as such. This was done in order to emphasize the role of the RCMP in the framing of each one of their specific cases, as opposed to the cases of the involved RCMP officers. Furthermore, data identified during the analysis of the Buddy Tavares case suggests that online social media users were referencing the Robert Dziekanski case (i.e., claims made by RCMP officers in news media documents) in order to make sense of the case. For this reason, the cases appear in reverse chronological order (i.e., Buddy Tavares (2011) and Robert Dziekanski (2007)) throughout this project as well as in the presentation of the case studies.

News media documents can be analyzed using Lawrence's (2000) notion of the official dominance model of news making. According to Lawrence (2000), statements or claims made by "primary definers" (Doyle, 2003), and "authorized knowers" (Tuchman, 1978) are given

primacy over other voices (i.e., civilians) in the construction of social events. Given that the majority of news relates to crime (Hall et al., 1978; Fishman, 1980; Ericson et al., 1991; Doyle, 2006), and the primary definers of crime matters are the police (Ericson et al., 1991), news media documents were selected as the first site of analysis, leading to the subsequent identification of social media platforms and UGC through their reference within the documents.

First, online news media documents involving Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski were selected for analysis as a result of a preliminary investigation targeting video-recorded instances of police violence within the province of BC, Canada. In each of the selected case studies, the social media platform YouTube was referenced in connection to the existing videos. As a result, the research focus shifted to include the specified YouTube pages containing each video. This progression emerged during the analysis stages of the news media documents, where direct references from both online and print news media articles published by *The Globe and Mail*, *The Province*, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) identified the videos as being uploaded to this social media platform.

During the analysis of the YouTube UGC, posts mirroring information present in the news media articles (i.e., claims made by RCMP officers and case-specific information) published on the CBC news website became of particular interest to this thesis because the website incorporates aspects of social media platforms (i.e., user posts and videos). This particular website (CBC) allows online users to respond to online news media articles in much the same way as YouTube, producing further UGC for analysis. The content, provided by users, can be deleted by site moderators should they deem the posts offensive or derogatory. Due to this capability, CBC's website meets the requirements of a social media platform, as it represents a union between media and interaction (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). In addition, CBC continues to be one of the most accessed Canadian websites, providing an example of a

Canadian social media platform for this research project (Alex, 2013).⁵ For these reasons, a progression was carried out between the two social media platforms, YouTube and CBC.

The selection of both YouTube and CBC as the social media platforms analyzed for this research project satisfies the overall research question, as both platforms allow for the identification of documents involving the framing of the selected case studies. Moreover, the platforms represent an international (YouTube) and national (CBC) blending of UGC, as the popularity and geographical availability vary considerably between the two websites. The vast amount of UGC gathered from these platforms contributes to the decision to limit this research analysis to YouTube and CBC social media platforms.

The identification of “violent interactions between police and civilians,” as it is discussed in news media documents, is complicated because violence is considered a basic part of police work (Manning, 1978; Fyfe, 1981; Bittner, 1991; Lawrence, 2000; Williams, 2007). Put simply, the use of the term “police violence” is ambiguous. Instead, terms such as “excessive force” and “excessive use of force” are often invoked when referring to violent interactions between police and citizens as reported in news media documents (Lawrence, 2000). This emphasis on language can be further elaborated when one examines how victims of police violence are described (i.e., “man”, “woman”, “suspect”, “perpetrator”, etc.). This project, however, is concerned with the term “use of excessive force”, as the term’s use implies that an officer employed more force than necessary in a given situation. Contrast this with the latter term, excessive use of force, which implies that an officer used an acceptable amount of force more frequently than was deemed necessary (Williams, 2007).

How police violence is understood, is the result of social interaction, interpretation and meaning. Altercations between police and citizens represent micro-level interactions that can be

⁵ www.alexa.com/siteinfo/cbc.ca (Monday, January 21, 2013.)

traced to broader institutional contexts. This process can be examined through the news media, and more recently, social media documents, which report their existence. This study uses symbolic interactionism (SI), a sociological theory noted for its theoretical exploration of meaning, interpretation and social interaction. Scholars of the SI school view meaning as a result of the communicative processes characteristic of human interaction, this theory is further elaborated in chapter two. Given the influence of the mass media over the construction and dissemination of information regarding social phenomenon (Altheide, 1996), SI is a useful theoretical perspective for analyzing how police violence is interpreted, discussed and shared in changing communicative formats.

The overall research question is: How is police violence framed in emergent forms of social documentation (i.e., news media and social media documents) and has this process altered the understanding and communication surrounding specific cases? This research question addresses a gap in the research literature surrounding the interaction between social media, video, and police violence. For this reason, qualitative media analysis (QMA), a recognized methodology for analyzing documents, was chosen as the methodological orientation (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). QMA is a 12-step process, which allows for the examination of mass media (both online news and social media) documents, in an effort to identify relevant themes and patterns with respect to the overall research question. The resultant data reveal that the police maintain the ability to provide the initial framing of each case by making certain claims and presenting certain information in mass media documents (i.e., background characteristics, officer motives, etc.). Analysis of UGC, however, suggests that online users reject this initial frame, as false information issued by the RCMP provides a framework for users to speak out against or reject not only the frame but also the integrity of the institution as a whole; an important theme identified.

This theme, which emerged during the research process, identified UGC that specifically rejected the RCMP's frame. Here, user comments identifying certain police-based claims, as well as information and/or evidence contradicting the integrity of their statements provided the basis for this theme. Users not only reproduced RCMP claims made in news documents, they were changed in a way that deviated from or reversed the RCMP or police's initial portrayal or framing of the case. Though these particular posts reaffirmed the RCMP's ability to frame the case (i.e., by reproducing the claims), the theme demonstrates a unique development between social media, policing and social accountability.

The documentation of police violence can be traced back to the now infamous case of Rodney King. On March 3, 1991, an 81-second amateur video captured by George Holliday, a civilian bystander, depicted three uniformed members of the Los Angeles Police Department violently engaging Mr. King. In total, Mr. King was struck with police batons 56 times, tasered twice and kicked six times by six different police officers. Four police officers – Stacey Koon, Laurence Powell, Timothy Wind and Theodore Briseno – were indicted for their involvement in the case. In the end, however, each of the officers was acquitted of all charges, despite the extensive documentation and video (Christopher Commission, 1991).

This case is significant to the present research project and the conceptualization of police violence because it was videotaped (Williams, 2007). Indeed, the name Rodney King can be thought of as synonymous with “police violence.” Presently, the video showing the beating can be viewed on YouTube and it currently has 1,346,548 views. Given that the case occurred in 1991 and YouTube was launched in 2005, the number of views demonstrates the prolonged importance of this case in social history. Moreover, the video has generated over 5,000 user comments, validating its importance in the era of social media and as a precursor for the analysis of documented cases involving police violence.

The introductory chapter is followed by a theoretical presentation of symbolic interaction and its utility to this study. In the third chapter, the methodological framework that is informed by the research problem is presented. Here, Qualitative Media Analysis (QMA) (Altheide and Schneider, 2013) will be presented according to its 12-step conceptualization of document analysis. While there exists a great deal of literature on the subjects of social media, news media, and police violence, there is an absence of research examining the interplay between these phenomena.

Chapters four and five examine the Robert Dziekanski and Buddy Tavares cases. First, the news media documents are presented followed by the identification of emergent patterns and themes, which focus on the reproduction of the policing institution's claims. Secondly, I present the UGC data made in response to the specific videos regarding each case on YouTube, and the comments posted on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) website.

The discussion of the social media documents mirrors that of the news media documents in order to facilitate a similar presentation of the themes and patterns that emerged during the analysis. In both instances, Schneider and Trottier's (2012) notion of crowd-sourced policing emerged as a prominent theme for consideration. Crowd-sourced policing involves peer-to-peer demonization and surveillance, which occurs through social media platforms (Schneider and Trottier, 2012). This theme, utilized from their research (see also Schneider and Trottier, 2013) emerged as a result of user posts invoking criminal justice discourse (i.e., terms such as murder, assault, criminals) as well as the reproduction of specific claims made by the RCMP in each case. The data suggests that crowd-sourced policing contributes to the users' understanding of police violence. This is evidenced in both the use of criminal justice discourse and the reproduction of claims, by which users attempt to "police the police," a theme that emerged during the data analysis stages.

With respect to both cases, across both datasets – news media and social media documents – one dominant frame emerged. This frame involves the RCMP’s ability to structure the discussion surrounding each of the selected case studies, including what can and cannot be said. As previously mentioned, this frame was also noted during the emergence of themes in UGC, which negated the RCMP’s framing of both cases. Though there is hesitation to use the word “failure”, this theme represents a significant aspect of this research project, as it demonstrates an instance where users felt that the RCMP were unsuccessful in the way that they framed the two cases.

The project concludes with a summary of the patterns and themes which emerged as a part of the dominant frame during the data analysis stages. They will be compared and contrasted across both case studies, and presented within the following directives: 1) the RCMP’s ability to frame police violence in each case, 2) crowd-sourced policing’s ability to encourage social accountability, 3) national identity in the case of Robert Dziekanski and 4) future directions of research in the field of police violence.

2. Theoretical Orientation

The purpose of this chapter is to present symbolic interactionism (SI) as a theoretical lens for exploring the process of framing in both case studies. SI is useful for studying this process, as this theory views social interaction as a basis for the understanding of social knowledge or society. It is this process of “meaning” or “understanding” our social lives which is changing as a result of social media, producing new ways of understanding and interaction. How police violence is framed is a symbolic process, resulting from interpretation and a constant renegotiation of meaning surrounding its existence. Of particular concern to this connection between symbolic interaction and police violence is the definition of the situation (Thomas and Thomas, 1970). This process, whereby individuals, through interaction, arrive at a common understanding or definition of the situation surrounding social phenomena, will be outlined in accordance within the theoretical implications of symbolic interaction, and the subsequent understanding of police violence. In addition, this process will illustrate how victims of police violence are defined in opposition to the policing institution, consequently framing them as “the other.”

It must be stated, at the outset, that the selection of theoretical literature in this project is limited to authors exploring symbolic interactionism in a manner that was deemed relevant to this research project. For this reason, the approach is concise and limited to the selected ideas explored by specific researchers, and does not represent the totality of symbolic interactionism.

2.1 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interaction holds that individuals create meaning when interacting with others. Interaction is understood as a central tenet of group life. In order to communicate with one

another, individuals must understand each other's actions. According to Blumer (1969), "...symbolic interactionism sees meanings as social products, as creations that are formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact" (pp. 5). The understanding of police violence, therefore, is a social product. How this term is conceptualized is a symbolically loaded process, as the terms "police" and "violence" are innately symbolic, and taken together produce various other meanings. This project uses the tenets of SI to explore how police violence is framed within documents, resulting in the identification of potential social understandings, which emerge during the research process.

2.2 Three Premises of Symbolic Interaction

According to Blumer (1969), symbolic interaction is comprised of three premises. First, human beings act or interact with things based on the meaning they have for them. Things can take the form of objects and individuals, who are rendered meaningful through the process of interaction. Second, meaning is produced through social interaction. This premise is furthered when one considers the interaction between individuals and cultural documents (i.e., news media documents), as a method of interpreting or drawing meaning from the reporting of social events. Third, meaning is constantly changing as new forms of social interaction emerge.

The third premise illustrates the changing processes concerning the acquisition of meaning. This is of particular concern to this research, in light of the changing nature of social interaction as a result of social media. This premise gives rise to the following research problem: How is police violence framed in emergent forms of documentation (i.e. social media documents) and has this process impacted in the understanding and communication surrounding these cases? Given that both types of documents (news media and social media) mediate social interaction, the meaning or understanding of police violence in the given cases can be traced to

the circulation of information. More specifically, meanings can be understood based on how they are framed across the documents. That being said, in order for an individual to acquire meaning during social interaction, there must first exist a form of self-interaction which occurs through the processing of external information through the self, the I and the me phases outlined below. This process, in turn, allows for the formation of action, based on the interpretation of social events as described by George Mead.

2.3 Symbolic Interaction and Mead

Social interaction produces meaningful understanding of language, culture, and symbols. Mead (1934) posits that there must first exist a form of self-interaction, which then allows for human interaction to follow suit. This process is divided into three constituent parts: the Self, the I, and the Me. The self involves an active creation of one's social world, through the objects or other individuals that populate that world. Mead (1934) views the self as reflexive. This is noted through the "I" and the "Me" phases of the Self.

The I is defined as "...the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others" while the Me "...is the organized set of attitudes of others which on himself assumes" (pp. 175). Thus, the "Me" is the aspect of the self which engages in self-interaction, or according to Mead (1934), self-organization. The self can be understood as the organizational aspect of the attitudes, norms, and values of others. This form of interpretation, then, allows the individual to process social interaction and formulate actions.

The tenets of interpretation and action, in the context of social interaction, are formulated against Mead's (1934) notion of the generalized other. Mead (1934) defines the "generalized other" as "the organized community or social group which gives rise to the individual, his unity of self" (pp. 154). The generalized other can be considered a symbolic entity of the social world,

created and sustained through the development of self. This notion can also be approached through the use of Lacan's (2001) 'nom-du-père' concept, whereby the term 'father' elicits three distinct symbolic meanings. The relevancy of this concept to this particular research project, involves Lacan's (2001) version of the symbolic father, whose associated ideals impose the law in a paternal nature, thus mandating social interaction in a much similar way to the notion of the state, government or generalized other.

Through group life and interaction, meaning emerges in accordance with a set of recognized symbols (i.e., language or culture). These symbols, then, produce gestures. Mead (1934) defines a gesture as "...that phase of the individual act to which adjustment takes place on the part of other individuals in the social process of behavior" (pp. 46). It is these gestures which outline or frame social interaction. Taken in the context of this research, gestures associated with the policing institution come to elicit certain responses within interaction. For example, the performance of being arrested by a police officer can be broken down into a series of gesture-based actions, which arise out of social interaction and learning. One does not simply know how to be arrested, this action must be learned socially and subsequently giving rise to further associated cultural symbols (i.e., the process of being labeled as a criminal). In this example, the police, as an institution controlled by the state, can be thought of as the "generalized other" or social institution whose gestures and symbolic actions produce meaning for an individual.

At the root of this interaction is the process of communication, which can exist in verbal or action based symbols that entice meaning between one, two or more individuals (Mead, 1934). Communication allows individuals to form and maintain social relationships, a core aspect of symbolic interaction theory and everyday group life. For example, hearing a police officer shout "Stop, you are under arrest", has the potential to elicit certain learned response (e.g.

stopping or fleeing the situation). According to Couch, Maines, and Chen (1996), communication is formulated around the ability to preserve and share information, a process that is constantly changing with the emergence of information technologies such as social media.

2.4 Information Technologies

Information technologies are used to describe the changing nature of social relationships, social interaction and, thus, meaning (Couch et al., 1996). Indeed, these emergent forms of communication structure the social aspects of group life in a way that allows individuals to share and preserve information. With respect to social media, this is accomplished through the use of the Internet, whereby users can access, store, and share information via specific platforms (i.e., YouTube and CBC). In light of these developments, a great deal of social interaction is now governed by information technologies such as news media and social media (Couch et al., 1996). These forms of information technologies have contributed to mediated or distanced forms of social interaction, which both impacts and captures the understanding of social phenomena.

Traditional forms of mass media, such as news media, are among the most influential institutions in the world (Ericson et al., 1989, pp. 397). Indeed, the mass media remains one of the few connections between individuals in the Western world (Altheide, 1976; Altheide and Snow, 1979). This influence is furthered through the examination of social media, which provides more fluid channels of communication and interaction, rendering various aspects of social life (i.e., face-to face interaction) more mediated. Individuals now engage in forms of online social interaction with the emergence of social media, whose reach has altered various social institutions, including the police. One alteration involves the ability of individuals to capture police-citizen interaction in real time through the use of video recording devices (i.e., cell phones and digital cameras). As a result, policing institutions utilize the mass media (both

social media and news media) in an effort to promote, restore or control their public image. This relationship, between police and mass media, or more specifically news media, can be examined using Altheide's (1995) research and the process of framing.

Altheide's (1995) approach to mass media is concerned with the relationship between information technologies, their resultant formats, and social control. Altheide (1995) defines formats as, "...the selection, organization, and presentation of experience and information" (pp. 11). Here, the relationship between formats and social control involves the definition of the situation. This notion, proposed by Thomas and Thomas (1928), postulates that when an individual defines the situation "...as real, they are real in their consequences" (pp. 572). Furthermore, those who are usually involved in the "situation" are typically not the ones defining it (Goffman, 1974). Thus, put simply, when one examines the emergence of various types of formats (i.e., newspapers) and their associated understandings of social events, social control can be thought of as a direct result of the presentation, understanding or framing of information.

As McLuhan (1964) notes, there are consequences for the development of any new medium, and these consequences are directly related to the inception, integration and remodeling of social interaction, cues, and understanding (Innis, 1951). For instance, when an individual reads a newspaper article, there are many factors that influence the interpretation of the information, such as: the newspaper (i.e. *The Globe and Mail* vs. *The National Enquirer*), the heading, the individuals cited in the article, and most importantly the framing of the article. Should the information in said article be defined as real, the process may result in real consequences, which then influence how and in what ways this social event can be further discussed.

With respect to police violence, the definition of the situation is directly related to the framing of each case. As previously mentioned, the ways in which social events are framed has a

large influence on how they are to be understood. One way to examine to how social events are framed is to first examine the specific format being used. A format can be thought of as a channel to direct social interaction. Take for instance news media, an information technology whose format yields a one-way source of information. Here, there are individuals constructing the presentation of information in news media documents, which are then delivered to an anticipated audience. When examining this relationship, Altheide (1995), notes that a form of social control has emerged as a direct result of the new forms of mediated interaction, which subsequently direct thought processes, behaviour, social activities, etc. For example, news media, a tool controlled by individuals, frames “news” in a certain way (Goffman, 1974). Stories covering topics such as murder or police brutality demonstrate this notion, through the production of certain claims from authorized individuals or claimsmakers (Best, 2008), which subsequently determines how these stories can and cannot be discussed or interpreted. Best (2008) defines claimsmakers as individuals who identify certain social problems and suggest methods to ameliorate, alter or correct them. For this project, it is relevant to look at how police violence is framed and, more importantly, how it is possible to discuss police violence as a result of this process.

News media documents are one way of analyzing how police violence is framed. This approach has been utilized in previous studies (see Lawrence, 2000) however, this research seeks to combine news media with social media documents in order to ascertain how the police frame police violence. This is done with respect to the overall research problem: how is police violence framed in emergent forms of documentation (i.e. social media platforms) and has the process altered the understanding and communication surrounding cases of police violence?

2.5 Social Media

Altheide and Schneider (2013) define social media as “a hybrid of media and social interaction” (pp. 5). Social media is a recent cultural development which allows individuals or users the ability to preserve and share information through online channels. The actual process of communication is termed as social networking, whereby users engage with functional aspects of social media platforms to produce text, audio, or visual-based (i.e., pictures and video) “posts.” Social media platforms such as YouTube – the world’s largest video hosting website – have changed the ways we share information, interact and communicate with one another (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 4).

According to Altheide and Schneider (2013), the proliferation of social media represents the most contemporary evolution in media trends (year 2000 to present). This observation is evidenced through the increase in mobile communication devices (i.e., smartphones), and the influence of social media (i.e., YouTube, Twitter, Facebook) in our everyday lives. The reliance on mediation in social life represents an ongoing relation to Altheide and Snow’s (1979) notion of media logic. Media logic informs social interaction and communication, including how things are being said, what is being said, and what is not being said within these communicative formats. Indeed, with the advancements to mobile communication technology (e.g., cell phones), these forms of communication devices have greatly altered social interaction, personal relationships and communication formats. This shift in mass media was adopted by major news websites such as the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation), which now contain social media capabilities (i.e., user-generated content responding to news media articles).

Put simply, Altheide and Snow’s (1979) notion of media logic explains the relationship between information technology, communication formats, and the presentation of information according to mass media principles, including the recent emergence of social media. What is

crucial to this research is the notion of format, which shapes the presentation or delivery and subsequent understanding of social phenomena. In addition, media logic shapes social interaction and works its way into the other non-media institutional structures. For instance, the policing institution has adopted several of the communicative formats and features of social media. Presently, the RCMP has several Facebook pages, multiple Twitter accounts, and a specific YouTube channel dedicated to posting videos of their training and institutional messages. Furthermore, the RCMP uses social media (e.g., Twitter) as a means of disseminating information – albeit selected information – regarding criminal investigations (i.e., Crime Stoppers) and public initiatives.

These changes have, consequently, influenced the interpretation, interaction and meaning associated with the institution of policing (Schneider, 2014). As a result of this more direct line of communication between policing institutions and the public, people currently have increased access to information. Whether this information is accurate or truthful can be contested, yet the access to or general availability of police-related information has necessarily increased as a result of social media. By comparison, news media can be considered one of the primary channels of information exchange prior to the emergence of social media.

The analysis of UGC allows for the examination of how police violence is framed in the cases of Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski. Trosow (2010) defines UGC as “content that is voluntarily developed by an individual or consortium and distributed through an online platform” (pp.2). For this particular project, UGC appears as “posts” on social media platforms, and serves as a site for the analysis of users’ “points of view” (Altheide and Schneider, 2013), the reproduction of claims made in news media articles, and the interpretation of social phenomena over a specified period of time. For these reasons, the analysis of the UGC

surrounding police violence, as it pertains to the two cases in question, is relevant and directly correlated to the ongoing evolution of this thesis.

In light of the increased prevalence of social media, and the associated principles of media logic, the interpretation of social events is changing. For these reasons, the analysis of social media is well suited within the symbolic interaction perspective, as it identifies a contemporary examination of social interaction and, thus, the production of meaning. Moreover, the utility of social media and the user posts responding to police violence in the cases of Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski, illustrate the processes by which each case is framed.

2.6 Literature Review

Presently, research exploring police violence focuses primarily on the policing institution's ability to influence the representation of events, victims, and incidents in news media documents (see Lawrence, 2000; Doyle, 2003; Hirschfield and Simon, 2010). This project recognizes the merit of this approach, and builds upon it through the inclusion of UGC. UGC was identified through the analysis of social media platforms. The inclusion of these documents addresses the contemporary shift in mass media culture, as outlined by Altheide and Schneider (2013). Currently, there exists no research examining both online news media documents and UGC surrounding documented instances of police violence. This project seeks to examine the impact of social media on the understanding of police violence. At this point, however, it is important to consider how police violence is conceptualized.

2.7 Theoretical Examination of Police Violence

Violence is a fundamental aspect of police work (Bitnner 1975; 1990; Manning, 1980; Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993; Chevigny, 1995; Lawrence, 2000; Williams, 2007). Indeed, the policing institution employs both physical and mental coercion, we are told, in order to ensure

that the safety, social order and well being of both the officers and the community at large are maintained. Of particular concern to this project is the use of violence associated with police work. Manning's (1980) article, *Violence and the Police Role*, expands on the interconnectedness between police practice, social control and violence through an explanation of the police mandate. Accordingly, Manning (1980) describes the police mandate as the ability:

...to control social order at whatever cost, to define the limits and conditions of that threat, to organizationally sanction, produce, and rationalize the reasons for that control, and to provide for other authorities the basis on which such claims are made (pp. 136).

Police maintain social order through the use of violence. The term "order," however, can be perceived differently across various contexts (Manning, 1980). In some circumstances, individual officers may be tasked with dispersing a crowd through the use of non-violent practices. At other times, a peaceful demonstration may turn violent, thus prompting the police to escalate the level of force used to restore order and maintain peace within the particular situation. The mandate, then, does not provide a clear connection between police and the use of violence, primarily as a result of the degree of discretion that is employed by individual officers in a wide array of situations. While there are limits to this (i.e., the introduction of the army to deal with increased violence), the police remain the first responders for maintaining peace and order within Western society.

As opposed to questioning the use of violence by the policing institution, Manning (1980) suggests an alternative view, where "...the question is to whom, when, and to what degree, they should be violent" (pp. 137). This approach identifies violence as discretionary, whereby police officers are expected to use violence in situations in which it is deemed necessary, avoiding its use in all other situations. Indeed, police violence, at its core, is subjective. The decision to use violence stems from an individual officer's interpretation or

definition of the situation, which is then questioned or encouraged depending on the interpretation of meanings (Thomas and Thomas, 1928).

Further complicating the conceptualization of police violence is the notion of compliance, whereby the general population of civilians does not challenge the policing institution's definition of the situation. This compliance is achieved through the management of symbolic action or, as Manning (1977) describes, the dramaturgical nature of the policing institution. Dramaturgy, a key sociological sub-theory of the symbolic interaction perspective, holds that social interaction is a performance whereby actors assume roles in the presence of an audience through the use of symbolic action (Brissett and Edgley, 1990). According to Burke (1989), symbolic action involves choice, conflict, purpose, and reflection. As police officers are engaged in daily or routine social interaction, their existence and subsequent actions are necessarily symbolic because they involve the performance of a role (i.e., police officer), an audience (i.e., civilian), and some form of communication (i.e., verbal, physical, mental, etc.).

Of particular concern to this project is the way(s) in which statements, accounts, and justifications are framed in both news media and social media documents. It is this process, whereby meanings emerge, that contributes to an understanding of police violence more generally. Indeed, the framing and subsequent understanding of police violence is necessarily symbolic. These actions must be understood in a manner that is consistent with previous examples of police violence or warrant claims from authorized or individuals known as claimsmakers (Best, 2008). These individuals report the existence of police violence, subsequently framing the parameters of discussion. For this reason, the symbolic process surrounding the framing of police violence is best understood from the symbolic interaction perspective.

2.8 Symbolic Interaction, Police Violence, and News Media

Using symbolic interaction's conceptualization of meaning, violence can be considered a symbolic aspect of police work. Since SI holds that the interpretation of gestures produces meaning, police violence must come to exist in a manner that distinguishes itself from and invites the symbolic association with illegal, unsanctioned or brutal gestures. This assumption is contrasted, again, by the consideration of violence as a basic aspect of police work. Thus, there must exist certain gestures, events or outcomes which elicit the term "police violence" as distinguished from "police work." One can approach this through the use of the term frame. For instance, if police officers were involved in a violent take down of an individual, how the event itself is framed, could potentially determine how it is understood. If the individual in this example was involved in illegal activity, described using various terms associated with criminality (i.e., violent, erratic, under the influence, etc.), the officer's may be framed in a manner that promotes their position as keepers of the peace. On the other hand, if this individual was framed in a manner that promoted co-operation and innocence, this event may promote labels of police violence, excessive use-of-force, etc. Police violence can be analyzed through frames, which can be identified in cultural documents arising from news and social media.

It must be understood, then, that this study is not focused on the differentiation between police work and police violence, but instead how police violence is framed given the existence of video recording devices and social media. Indeed, the proliferation of mobile communication devices, tied to the emergence of social media platforms, now allows for instantaneous and seamless sharing and responding to these recordings. In certain instances, these videos precede news media coverage, and subsequently become central to the development and production of news media documents reporting on the videos (Schneider, 2014). Still, the meanings of police

violence remain controversial. As a result, a great deal of clarification is required as to what signifies “police violence.”

One way to examine police violence is by analyzing news media documents reporting its existence (see Lawrence, 2000). This approach focuses on claims produced by members of policing institutions. These individuals are given precedence over others, and these individuals are considered the “primary definers” or “authorized knowers” (Lawrence, 2000; Doyle, 2003; Schneider, 2014). The police can be considered “primary definers” with respect to crime matters in news media (Ericson, 1982). One of the foundations to this relationship, between the police and the news media, has been the police’s ability to frame the discussion surrounding police violence, which then influences how it is to be understood by the public. This project examines this process, and asks how specific cases are framed in social media and news media.

2.9 Research Formulation

In light of the aforementioned ambiguity surrounding police violence, the research question remains: How is police violence framed in emergent forms of social documentation (i.e., news media and social media documents) and has this process altered the understanding and communication surrounding specific cases? Indeed, news media documents that use terms such as “excessive force” and “brutality” are among the few sources available for analyzing this social phenomenon. For this reason, it makes sense to start here. This approach is furthered through the consideration that crime news, as it pertains to police violence, relies heavily on the police as news sources (Chibnall, 1977; Hall et al., 1978; Fishman, 1980; Chermak, 1995; Lawrence, 2000; Doyle, 2003). As a result of this research, it appears as though news reports involving police violence typically require the release of statements or claims from policing members, often senior-policing members, in order to clarify what took place during an

altercation. As a result of this relationship, police are able to maintain control over how the public perceives them – in short, over their public perception (Ericson et al., 1991); which includes their public image (Manning, 1977; Schneider, 2014).

This consideration can be connected to Altheide and Snow's (1979) description of communication formats, which emphasizes the policing institution's ability to organize and present information according to certain media logics. With respect to both case studies, the data suggest that the police – through media channels (i.e., news) – provide the initial frame of police violence. The frame is then strengthened or, in certain cases weakened, through the continued publication of certain claims or statements made by police officers in news media documents. This process, however, has been altered by the existence of social media and, more specifically, videos documenting police violence.

One can analyze how police violence is framed in social media documents, and the changing nature of its understanding, through the identification of user-generated content (UGC), a characteristic of social media (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). These documents (UGC) can then be analyzed to decipher potential understandings of police violence by analyzing user responses to videos (should they exist), images, and news media documents. This study, then, seeks to analyze how two selected cases – Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski - of police violence are framed in news media documents as well as social media documents, and the social implications of the process on the understanding and communication of each case. The research question, therefore, helps to inform the selection of a methodological approach which focuses on the analysis of documents and social interaction. For these reasons Qualitative Media Analysis (QMA), is the appropriate methodology.

3. Methodology

3.1 Qualitative Media Analysis

QMA is a widely recognized and established methodology across the social sciences (see Appendix, Altheide and Schneider, 2013). QMA allows researchers to locate and retrieve documents in order to track words, themes and frames. This methodology encourages researcher involvement and a high degree of reflexivity when formulating research problems (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). With respect to the overall research problem – how is police violence framed in emergent forms of documentation (i.e. social media platforms) and has the process altered the understanding and communication surrounding cases of police violence? - QMA is a suitable methodology, because it allows the researcher to identify emergent frames and themes across news media and social media documents.

As a methodological tool, QMA is comprised of twelve steps, designed to serve as a field guide for researchers (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). Step 1 encourages the researcher to identify a research problem.

3.2 Document Analysis

Studying documents is crucial for understanding culture (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). According to Altheide and Schneider (2013), a document can be defined “...as any symbolic representation that can be recorded or retrieved for analysis” (pp. 5). Examples include news media documents and social media documents which are produced through the identification of UGC. For the purpose of this project, both news media documents and UGC were included as a result of a progression between them, which emerged during the research process. Given the changing nature of social communication methods, specifically the proliferation of social media

platforms and handheld electronic recording devices (i.e., smartphones and cameras), QMA acts as a contemporary field guide for researchers seeking to explore multiple forms of documents, how they can be interpreted and their potential implications on everyday existence.

Documents capture and present meanings, and it is this process that QMA allows the researcher to explore. When examining documents, however, researchers must consider three tenets: context, process and emergence. These tenets allow the researcher to understand the contingencies behind the construction and possible interpretations surrounding the document.

Context refers to “...the social situations surrounding the document in question” (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 14). Context allows the researcher to understand social factors which may have impacted or been impacted by the document. For instance, recent advances in mobile communication devices have allowed people to record instances of police violence and share them using social media. The inception, broadcast, and response to the videos represent emergent communicative formats, and social situations (i.e., UGC).

Next is the notion of process, which refers to the method of conception or the actual steps taken to produce the document (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 14). The processes associated with the construction of these documents (i.e., how they are framed), provides insight into their possible interpretations. For example, news media documents are created according to principles surrounding readership and audience demand (Gans, 1979; Fishman, 1981). Put simply, the stories featured in these reports are those that will garner the most ratings or interest (Gans, 1979). Furthermore, the changing nature of news coverage and production (i.e., the incorporation

of videos posted on YouTube⁶) illustrates the need to consider how social media contributes to the framing of news and news documents.

The process by which UGC is presented is also pertinent to this research. Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube allow users to share, comment and store information surrounding social phenomena. This includes information (e.g., video recordings, witness testimony from courtroom proceedings, and direct accounts of individual experience) that is identified by news media. In the two cases examined, claims made within news media documents are reproduced within social media documents or UGC, thus demonstrating the influence or authority of certain claimsmakers in connection with various social phenomena. Police officers provide a great deal of claims, which subsequently frame how police violence is discussed and potentially interpreted. This process can be analyzed by applying QMA to both news media and social media documents, thus providing further rationale for the selecting this methodological tool.

The final tenet, emergence, refers to “...the gradual shaping of meaning through understanding and interpretation” (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 16). Emergence, then, is influenced by the framing of social phenomena within news media and social media documents, which in turn, provides the parameters for discussion and interpretation (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). How specific documents are interpreted is a direct result of the emergent frames which subsequently limit what can and cannot be said in relation to the event covered in the document(s). This process is crucial for developing cases reporting police violence, as the specific claims made by police officers frame how the event is and is not discussed in both the news media and social media documents.

⁶ YouTube, at the time of this project, is the most popular public video hosting site. It is estimated that the site itself draws over 10 million views per day (see Hilderbrand, 2007; Kim, 2012).

3.3 Research Formulation – Violence as “Excessive Force”

From a review of the literature on policing, the following terms emerged surrounding police violence: “excessive use-of-force,” “unnecessary use-of-force,” “justifiable use-of-force,” and “brutality.” In addition, the BC Police Act Part II Division 2 77(3) (a) (ii) (A)⁷ describes the use of “unnecessary force” as a breach of public trust, resulting in disciplinary measures against a police officer. The terms “force” and “violence” are most relevant to this research project, as their use appears in both sets of documents, and these terms are used interchangeably by Fyfe (1981), who suggests:

police supervisors and field commanders should be held accountable for monitoring and acting on the unjustifiable use of force or violence by personnel reporting to them (pp. 388).

This explanation identifies “force” and “violence” as transposable, an action that is echoed in further literature discussing both of these tenets as necessary and fundamental characteristics of police work (Bittner, 1975; 1990; Manning, 1980; Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993; Chevigny, 1995; Lawrence, 2000; Williams, 2007). For these reasons, this study will consider the terms “force” and “violence” interchangeably.

Next, there must be a consideration as to whether or not force or violence is deemed excessive and/or justifiable. The former consideration is associated with police violence, while the latter implies that the actions were acceptable. Chevigny (1995) states, “...the power to use force is a defining characteristic of [police work]...the line between excessive and justifiable force is difficult to draw” (pp. 139). This is true when one considers the use of violence or force as basic aspects of police work, which complicates the ability to define police violence.

⁷ Available at http://www.leg.bc.ca/39th1st/1st_read/gov07-1.htm

Skolnick and Fyfe (1993), however, spotlight the existence of a recording as an important aspect of police violence. Here, the authors distinguish between two terms they refer to as unnecessary force and brutality. The latter term is synonymous with ongoing consideration of police violence and is defined as, "...a conscious and venal act committed by officers who usually take great pains to conceal their misconduct [and] in the absence of videotapes...is extremely difficult to prove" (pp. 19).

The definition of "brutality," offered by Skolnick and Fyfe (1993), provides a unique dimension for the development of police violence; the existence of videotapes. This consideration is furthered through the use of the term "prove," emphasizing the ambiguous and highly contextual aspects surrounding the existence of police violence. Though the term "brutality" differs from police violence, its use and association with the term "misconduct" implies the existence of violence or force that has been used in a manner inconsistent with the definitions of justifiable or acceptable force. In addition, the association between "brutality" and "videotapes," as presented by Skolnick and Fyfe (1993), represents a connection between new forms of social media and the prevalence of recorded police violence. For this reason, Skolnick and Fyfe's (1993) definition of "brutality" will be considered within the scope of police violence.

Still, the term "police violence" is often not invoked in the news media documents identified during this research process. Instead, the term "force" will be treated as synonymous with "violence" in accordance to Fyfe's (1981) conceptualization and use of the two terms. "Force" is used in the following contexts: "use of excessive force", or "excessive use of force." Williams (2007) distinguishes between the two terms, defining "use of excessive force" as a situation in which an officer used force that was determined to be too much for the contextual factors. "Excessive use of force" is defined as a situation in which an officer employed an

acceptable or justifiable amount of force too many times (Williams, 2007). This project identifies “excessive force” as the key term for identifying recorded cases of police violence or brutality in news media documents and social media documents.

3.4 Pilot Project

The preliminary investigation identified Canadian cases involving the police (i.e., RCMP) and “excessive force.” This search was conducted using the Lexis/Nexis⁸ search database. The functionality of this database makes it possible to zero in on specific search parameters (i.e., country, date, and newspaper). The following parameters were applied to the initial search: geographic location (e.g., Canada); articles limited to *The Globe and Mail*, which is considered to be Canada’s paper of record (Altheide and Schneider, 2013); and only those appearing after January 1, 2000, to incorporate Schneider and Altheide’s (2013) fifth phase of mass media development (i.e., rise in social media).

Though *The Globe and Mail* includes stories from the United States, articles were identified and sorted through in order to identify specific cases that had occurred in Canada. These cases were then cross-referenced in the database to identify information that confirmed their location (i.e., Canada). This search produced a total of 121 news media documents. These documents were then downloaded and stored in a single document that totaled 295 pages. Each online news article was treated as an individual document of analysis, and reviewed to identify emergent themes and patterns.

One particular point of emergence surrounding the term “excessive force” was the incorporation of the term “video” in the news documents. Indeed, of the articles – all appearing

⁸ Lexis/Nexis is an academic search database which allows researchers to locate news media articles published in international newspapers. Using specified search parameters, the researcher is able to retrieve documents of interest, refine the results using keywords and download the content in text based files.

in *The Globe and Mail* - appearing after January 1, 2007 (57 articles), 38% (22 articles) contained the term “video.” This is in contrast to the earlier online news articles (64 articles), which did not contain the term. The increasing usage of the word “video” in the associated news articles reporting the existence of “excessive force” is an important indicator that a new search was necessary, one identifying select cases containing both “excessive force” and “video.”

This search identifying both “excessive force” and “video” produced a total of 24 news media documents. Each individual article was analyzed, producing the following themes and patterns. First, each individual case – four in total across the 24 retrieved documents, distinguished by the civilian involved in the altercation — mentioned the existence of “excessive force” perpetrated by an officer or officers of a Canadian policing institution (e.g., the RCMP). Second, the first news documents covering their respective case mentioned the term “video.” Here, the term “video” was employed in connection to the use of “excessive force”; this was demonstrated through the use of the term “video” and “excessive force” in the same sentence in each of the four identified cases. Finally, with respect to each of the emergent cases, the videos were uploaded to YouTube – a social media platform – leading to the subsequent identification of UGC. The following names emerged according to the specified search parameters:

- 1) Robert Dziekanski (2007) – 3 articles
- 2) Buddy Tavares (2011) – 1 article

3.5 Identification of Case Studies

Each of the aforementioned names appears in Canadian news media, in conjunction with the themes outlined above. In addition, each of the two cases involves the existence of a video that was captured by a handheld device (e.g., iPhone, “smartphone,” or camera) and uploaded to YouTube. This tenet is important because the existence of the amateur-captured recordings,

which are then uploaded to a social media platform, produces UGC necessary for analysis. Without this characteristic (i.e., mass media captured, edited and reported), the resultant UGC may not have covered dominant frames (i.e., police claims) in the same way. The videos of the Dziekanski and Tavares cases each have 145,880 and 71,243 views - at the time of this writing - respectively. In addition, the Dziekanski and Tavares videos contain over 1,000 user comments in response to each video.

Due to the identifiable characteristics – i.e., the use of the term “excessive force,” the existence of a video, and the incorporation of social media platforms - the cases of Robert Dziekanski (2007) and Buddy Tavares (2011) were selected as case studies for this research project. These specifications (i.e., inclusion of social media platforms and UGC) satisfy the overall research problem – how is police violence framed in emergent forms of documentation and has this process impacted the understanding and communication surrounding specific cases. Each individual case occurred in BC, Canada, within a span of four years, receiving both local and national news attention. This is significant as both cases represent instances of police violence committed by the same policing institution and both were recorded, allowing for a comparison to emerge during the data analysis stages. Furthermore, these case studies make it possible to analyze the framing of each case across both news media and social media documents.

3.6 Selected Social Media Platforms

The first social media platform chosen for this research project was YouTube⁹. YouTube is a video-sharing site that was made public on December 15, 2005 (Ratliff, 2006). The website remains one of the most popular online destinations for users, acknowledged by Kim (2012) as a

⁹ www.youtube.com

revolutionary medium due to its blend of “...traditional agents (i.e., network broadcasters and TV audiences), content (i.e., program genre and style) and institutions (i.e., copyright and advertisements)” (pp. 53). Each day, billions of videos are streamed, with a large percentage uploaded by amateur videographers. YouTube, as a social media platform, was referenced in the news media documents covering both the Tavares and Dziekanski cases, thus prompting the progression from news media documents to the respective web pages hosting the videos.

The resultant UGC, which was downloaded and analyzed, contains user posts regarding the sequence of events displayed in each video, progression of the investigations more generally, and the users’ personal opinions of the police involvement. Indeed, it is this latter characteristic of users referencing claims made by the RCMP officers in news media documents that illustrates the policing institutions’ ability to frame the ongoing discussion in each of the case studies. In certain instances, users posted direct quotations from news media documents published on CBC, contributing to the emergence of new research paths. These particular posts were noted and identified in online news media documents published on the CBC website. During the progression from YouTube to CBC, it was also noted that the CBC website contains social media characteristics (i.e., UGC), thus prompting its selection as the second social media platform of analysis.

The CBC website satisfies Altheide and Schneider’s (2013) definition of social media, as it publishes online news media documents (e.g., news reports), which are received by an online audience (e.g., users), and subsequently responded to (e.g., communication and interaction). CBC can be said to exist as a “...hybrid of media and interaction” (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 5). This particular social media platform represents a unique blend of social media, as it embeds links to relevant videos hosted on other social media platforms (i.e., YouTube) directly within its published content, e.g., the Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski videos hosted by

YouTube. While this capability is mirrored by other online news agencies, such as *The Globe and Mail*'s website, CBC represents one of the most highly accessed Canadian news websites. According to Alexa¹⁰, cbc.ca/news is the top Canadian published online news website and is currently ranked 33rd overall in the most widely accessed websites in Canada (Alexa, 2013). *The Globe and Mail* ranks 59th. Thus, in an effort to incorporate the most widely accessed online Canadian news content, CBC was selected as the second and final social media platform for analysis.

Using both YouTube and CBC news as social media platforms makes it possible to collect UGC directly responding to and reproducing claims made by the RCMP officers in the news media documents framing the discussion. According to Altheide and Schneider (2013), "User-generated content is a basic characteristic of social media; this can include user-created and shared (published) texts, audio, image, and video content – *all documents retrievable for analysis*" (emphasis original, pp. 103). The inclusion of this UGC, when combined with the step-by-step analysis associated with QMA, makes it possible to identify themes and frames emerging across the development of both case studies, addressing the overall research question.

3.7 Qualitative Media Analysis – Step by Step

Step 1 (pp.39) involves the identification of a research problem. This allows the researcher to determine the unit of analysis (i.e., news documents, newscast, television portrayal, narratives, etc.), as well as the characteristics and specifications unique to the research project. The research problem is as follows: how is police violence framed in emergent forms of documentation (i.e. social media platforms) and has the process altered the understanding and communication surrounding specific cases?

¹⁰ www.alexa.com/siteinfo/cbc.ca# (Monday, January 21, 2013.)

Steps 2 and 3 (pp. 39) are designed to become familiar with the context of the information source in which the research topic is discussed. Typically, these steps involve identifying a unit of analysis that will become the primary focus of the research process. This project, however, incorporates two forms of documents as the primary units of analysis. First, news media documents involving the cases of Robert Dziekanski and Buddy Tavares were identified during a preliminary investigation, downloaded and stored as single documents. These news media documents were gathered using the Lexis/Nexis academic search database. This comprehensive database allows researchers to identify news media documents that appear in major or national (i.e., *The Globe and Mail*) and local (i.e., *The Province*) media outlets around the world, dating back to the 1980s. Through the use of specialized search engines, Lexis/Nexis generates documents of interest in accordance with researcher specifications. For example, the term “Buddy Tavares” produces thousands of “hits.” By entering search terms such as “Buddy Tavares” and “Police” and “excessive use-of-force,” however, documents relating specifically to the case of interest are produced, lowering the overall number to 22. In addition, one can specify geographic areas (i.e., North America or Canada), segments (i.e., headlines or front page), and date parameters, etc. Thus, the individual cases (their representation in the form of news documents), serve as one of the units of analysis.

Articles selected for further analysis appeared in both print and online form in *The Globe and Mail*, *The National Post* and *The Province*. Both *The Globe and Mail* and *The National Post* serve as the national papers of record, while *The Province* was chosen due its geographical proximity to the cases selected for analysis. It was important to include these three newspapers as it maximized the amount of articles selected for analysis. Because this research project focuses on specific case studies, time periods were isolated from the inception of each case and onward.

3.7.1 News Media Documents

The news media documents corresponding to the Buddy Tavares case were identified using the Lexis/Nexis search engine. In total, 14 articles from *The Globe and Mail*, 35 articles from *The Province*, and four articles from *The National Post* were located and retrieved. The publication dates range from January 9, 2011 to September 13, 2011. These articles were then stored as a 61-page PDF document. After an initial review of the data, various search terms were entered into advanced search box of Adobe Acrobat Pro. The first search, “RCMP,” produced 200 occurrences across the 61 pages for a total of 11 pages of aggregated data. From there, further search terms emerged and were employed to search the data. These terms include “video,” “suspension,” “domestic violence situation,” “excessive use-of-force,” “official,” and “Superintendent (Supt.) Bill McKinnon.” These terms were subsequently searched for in the 61-page PDF document, until the point of saturation was reached, meaning that no new documents were produced (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

News media documents corresponding to the case of Robert Dziekanski were also identified using the Lexis/Nexis search database. In total, 270 articles from *The Globe and Mail*, 99 articles from *The Province* and 49 articles from *The National Post* were downloaded. The publication dates for these news articles ranged from October 25, 2007 (the first published account in *The Province*) to July 21, 2012 (*The Globe and Mail*). These articles were then saved to a single PDF document totaling 720 pages. After the data was initially reviewed, search terms were entered into the advanced search feature of Adobe Acrobat Pro. The first search term, “RCMP,” produced 1625 occurrences across the 720 pages, resulting in 85 pages of aggregated data. After having reviewed the aggregated data, the following search terms emerged: “video”; excited delirium”; “death”; “victim”; “immigrant”; “Polish” and derivations of “Poland”; “heritage”; “descent”; “official”; “lied” and derivations including “liar(s),” “lying,” “false,” and

“fabrication”, “excessive force”; and “taser.” These search terms were then reentered into the 720-page document until the point of saturation (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) was reached, producing no new documents for consideration.

3.7.2 Social Media Documents

The second type of document used in this research project stems from UGC on two social media platforms: YouTube and CBC news. These social media platforms were identified in a two-stage progression. First, the YouTube videos were located after the news media documents referenced the term “YouTube.” Both cases involved amateur videos that were captured using mobile communication devices (i.e., iPhone and camera), and subsequently uploaded to YouTube. The videos were both referenced in the first news media documents of their respective cases, likely drawing increased attention to the respective YouTube pages. Second, user posts containing direct references to and quotations from CBC online news media articles were identified in the YouTube UGC. This led to the progression from YouTube to the CBC website, which allows users to respond to the online news media articles. This UGC was subsequently included as yet another platform to explore the framing of both cases.

Because both videos were uploaded to YouTube, and it was the first emergent social media platform, it made sense to start here. These data appear as posts on YouTube and are used to explore potential interpretations, responses or comments surrounding the video: 1) the online perception(s) of the incident(s), 2) whether or not this perception changed over time, and 3) how the discussion was framed.

3.7.3 Buddy Tavares – YouTube and CBC

One of the original Buddy Tavares videos¹¹ was posted to YouTube on January 8, 2011, receiving 601 comments over a span of two years and 13 days.¹² Throughout this time, the video received 52,150 views. The video received 48 “thumbs up,” which are considered as online endorsements or “likes;” and 13 “thumbs down,” which are considered “dislikes.” All of the 601 user generated comments were accessed using YouTube’s “show all comments” function. This allows users to generate a subsequent webpage that allows all comments to be accessed. Using the screenshot function, each page of comments was recorded and stored.

After having collected the UGC from YouTube, references to CBC’s online news media articles covering each specific case were noted and identified in the original articles. For instance, one YouTube user states:

The BC Civil Liberties Association are pursuing a lawsuit against the RCMP not only for the assault but for their smear campaign against the victim (YouTube, 1 year ago).

This information was duly noted in the CBC online news media document entitled “RCMP tried to ‘smear’ kicked man: advocate” (CBC news, 2011). Aspects of the aforementioned user post – “smear” campaign and Buddy Tavares – were then entered into a Google search, producing the relevant CBC document as the first returned result. From there, all other CBC online news media documents covering the Buddy Tavares case were analyzed, along with the respective UGC.

In order to identify all of the articles published in this particular case, “Buddy Tavares” was employed as a search term and entered directly into the CBC website search bar. In total, seven articles were identified covering Buddy Tavares’ case. Each article contained comment

¹¹ Here is the active link for this video http://www.youtube.com/all_comments?v=jLo18EcZxsY

¹² Comments were collected from the day of upload until January 21, 2013.

sections for online users, as well as direct embedded copies of and links to the YouTube video. The user comments are listed at the bottom of each individual webpage (i.e., news media document), and can be downloaded in a similar manner to the YouTube comments. Using the screenshot method, each page of comments was downloaded and stored in a single document. Both the YouTube and CBC user comments were then transferred into a single PDF document totaling 698 pages, allowing for the combination of UGC and the emergence of themes and patterns in accordance with the emergence of meaning in this particular case.

An initial review of the UGC data was conducted using the advanced search feature of Adobe Acrobat Pro. The first term, “RCMP” produced 1807 occurrences across the 698 pages, resulting in 83 pages of aggregated data. After having reviewed the returned results, the following search terms emerged: “kick”; “domestic violence situation”; “liar” – and derivations including “lying”, “lie”, “liars” and “false” and “fabrication”; “control”; “Robert Dziekanski” and various misspellings of his name; and “corrupt.” These terms were then reentered into the original 698-page document until the point of saturation was reached, and no new documents were produced during the searches (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

3.7.4 Robert Dziekanski – YouTube and CBC

The first posted videos¹³ depicting Robert Dziekanski’s interaction with the RCMP-Vancouver detachment was uploaded November 14, 2007. Each video contained the same portrayal of the interaction between Robert Dziekanski and the RCMP officers. Currently, there are five accessible copies of the video on YouTube, with a combined 502,634 views. All five videos were uploaded over a period of two days- November 14 or 15, 2007- and have generated

¹³ Here are the active links to these videos - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JeViFiODSYo> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPCgwCS3viQ> – These refer to the originals taken by Paul Pritchard.

6723 user comments in five years, two months, and two days respectively.¹⁴ In order to ascertain the greatest degree of UGC, all of the user comments from each of the five videos¹⁵ were collected and downloaded using the aforementioned screenshot method and the “show all comments” function on YouTube.

In a similar manner to Buddy Tavares’ case, user posts referencing the CBC online news media articles were identified in the UGC. For instance, two YouTube users directly refer to “CBC” in their posts. The first states, “These cops might actually be facing charges now, according to...CBC” (YouTube, 2 years ago), while the other adds: “The RCMP has turned itself into a mafia type organization that happily uses slander and disinformation. The CBC in Ontario, Canada, has reported the man was abusive, drunk and resisting arrest” (YouTube, 5 years ago). The latter user is referencing a CBC online news media article entitled “Dziekanski called ‘drunk’ and ‘aggressive’ in audio tape released by Taser inquiry” (CBC news, 2009). This connection was noted, and a progression between the YouTube and CBC social media platforms was completed.

This action led to the identification of five specific articles on CBC and related UGC surrounding Robert Dziekanski’s case. A total of 2567 user posts were downloaded. Each article was compiled and stored in a single PDF file. Next, to isolate the UGC collected from both social media platforms, the YouTube and CBC comments were compiled in a PDF document totaling 924 pages. Combining both sets of UGC into one master set allows for greater organization of content, as well as a streamlined approach to the analysis. Furthermore, this

¹⁴ Comments were collected from original day of upload until January 21, 2013.

¹⁵ In addition to this mentioned in footnote 9, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPe_hf7aBXM, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CR_k-dTnDU and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYV9UDhc0k4>

allows for the identification and the tracking of various themes which emerged during the research analysis.

An initial review of these data (CBC + YouTube) produced the following search term: “RCMP.” This search produced 1625 occurrences across 924 pages of data, netting an aggregated data set of 85 pages. A review of this data produced the following search terms: “excited delirium”; “liar” and derivations including “lying,” “lie,” and “liars”; “Polish” and derivations of “Poland”; “victim,” “death,” “immigrant,” “Canada,” “Canadian,” “citizen,” “murder,” “charged,” “agitated,” “combative,” and “violent,” Each of these terms was then reentered into the original 924 page document until the point of saturation was reached and no new documents emerged for consideration.

Steps 4-6 (pp.44) require the emergence of variables or categories from the previous steps, which culminate in the creation of a protocol.¹⁶ Altheide and Schneider (2013) define a protocol as “...a way of asking questions of a document” (pp. 26). While this definition may appear very general, the questions asked by the researcher often involve research specific themes. The protocol, then, could be considered interdisciplinary as the specific questions asked of the documents may stem from various academic subjects, thus increasing the value of this methodological approach across the social sciences. The protocol, more specifically, is the most important aspect of the methodology, because it allows the researcher to track frames, themes, patterns, etc. According to Altheide and Schneider (2013) these characteristics relate to communication formats, which “...refer to the selection, organization, and presentation of information” (pp. 50).

Stemming from communication formats are frames, themes, and discourse (see figure 3.3, Altheide and Schneider, 2013). Frames, according to Goffman (1974), represent a

¹⁶ Protocol is listed in Appendix A

“schematic of interpretation...which enable[s] people to locate, perceive, identify and label ‘occurrences of information’” (pp. 55). A frame, then, can be thought of as a lens for viewing social phenomena. How things are framed contributes to the way in which individuals understand them. Furthermore, frames are “broad thematic emphases or definitions of a report” (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 52). These definitions, with respect to both news media documents and social media documents, *frame* the discussion of social phenomena, including what is being said and what is not being said (Fishman, 1980).

After having reviewed data sets for the news media documents and the UGC, one dominant frame emerged. This frame centered on the police’s ability to manage or control the definition of the situation, particularly in a manner that favored the police. The frame and its related subtheme – RCMP management of the situation – were noted and tracked using emergent characteristics such as: 1) location of statement in the document (i.e., first paragraph), 2) individual making the claim (i.e., Superintendent, Constable, etc.), and 3) accusation of excessive force.

The frame emerged during the research process and is represented through various *themes*. Themes exist as “mini frames,” which emerge within the larger boundaries set by frames (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, 53). These themes are tracked by analyzing the *discourse* used in the documents, which is defined as “the actual words and direct messages of documents” (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 53). Identifying themes is best understood through tracking discourse. This method, a component of QMA, requires the researcher to “...follow[s] certain issues, words, themes, and frames over a period of time, across different issues and across different news media” (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 117). Tracking discourse is utilized in this research project, with respect to the construction of the research protocols and the aforementioned search terms, which emerged during the data collection phase.

During this particular stage of the research process, a prominent theme emerged within the conceptualization of the RCMP frame. This particular theme centered on UGC identifying particular shortcomings, lies or failures in lieu of the RCMP claims which framed each case in a particular manner. Using tracking discourse, these particular posts were identified, subsequently leading to the introduction of new key words (i.e., “lies,” “liars,” “fail,” etc.) that were searched throughout both sets of UGC.

Step 7 (pp. 55) requires the researcher to select a sampling strategy. For the purpose of this research project, progressive theoretical sampling was utilized. Progressive theoretical sampling entails the selection of documents based on their overall relevancy to the research project. Therefore, it allows documents to emerge as the research process progresses and changes, and new themes become relevant. Thus, the initial research problem –how is police violence framed in emergent forms of documentation (i.e. social media platforms) and has the process altered the understanding and communication surrounding cases of police violence?– was continuously revisited in light of the emergent frames and themes.

Progressive theoretical sampling allowed for the inclusion of UGC, as it was deemed relevant to the overall research problem. Through the analysis of the UGC the potential meanings, or understandings, of the Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski cases were examined. Progressive theoretical sampling, then, “[allows for] the selection of materials based on emerging understanding of the topic under investigation” (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 56). Thus, through familiarization, social media platforms (i.e., YouTube and CBC) were selected as a result of their relevancy to the cases’ development and the overall research problem.

Step 8 (pp. 62) involves collecting data using codes. This particular step involves using protocol categories to cluster relevant data that can be retrieved at a later stage of data analysis.

One way of doing this is to retrieve and store original documents that can be utilized at any point in the research process. This was done through the identification of specific colour-coded analysis of each individual news media document. For example, Each news media article occurring in both the Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski cases, was coded using a computer and Microsoft word, according to the following characteristics: 1) reference to RCMP (blue), 2) reference to Buddy Tavares or Robert Dziekanski (red), 3) reference to incident (green), 4) reference to outcome (purple), 5) reference to video (orange), 6) areas/persons of interest (yellow). This coding process ensured each article was organized and allowed for the identification of patterns and themes. This coding makes it possible to track frames and themes with respect to the ongoing research development. Each news media document was coded using a computer, and combined into a single PDF document relating to each case. The same was done with the UGC from YouTube and CBC news social media platforms.

Step 9 (pp. 68) focuses on the data analysis aspect of the research process. In a similar manner to the aforementioned location, retrieval and storing of original documents, this section involves the use of coding, which will serve as the point(s) of comparison, contrast and discussion during the later developments of the research process. Charmaz (1991) adds, "...start with individual cases, incidents or experiences and develop progressively more abstract and conceptual categories to synthesize, to explain and to understand [the] data and to identify patterned relationships within it" (pp. 335). Thus, by using QMA to identify specific case studies – which are then further sub-divided by communication formats, themes, frames and discourse – the information collected can be coded and sorted as a part of the overall tenet of the methodology; the quest for meaning.

Steps 10-12 (pp. 71, pp. 72, pp. 73) involve final stages of the research development through comparing, contrasting, and discussing "extremes" and "key differences." This is

important as this step involves an analysis of the data based on the overall research problem. In addition, this section illustrates the prominent findings of the research process, as well as the integration of findings and key concepts in discussions and further research sections. What is of primary concern to this section is a dialogue between the researcher and research. Since the processes of emergence, involvement and immersion require the researcher to have a degree of accountability in this process, it is important to discuss the overall impact of project on a multitude of levels. This is done in order to:

[ground] our assessments of the social world in qualitatively oriented research [which] helps preserve the relevance and character of social life as a process of social interaction, even as we are able to capture it in analysis (Altheide and Schneider, 2013, pp. 73).

3.8 Presentation of Case Studies

Each case study will be outlined in the following chapters, in terms of the overall research question, investigating how is police violence framed in emergent forms of social documentation (i.e., news media and social media documents) and has this process altered the understanding and communication surrounding specific cases?. In order to accomplish this analysis, the case studies will be presented in the following order. First, a presentation of the news media documents will be illustrated in connection with the emergent research frame involving the RCMP's framing of each case. This frame will be presented through the identification of emergent sub-frames or themes in this data. Secondly, the UGC will be presented in order to analyze how the documentation occurred throughout the length of the case. Overall, these data suggest that the RCMP provided the initial frame of each case by making certain claims which were then negated by the social media users.

The presentation of the case studies occurs in reverse chronological order in this project. This was done as a prominent theme, connecting the Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski cases, emerged during the research analysis, thus connecting the cases in this order. Interestingly, social media users identified similarities between the Buddy Tavares case and the Robert Dziekanski case in the UGC surrounding the Buddy Tavares case. For this reason, the presentation of the case studies follows a specified order dictated by the social media users and UGC, whose interpretation of the Buddy Tavares case involves themes which emerged during the Robert Dziekanski case.

4. Data Chapter – Buddy Tavares

4.1 Chapter Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to decipher how Buddy Tavares' case is framed in both the news media and social media. First, a brief overview of Buddy Tavares' case will be illustrated, in order to provide a working knowledge of the case-specific characteristics. The analysis will then be subdivided into two categories: 1) news media documents and 2) UGC from social media. The news media document analysis focuses on the RCMP's ability to frame the discussion of this case, by producing certain claims. This frame will be presented in accordance with three emergent themes: a) the use of the term "video," b) the definition of "excessive force," and c) the RCMP claims against Buddy Tavares.

This will be followed by a discussion of the UGC, which also identifies the RCMP's framing of the case. The frame will be presented in accordance with Schneider and Trottier's (2012) notion of crowd-sourced policing and emergent themes. The themes will appear in the following order: 1) the use of criminal justice discourse, b) the reproduction of RCMP claims and the RCMP as "liars," and 3) connections with the Robert Dziekanski case. The research suggests that the RCMP provided the initial frame of Buddy Tavares' case, which was then challenged in the UGC.

4.2 Case Overview

Buddy Tavares was pulled over by two plainclothes members of the RCMP in Kelowna, BC on January 7, 2011. A local news reporter, identified as Kelly Hayes of Castanet News, began filming the event with his mobile phone (iPhone). The video shows Constable (Cst.) Geoff Mantler of the RCMP Kelowna Detachment, with his firearm drawn, directing Buddy

Tavares out of his vehicle. Buddy Tavares is seen on his hands and knees by the side of the road, complying with the officer's orders. The video then shows Cst. Mantler kicking Buddy Tavares in the face, causing him to collapse on the street in a pool of his own blood. Buddy Tavares was subsequently arrested with the assistance of another officer and placed in the back of the RCMP cruiser.

At the time of this writing, Cst. Mantler was found guilty of assault causing bodily harm to Mr. Buddy Tavares. Since the initial upload of the video to YouTube, however, the evolution of the case in the news media has been paralleled by a significant amount of UGCs. The RCMP's (mis)management of the situation sparked public outrage, which was evidenced in a public rally/protest,¹⁷ as well as through comments generated across the social media platforms analyzed in this project. The data suggest that social media played a large part in creating an understanding of the case, and subsequently police violence.

4.3 The Video

The video was subsequently uploaded to the Castanet news YouTube channel¹⁸ on November 7, 2011. At this point, multiple news sources acknowledged the amount of attention the video was receiving online. An article published by *The Province* two days after the incident carried the headline: "Video shows Mountie's kick to face; Officer put on desk duty after footage showing violent arrest goes viral online" (Colebourn, 2011). This was echoed in an article from *The National Post* published two weeks after the incident, reading, "Mountie may face assault charges; Caught on video; Man allegedly kicked in face during arrest" (Sherlock and

¹⁷ The rally took place January 16th, 2011. It was organized using Facebook, and attracted approximately 250 participants (Nieoczym, 2011b). The rally was a significant development in this case for two reasons. First, Supt. McKinnon released the decision to pursue criminal charges against Cst. Mantler moments before the rally mobilized. Second, the event was centered on a public disapproval of Cst. Mantler's actions.

¹⁸ <http://www.youtube.com/user/CastanetNews>

Sinoski, 2011). These two instances provide examples of, and demonstrate attention paid to, the existence of the video. The use of the term within these headlines highlights its prominent role in the initial understandings of the case.

Indeed, the first two articles concerning Buddy Tavares' case refer to the video in the first sentence, prior to any statements released by RCMP liaisons or senior members. A *Globe and Mail* report published January 10, 2011 (two days following the incident) noted:

In an *iPhone video* shot by a local reporter and *posted on the Internet*, a man can be seen getting out of the truck at gunpoint. He has just gotten onto his hands and knees when a plainclothes officer kicks him in the head, causing the man to fall forward.

When he is later led away in handcuffs, his face is bloodied while a bloodstain is visible on the pavement (Nieoczym, 2011a, my emphasis added).

This description illustrates the importance of the video to the initial reporting of the incident.

“iPhone video” denotes the amateur nature of the video, while “posted to the Internet”, indicates that the video exists independent of any police or news media affiliation. Similarly, an article from *The National Post* published January 9, 2011 states, “A Kelowna Mountie has been assigned desk duties after a disturbing video of a police officer kicking a suspect in the head during an arrest was made public” (Colebourn, 2011). This statement identifies a Kelowna Mountie¹⁹ as the perpetrator of the violent interaction, whereas the previous quotation simply states that a “plainclothes officer” was involved.

Following the release of these articles Superintendent (Supt.) Bill McKinnon of the RCMP Kelowna Detachment issued a public statement in *The Globe and Mail* which read, “After reviewing [the video], I ordered a criminal investigation” (Nieoczym, 2011a). The investigation, which Supt. McKinnon is referring to, was later carried out by the Abbotsford

¹⁹ Another term used to describe a member of the RCMP

police detachment of the RCMP. Similarly, a separate article published the same day in *The National Post*, also quotes Supt. McKinnon:

I have reviewed that video, and I have ordered a statutory investigation of excessive force as well as a code of conduct investigation in relation to the manner in which the officer executed his duties (Colebourn, 2011).

This statement, offered by Supt. McKinnon, represents the first mention of the term “excessive force” in the cases’ evolution. It is important for two reasons. First, it is mentioned in the first news media document covering Buddy Tavares’ case. Secondly, Supt. McKinnon, a senior member of the RCMP, is the first individual to present Buddy Tavares’ case as potentially involving “excessive force.” This correlates directly with the relevant frame that emerged during the research process and aids in the analysis of the policing institution’s ability to control how police violence is discussed. Indeed, the term “excessive force” appears 12 times throughout the subsequent news media documents. What is interesting to note with respect to the use of the term “excessive force,” however, is its changing location and meaning throughout the cases’ evolution.

4.4 Excessive Force

One of the ways of analyzing this particular instance of excessive force involves a connection between the terms “excessive” and “force.” While the term “force” is an unavoidable aspect of police work (Manning, 1981), when prefaced with “excessive,” the term becomes a criminal matter. According to Williams (2007) the term “excessive” implies that too much force was employed in a given situation, while the term “force” concedes a normal aspect of police work.

In this particular case, Supt. McKinnon uses the term “excessive force,” thus implying that Cst. Mantler’s actions exceeded the appropriate amount of force given the contextual and situational variables. Indeed, the term “excessive force” is utilized throughout the coverage of the case. An article published in *The Province* on January 11, 2011 (four days after the incident) uses the term in the first sentence. The article reads:

The RCMP said Monday that a Kelowna Mountie will be suspended with pay, while being investigated for use of excessive force after he was caught on video giving a soccer-style kick to Tavares’ head (Cooper, 2011).

This statement provides a connection between the RCMP defining the situation as one warranting an investigation surrounding the use of “excessive force.” In the same article, Supt. McKinnon states:

I recognize that the community is shocked by what they have seen...I can tell you that I too am shocked and disappointed: [however] we have to now allow the process to take its course (Cooper, 2011).

It is important to note that Supt. McKinnon – at this point – is the only RCMP member releasing statements on behalf of the institution and Cst. Mantler. For that reason, his claims could be said to represent the sentiments of the institution as a whole. Supt. McKinnon’s initial framing of Buddy Tavares’ case involves both “shock” and “disappointment”, as mentioned in his aforementioned claim. These emotions are challenged, however, in an article published 10 days later in *The Globe and Mail* with the headline: “Excessive force complaint not first against B.C. officer” (Nieoczym, 2011b). The first sentence of this article reads:

Kelowna RCMP Constable Geoff Mantler was already under investigation for a complaint of excessive force when he allegedly kicked Buddy Tavares in the head during an arrest, police have confirmed (Nieoczym, 2011b).

On August 10, 2010 a Todd Packer of Kelowna filed an accusation of excessive force against Cst. Mantler. That accusation was reported in *The Globe and Mail* on January 27, 2010. The *Globe and Mail* article, therefore, contradicts the statements of Supt. McKinnon. The aforementioned statement involving Cst. Mantler's second excessive force allegation is important; given that the RCMP were aware of Cst. Mantler's previous excessive force accusations, it contradicts Supt. McKinnon's claims of "shock" and "disappointment." Cpl. Anne Linteau, a senior RCMP officer involved in Cst. Mantler's previous investigations, goes on to say that this particular complaint was under internal investigation, with "time delay." This "time delay" claim is substantiated by Cpl. Linteau's comparison of Mr. Todd Packer's allegation of excessive force and that of Buddy Tavares.' Cpl Linteau states:

Having a video of the incident is certainly beneficial to our investigators... You know exactly what it is that happened... Of course, you still have to investigate all the circumstances surrounding the video footage, but certainly it's a valuable piece of evidence (Nieoczym, 2011b).

The statement offered by Cpl. Linteau demonstrates the importance of having a video when investigating allegations of excessive force. To further this connection, another allegation of excessive force against Cst. Mantler came to light, following the Buddy Tavares case. This instance occurred on August 30, 2010 involving Manjeet Singh Bhatti, representing Mantler's second (Buddy Tavares being third) in a line of excessive force accusations. This instance, in addition to Mr. Packer's, was not videotaped, though Cst. Mantler's videotaped actions are referenced in each article reporting either Mr. Singh's or Mr. Packer's name. The two charges filed against Cst. Mantler by both Mr. Singh and Mr. Packer were eventually dismissed by the RCMP, stating that the court was unlikely "...to find Mantler's use of force...excessive, and that there was no substantial likelihood of conviction" (Sullivan, 2011).

This outcome is significant using a subtenet of QMA known as tracking discourse (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). Tracking discourse allows researchers to identify how words appear and change throughout the evolution of a specific range of documents (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). This information provides the researcher with potential understandings or interpretations that relate to the use of such discourse, how it is employed, by whom, etc. In each of the 12 instances where the term “excessive force” is employed in connection with Cst. Mantler’s action, the term “video” appears no more than two sentences away. The location of these two terms suggests a connection between the police use of excessive force and the existence of a video. This connection is furthered when one considers the two previous accusations made against Cst. Manlter, accusations that were dismissed based on a lack of “substantial” evidence. Clearly, the video is being considered a form of evidence in the on-going evolution of the case, as well as an integral part of the RCMP’s definition of excessive force.

Between January 11 and 22, 2011 “excessive force” appeared in news articles and media reports about Buddy Tavares. After the latter date, the term was never used again, and instead the term “domestic violence” became the a theme of interest, issued by the RCMP. The data suggest that this term was used in order to maintain the integrity of the RCMP as an institution, subsequently relating to their ability to frame the case. The first mention of “domestic violence” occurred January 11, 2011 in the same article that first mentioned excessive force. Domestic violence emerged as a prominent theme for consideration as the articles began to focus on this term more and more. Whereas “excessive force” was typically placed towards the beginning of the article, “domestic violence” was placed towards the end of the article and, over time, the term slowly moved up, eventually overshadowing “excessive force” altogether. The theme surrounding the claims made by the RCMP relating to Buddy Tavares’ involvement in a “domestic violence” situation demonstrate an instance of the RCMP setting the parameters of

discussion surrounding the case. For this reason, “domestic violence” became a prominent theme for consideration, within the dominant RCMP frame.

4.5 RCMP Claims – Domestic Violence and Brain Injury

The term “domestic violence” occurs 35 times across 61 pages of data. This frequency suggests the use of the term is an important aspect of the on-going case’s evolution. Moreover, the term replaces the term “excessive force” in any discussions about the Buddy Tavares case. This was noted through the tenets of tracking discourse, whereby the use of the term “domestic violence” became the focal point of the online news media documents, replacing the previous importance surrounding the term “excessive force.”

The term “domestic violence” first appears in two articles published January 10, 2011. The article published in *The Globe and Mail* references the term a total of seven times, with the first instance displayed in the second sentence of the article. The sentence reads:

The RCMP said Monday that the suspect [Buddy Tavares] was involved in a domestic violence incident prior to his arrest, a new development in the case that has bewildered the man’s friends and family (Nieoczym, 2011b).

According to Supt. McKinnon, this claim was issued in connection to a careless use of a firearm charge filed against Buddy Tavares by the RCMP. When asked by reporters if Supt. McKinnon would elaborate on the “domestic violence situation,” he offered no further information. In the same article, Buddy Tavares’ ex-wife Trudi Tavares states that she, “...was absolutely not a victim of violence at the hands of her ex-husband, adding that, to her knowledge, he does not have another wife or girlfriend” (Nieoczym, 2011b). These sentiments were reiterated through the addition of statements provided by Ken Albert (friend of Buddy Tavares) and Angela Behiels

(sister of Buddy Tavares), echoing their confusion about the “domestic violence situation” claim made by Supt. McKinnon.

Each time one of Buddy Tavares’ family members was quoted in the article, his or her quote followed one by Supt. McKinnon. This had the effect of allowing the RCMP to set the tone for the framing of the discourse: nobody was allowed to speak until the RCMP established a framework; nobody else could set the scene, only the RCMP. In addition, Supt. McKinnon’s claim represents the RCMP’s ability to frame what is and what is not being discussed in the case’s on-going evolution. At this particular moment in the case, “excessive force” is no longer the claim being supported, and instead, “domestic violence” is the focal point of the investigation. An article published in *The Globe and Mail* the following day (January 12, 2011) references the “domestic violence situation” a total of seven times (Nieoczym, 2011c).

This particular article also quotes another RCMP spokesperson, Cst. Steve Holmes, who responds to the confusion surrounding the “domestic violence situation” claim. Cst. Holmes states, “we say it relates to domestic violence because that forms part of the circumstances to support careless use of a firearm... it just forms part of the background” (Nieoczym, 2011c). This statement acknowledges the ability of the RCMP to frame this case. Considering the lack of a firm basis for the claim, in addition to the how quickly it emerged in the news media articles, the “domestic violence situation” is designed to redirect attention away from the institution, thus maintaining the ability to frame the case in a manner which promotes the integrity of the institution.

Indeed, the RCMP begin to recognize they were likely stretching things thin with their “domestic violence situation” claim when Cst. Steve Holmes states that he is no longer “authorized” to speak about Buddy Tavares’ case (Nieoczym, 2011c). This statement came in response to a complaint filed by the B.C. Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) against Supt.

McKinnon for statements connecting Buddy Tavares to a “domestic violence situation.” The complaint, directed by the BCCLA, accused Supt. McKinnon of conducting a “smear campaign” against Buddy Tavares, through the accusation of a ‘domestic violence’ charge (Nieoczym, 2011c). However, the “domestic violence” claim had already framed Buddy Tavares as an individual who possessed a weapon and had been involved in a “domestic violence situation.” By presenting Buddy Tavares in a negative light, the RCMP’s claims distracted attention away from the institution, thus maintaining control over the discussion and understanding of the case.

The frame is also evident through the use of the term “brain injury,” which appears eight times over a span of seven articles from January 9 – January 16, 2011. The use of this term stems from Buddy Tavares’ involvement in a motorcycle accident which resulted in a “brain injury”. While the details of this accident are never fully elaborated, the term is used by the RCMP in order to frame Buddy Tavares’ actions, as being those of an individual suffering from a “brain injury”. This degree of frequency denotes significance, as the term is used in conjunction with Buddy Tavares’ reported possession of a weapon. For example, *The Globe and Mail* reports “The suspect, whom police have identified as Buddy Tavares, was on leave from work with a brain injury from a recent motorcycle accident” (Nieoczym, 2011a). This was furthered in *The Province*, which added that Buddy Tavares was on disability leave from his job at the time that the RCMP officer allegedly beat him (Colebourn, 2011b). Kelly Hayes (videographer) added to these claims, stating, “The officers were reacting on the information they had that there was a man with a gun who has a possible brain injury” (Colebourn, 2011a).

Mr. Hayes elaborated on his use of the term “information,” explaining that he had been listening to a police scanner, which informed him of the incident and the details that were provided to the officers in pursuit (Colebourn, 2011a). Thus, not only was Buddy Tavares in possession of weapon, the police had been warned that he could be considered irrational and/or

unpredictable due to his brain injury. These claims frame Buddy Tavares in a negative manner. As opposed to focusing on the “excessive force” allegations against Cst. Mantler, the bulk of the news media articles focus on Buddy Tavares as a brain-injured man in possession of a weapon that is connected to a domestic violence situation. From the reader’s standpoint, these claims suggest that Buddy Tavares may have deserved the handling he received.

4.6 RCMP’s Control of the Discussion

The aforementioned framing of Buddy Tavares as deserving of Cst. Mantler’s actions was dually noted by David Eby, the director of the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, who stated “Our concern is that there was the use of a character smear [in order to]...make Buddy Tavares look bad and the RCMP look good” (Nieoczym, 2011d). The RCMP appeared to acknowledge their mishandling of the case when, on February 22, 2011, RCMP Assistant Commissioner Peter Hourihan made a visit to Buddy Tavares’ home in order to apologize on behalf of the RCMP (Nieoczym, 2011e; Ivens, 2011). The same articles also mention that the Crown prosecutors had dropped pending criminal charges against Buddy Tavares. Both Peter Hourihan’s apology and the decision to dismiss charges against Buddy Tavares suggest a change in the definition of the situation that had previously framed Buddy Tavares in a negative manner.

In addition, Supt. McKinnon initially reported that barring “extreme circumstances,” Cst. Mantler would not be suspended without pay (Colebourn, 2011a). Supt. McKinnon’s statement was issued January 16, 2011, and was reversed May 31, 2011. Supt. McKinnon issued the following statement May 31, 2011:

The allegations of misconduct against him are so serious that they require a greater response than the suspension alone...I must clarify that suspensions, either with or

without pay, are not forms of punishment. They are temporary measures to *protect the integrity of the RCMP* (my emphasis added, Nieoczym, 2011f).

Initially, in order to ensure the integrity of the RCMP, claims were issued surrounding Buddy Tavares' involvement in criminal activity through the claims relating to a "domestic violence situation" and "careless use of a firearm." These claims, however, were not qualified in any manner consistent with a criminal investigation (i.e., the presentation of evidence), and as a result, led to a personal apology, the dismissal of criminal charges and the decision to suspend Cst. Mantler without pay. The dismissal of charges and Mantler's suspension without pay can also be seen as strategies to "protect the integrity of the RCMP," thus maintaining its position of social power by showing that it can still define a situation and describe it as a personal failing as opposed to an institutional one. The investigation of news media documents covering the case of Buddy Tavares produced frames and related subthemes that contribute to the meaning-making process connected to this particular instance of police use of excessive force. I now turn to the discussion of the UGC.

4.7 User-Generated Content

4.7.1 Crowd-Sourced Policing

According to Schneider and Trottier (2012), the movement towards an online community has spawned new forms of citizen policing. Social media platforms such as YouTube and CBC news, "...when coupled with mobile and digital photography, enable users to document and disseminate information about criminal events, including [police violence], with unprecedented speed" (Schneider and Trottier, 2012, pp. 62). With respect to the Buddy Tavares case, the capturing and posting of the associated video, in addition to the UGC in response to the online

news media documents, allowed citizens to engage in a form of “citizen policing.” Schneider and Trottier (2012) refer to this process as “crowd-sourced policing,” whereby social media users focus and expand on documents relating to criminal justice discourse independent of modern police work. In this particular case, claims made by Supt. McKinnon and Cst. Steve Holmes relating to Buddy Tavares’ involvement in a “domestic violence situation” were spotlighted in the UGC, demonstrating a form of crowd-sourced policing.

Schneider and Trottier’s (2012) conceptualization of crowd-sourced policing involves peer-to-peer and, we can assume, non-police officer surveillance and criminalization through social media platforms. This assumption stems from the identification of non-police work, contrasted with real or legally sanctioned police work. I would like to use this concept to explore how online users interact and communicate in response to police violence. This process provides insight into how the case is framed, thus contributing to the overall research question. Overall, the data collected in accordance with this version of crowd-sourced policing involve the ability of the policing institution, in this case the RCMP, to frame the discussion. This is evidenced through the following emergent themes: 1) the use of criminal justice discourse and 2) the reproduction of RCMP claims. The frame relates to the RCMP’s control of the discussion, will also be emphasized by identifying user connections with the Robert Dziekanski case.

4.7.2 Criminal Justice Discourse

With respect to Buddy Tavares’ case, Cst. Mantler was charged with assault causing bodily harm. The nature of these charges are criminal, thus prompting the use of criminal justice discourse when referencing the case. Furthermore, the direct response to the YouTube video generated a large degree of content criminalizing the RCMP’s actions. This data involves a version of Schneider and Trottier’s (2012) notion of lateral surveillance, whereby users post

comments that directly criminalize the actions of other users, or in this case, the RCMP member depicted in the video. Though the officer, identified as Cst. Geoff Mantler, is a member of the criminal justice institution, users criminalized him independent of his association to the RCMP.

A user notes:

And you wonder why so many people hate cops... I hope this victim gets the justice he's entitled to. Meaning that the officer should be charged, convicted of assault and serve jail time. Furthermore, this man [sic]²⁰ should sue the RCMP and get awarded compensation for the pain and suffering he received at the foot of this barbaric criminal. The public is k and tired of watching caught on camera officers getting away with criminal acts of behavior (CBC, January 17, 2011, 8:19am)

This specific user uses terms such as “justice,” “assault” and “criminal,” all of which identify the behaviour of “the officer” (Cst. Mantler) as criminal. In addition, the user references the “public” as witnesses to many recorded instances of police engaging in criminal activity. This suggests the increasing frequency of appearance of videos depicting officers engaging in these behaviours. Another user noted:

Criminal charges for criminal actions... RCMP officers should be subject to the Criminal Code as any citizens would granting exception for the proper exercise of their duties in the performance of their job. The only caveat is that criminal investigators should not be (likely cannot be) done by other officers. (CBC, January 11, 2011, 11:09am)

This post suggests that the RCMP officer involved in the altercation should be subject to the criminal justice process in a manner consistent with that of a non-officer civilian. Thus, the

²⁰ From this point forward, all UGC posts will be presented as they appear online in order to maintain the authenticity and accuracy of the information.

use of this criminal justice discourse that users want to criminalize the individual officer, this case Cst. Mantler, mirroring modern police work. Another user adds, “Good! But let’s keep on watching this story, as these things tend to get swept under the rug. Recommending he be charged is not the same as actually BEING charged” (CBC, January 16, 11:46am).

This particular post is referencing Supt. McKinnon’s decision to pursue criminal charges against Cst. Mantler. The user notes that while criminal charges may appear formidable, these claims have a tendency to be dismissed, whereas the previous comments condemn Cst. Mantler’s actions as criminal. The user states:

I am usually pro police, they do a tough job and often are at risk. There is no defense that I can see in this case. The RCMP officer Geoff Mantler should without a doubt be charged with assault causing bodily harm (YouTube, January 16, 2011, 7:23pm).

Although this user self-identifies as pro-police, he/she is convinced by the apparent evidence against Cst. Mantler and considers the officer’s actions criminal. Furthermore, this user’s post contains a direct reference to the charge issued by Supt. McKinnon and the RCMP representatives involved in the progression of the criminal investigation against Cst. Mantler. This specific instance represents a connection between the UGC and the news media articles, whereby a claim offered by an RCMP member was reproduced in a user post.

Each of these posts includes the use of criminal justice practices such as subjecting the officer(s) to the Criminal Code of Canada, laying charges and/or convictions, and identifying the individuals involved in the video. Moreover, the posts suggest that the RCMP are structuring the discussion of the case. These posts suggest that, the use of criminal justice discourse is attributed to the RCMP’s framing of the case. This version of crowd-sourced policing, then, is useful for identifying the RCMP’s ability to frame the discussion of the case, including what is being said

and how it is being said. This was demonstrated through the identification of criminal justice discourse and is furthered through the reproduction of RCMP claims.

4.7.3 The Rejection of the RCMP Claims – RCMP as “liars”

Further review of the UGC dataset using Adobe 10’s advanced search feature showed that the term “liar” – and derivations of “lie” and “lies” (not present in news media) – was employed three times. This term was identified in conjunction with the first search term “RCMP.” and netted 55 pages of aggregated data. From there, each user comment was treated as an individual unit of analysis, in order to understand if social media impacts the case’s progression and understanding. One user notes:

The shenanigans, outright lies, and doubtful actions of the RCMP show a country not in control of their own police. This puts us on par with a third world government that spends most of the citizens taxes and other revenue on selfish government policies that are oriented toward their own reelections and need for power. No powerful watchdogs are in place (even Chretien had [hi]s OWN watchdog that was hired by and reported only to him) to oversee standards for all of our government agencies. The watchdogs should have the power to force government agencies to answer their actions in public with full liability and job termination when necessary (CBC, January 15, 2011, 2:30pm).

Another user adds, “The problem is the police keep changing their stories after they have been caught in a lie” (CBC, January 14, 2011, 2:24pm). These posts suggest that the claims by the RCMP and Supt. McKinnon did not represent the truthful portrayal of events. This sentiment is echoed by another user who adds, “domestic violence is an RCMP fabrication in a desperate attempt to deflect attention away from themselves. The only violence came from the boot of the RCMP Constable Geoff Mantler” (CBC, January 26, 2011, 9:15am). This user directly

references the “domestic violence situation” described in the news media documents by RCMP spokespersons. In addition, the user identifies this “fabrication” as a strategic maneuver to “deflect” the audience’s attention away from the RCMP, thus allowing the organization to maintain its integrity. Another user echoes this perception, stating:

Now it is Domestic Violence incident?!!! They are trying to distract from what the man (will not call him 'cop'-he does not deserve it) did. The officer was all jacked up and he screwed up!!! Would you want him pulling your son or daughter or wife or sister or brother over or responding to a call they made? NO take your chances and stay alive/healthy! (YouTube, 2011).

Both of the user posts suggest that the information released by the RCMP was designed to distract readers from the progression of Buddy Tavares’ case. This user rejects or resists the overall RCMP frame. In this particular case, users identify the “domestic violence situation” as a prominent attempt to frame Buddy Tavares in a negative manner. By framing Buddy Tavares negatively, the RCMP redirects the audience’s critical perception towards Buddy Tavares and away from itself. Another user adds, “we need to remember that the police are attempting to justify this very violent assault by a police officer with a fabricated completely false claim that they were responding to a domestic violence situation” (CBC, January 16, 2011, 2:48pm).

This particular post identifies the claim made by the RCMP as an attempt to “justify” the actions of Cst. Mantler. According to Scott and Lyman (1968), a justification exists when people accept responsibility for their actions but in doing so, deny the disapproval or scrutiny they attract (pp. 491). Utilizing this conceptualization of a justification, the post suggests that the RCMP fabricated the claim surrounding the “domestic violence situation,” in an effort to deny the disapproval stemming from Cst. Mantler’s actions. Indeed, the focus and association of blame with either the RCMP or Cst. Mantler was evidenced in the user posts. One user suggests:

let's start by being truthful. RCMP spokesman. It means designated liar for the rcmp. The designated liar reads from a memo that he/she does not write, and so they cannot respond to questions, because they know no answers. they could be replaced by email. yet the most visible rank of designated liars Is sergeant. and Inspector shields, who was hidden from the public, In bc at least, for several years because he told a joke that may have been offensive to some group, at a speech he gave unfair to punish him, If It was just a joke. yet he Is rewarded for lying to the public, with a high rank and corresponding pay and perks (CBC, January 26, 2011, 12:00pm).

With respect to the online news media documents, the RCMP spokesperson for the majority of Buddy Tavares' case was Supt. Bill McKinnon. The sentiment among users was that Supt. McKinnon should resign from that position. One user wrote, "If Supt. Bill McKinnon does not possess the maturity, integrity and discipline to uphold the law he must resign. If the RCMP was not a criminal gang he would be fired..." (CBC, January 26, 2011, 5:56am). Similarly, another user writes, "You would think that the Supt. Bill McKinnon would have learned something about accepting responsibility and demonstrating leadership by example. Calling a violent assault by a cop, "an error" and or "incredible work" is just an example of how sick the RCMP is from the bottom to the top" (CBC, January 17, 2011, 10:13am). These posts suggest that the responsibility resides in the institution as a whole, from the claims made by the RCMP and Supt. McKinnon to the actions of Cst. Mantler.

Stemming from these data, the claim surrounding Buddy Tavares' association with a "domestic violence situation" represents an attempt to justify Cst. Mantler's actions, as well as to distract attention from the RCMP as an institution. User posts identify this connection and suggest a plausible connection between the claims provided in the news media documents and the lack of evidence to qualify their allegations. Taken from this perspective, these data can be

understood as a form of resistance or rejection among the social media users who identify and criticize specific RCMP claims and the RCMP frame. With respect to the overall research problem, these social media platforms have allowed users a space to speak out against the RCMP's framing of the case. This finding, then, suggests a potential change to the ability of the RCMP, as an institution, to the frame Mr. Tavares' case. This finding is further supported in the user posts which draw connections between Buddy Tavares' case and that of Robert Dziekanski.

4.7.4 Connections with Robert Dziekanski Case

The initial review of the UGC dataset produced search terms such as "Robert Dziekanski," "Vancouver" and "YVR" (which denotes the Vancouver International Airport). These terms were noted and subsequently reentered into the dataset, netting 13 pages of aggregated data.

It is important to note that these connections drawn between two separate documented instances of police violence contribute to the research frame, whereby the policing institution sets the parameters (i.e., frame) for discussion, which may or may not be resisted by social media users. Moreover, the connections drawn between the cases suggest that social media (i.e., the resultant UGC), contributes to their understanding. In the case of Buddy Tavares, various users drew connections from Robert Dziekanski's case, in order to make sense of the RCMP's claims and construction of events. One user notes:

we all saw the violence toward MR Dziekanski in the airport by the RCMP...then the lies by the RCMP... *he was a violent drunk*...blood tests proved he was not drinking the RCMP killed him...so the tactics used against Buddy Tavares...the lies by the RCMP are in many cases the standard operating method used by the RCMP...we need a total overhaul of the RCMP...but in reality I think its to late for that...we are stuck with what

we have...all of us just hope we never ever have to deal with them (YouTube, 3 years ago).

This user identifies what he or she believes to be a direct connection between the claims made by the RCMP with respect to both Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski. Another user adds, “People with video cameras show one thing which is the opposite to the story being spun. Remember the four goons tazing the man to death at YVR. Their story was simply lies and because someone got the pictures, the public knows...” (CBC, January 26, 2011, 5:53am). Indeed, other user posts reference Dziekanski’s case as the “YVR incident,” or simply, “YVR,” denoting the Vancouver International Airport. It is important to note that these references do not include Dziekanski’s name nor RCMP involvement, and instead refer to the case by the location. Further connections are drawn in statements such as:

Police brutality is nothing new in Canada. It has always been around. The advent of social media has led to an increase in reported incidents like the Kelowna and YVR incidents. Now that eyes are everywhere and recording these incidents the police will become more cautious about beating innocent civilians simply for the sake of being brutish (CBC, January 16, 2011, 12:15pm).

These data identify similar claims which emerged during the evolution of both cases. For instance, Robert Dziekanski was portrayed by the RCMP as a violent, intoxicated individual suffering from a syndrome the RCMP refer to as “excited delirium.” This syndrome is not recognized scientifically (i.e., medically), however:

The RCMP define excited delirium as a potentially fatal ‘state of extreme mental and physiological excitement that is characterized by extreme agitation, hyperthermia,

hostility, exceptional strength and endurance without apparent fatigue (Leeder and Alphonso, 2007).

In a manner similar to the vagueness surrounding the definition of excited delirium, the RCMP produced claims surrounding Buddy Tavares' involvement in a "domestic violence situation," but would not release any further information. Thus, the connections drawn by these users, suggests that similar tactics or strategies were employed in both cases. Another user notes:

It will be very Interesting to see what the charges will be, so don't count your chickens just yet, also can you actually Imagine any "judge" sending one of our finest to a jail, In BC he might get house arrest a no ankle bracelet. Now If we could only get those cowards that tasered Dziekanski to death at the airport charged with murder, and that Is what It was. Why are we not demanding "justice" there for that act as well. It appears that our finest just walked away from that one also. Seeing Is believing, I will wait and see (CBC, January 16, 2011, 10:42pm).

In both the Tavares and Dziekanski cases, the connections drawn from the videos, made apparent in the UGC, suggest that users identified similarities amongst the cases. Furthermore, the data suggest that users managed the RCMP claims surrounding Robert Dziekanski as a way of understanding the progression of Buddy Tavares' case. These connections, interestingly, both involve rejecting RCMP claims or frames presented in each case. Though the RCMP set the initial parameters for discussion, the data suggest that users rejected many of the RCMP's claims. This finding contributes to the overall research problem, which seeks to understand how is police violence framed in emergent forms of social documentation (i.e., news media and social media documents) and has this process altered the understanding and communication surrounding specific cases? In terms of the Buddy Tavares case, social media users rejected the claims made by the RCMP, framing of the case in a particular manner.

4.8 Summary

The analysis of the UGC, when combined with the news media documents, demonstrates the RCMP's ability to provide the initial frame of the discussion, including what can and cannot be said surrounding Buddy Tavares' case. This ability was noted in conjunction with the following themes. First, the conceptualization of "excessive force" was influenced by the claims produced by RCMP officers in news media as well as the existence of the video. The data suggest that the RCMP frame "excessive force" depends on the existence, or lack, of a "video." Furthermore, claims made by Cpl. Linteau reference the importance of a video when determining or framing cases as ones involving "excessive force."

The subsequent dismissal of the term "excessive force" from the documents, and the inclusion of "domestic violence situation" and "brain injury" represent the RCMP's ability to direct audience attention through the use of claims in news media. These claims demonstrate the RCMP's ability to frame Buddy Tavares, and the case more generally, in a manner that controls subsequent discussion and understanding. The reproduction of the RCMP claims, evidenced in the UGC, contribute to this frame. This was noted through an emergent theme involving crowd-sourced policing, which identified specific user posts referencing Supt. McKinnon's (RCMP) claims and statements (i.e., Cst. Mantler is charged with assault causing bodily harm). The reproduction of these claims is evident in the user posts, suggests that the RCMP framed the discussion of Buddy Tavares' case.

Users, however, resisted this frame by labeling the RCMP as "liars", as well as posts reporting similarities between the Robert Dziekanski and Buddy Tavares cases. Furthermore, research findings suggest that users reference claims involving Robert Dziekanski's case in a manner that can be understood as identifying similarities between the two cases. Indeed, posts identify case-specific claims made during media coverage of the Robert Dziekanski case such as

the RCMP portraying Robert Dziekanski as a violent, combative, intoxicated individual. These claims were ultimately dismissed in light of forensic evidence disproving their existence. In a similar manner, users identify the claim surrounding Buddy Tavares' involvement in a "domestic violence situation," as one intended to justify the actions of Cst. Mantler.

The data suggest that though the RCMP initially frame the discussion the case of Buddy Tavares, social media users reject this process. Moreover, the data imply that online users engage in discussions within the parameters of said frame, in a critical manner. This emergent theme involving the users rejecting the RCMP represents a significant shift in the ability to track the understanding of police violence within the confines of social media. Furthermore, this theme suggests that social media may provide a space to critique police violence, contributing to the overall research problem, through the identification of a change in the documentation or understanding of the case of Buddy Tavares. As opposed to a one-way source of information and understanding (i.e., news media), social media users now have the ability to participate in two-way (i.e., UGC referencing news media articles) communication. In this particular case, the RCMP framed the initial understanding of the case, but were later challenged through information identified and critiqued by online social media users.

5.0 Data Chapter – Robert Dziekanski

5.1 Chapter Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the process by which the case of Robert Dziekanski is framed across news media and social media platforms. This task will be completed in line with the overall research problem, which seeks to analyze how police violence is framed in emergent forms of documentation (i.e. social media platforms and devices) and whether this process has impacted the understanding or communication surrounding specific cases? This will first entail a brief overview of Robert Dziekanski's case. Here, details emerging from news media documents will be presented in order to provide a working knowledge of the cases' overall evolution. The report will then be subdivided into two categories: 1) news media documents and 2) UGC. The news media document analysis focuses on certain claims delivered by the RCMP, which frame the discussion of Robert Dziekanski's case. This process will be outlined in accordance with the following themes that emerged during the data analysis stages: 1) RCMP control of the video, 2) RCMP's definition of "excited delirium," 3) Robert Dziekanski as suffering from "excited delirium," and 4) Robert Dziekanski as a "threat" to officer safety.

This discussion will be followed by a presentation of the UGC, which identifies emergent themes that also relate to the RCMP's ability to frame the discussion surrounding Robert Dziekanski's case. These themes emerged from the data and identify user posts referencing criminal justice discourse, as well as the rejection of RCMP claims made in the news media articles. These themes will be presented in accordance with Schneider and Trottier's (2012)

notion of “crowd-sourced policing.” They will appear in the following order: 1) The use of criminal justice discourse and 2) The rejection of RCMP claims.

5.2 Case Overview

Robert Dziekanski landed at the Vancouver International Airport October 13, 2007, following a journey from his native Poland. He was immigrating to Canada to live with his mother, Zofia Cisowski, who resides in Kamloops, British-Columbia. According to news media articles, Robert Dziekanski, who spoke no English, became agitated when he was stopped in the Canadian customs section of the airport (*National Post*, 2007). A call to the RCMP was placed after a customs agent reported Robert Dziekanski as “really drunk and...throwing suitcases around” (*National Post*, 2007). The RCMP were notified, dispatching four uniformed members from the Vancouver International Airport detachment.²¹

Upon arrival, a civilian bystander – Paul Pritchard – began recording the interaction between the RCMP members and Robert Dziekanski. Reports indicate that the officers arrived at 1:27 am on October 14, 2007, and subsequently tasered Robert Dziekanski at 1:28 am in an effort to subdue him (*National Post*, 2007). Robert Dziekanski was later pronounced dead following this interaction.

Following Robert Dziekanski’s death, Mr. Pritchard turned the video in to the RCMP at their request. The video was subsequently held as evidence until November 13, 2007. Once the video was returned to Mr. Pritchard by the RCMP, it was uploaded to YouTube, and became a central component of the cases’ overall development. This is evidenced through the use of the term in news article headlines such as: “Taser video held as evidence; Police refuse to release tape of fatal evidence” (Austin, 2007), “Taser video goes public today” (Baron, November 13,

²¹ The RCMP have jurisdictional authority over the Vancouver police department at the Vancouver International Airport.

2007), and “RCMP accused of misrepresentation; BCCLA also accuses police of trying to smother witness’ videotape” (O’Connor, 2007). In addition, the video was entered as evidence during the Braidwood Enquiry, an independent investigation launched by the Attorney General of British-Columbia, Wally Oppal. This inquiry led to the subsequent identification of false testimony and claims submitted by the four officers and the RCMP spokespersons during the case’s evolution. At the time of this writing, the four RCMP officers - Cst. Bill Bentley, Cst. Gerry Rundel, Cst. Kwesi Millington, and Cpl. Benjamin “Monty” Robinson – are on trial for perjury.

After having reviewed news media documents and UGC surrounding the case, it became clear that claims made by the RCMP in news media reports (both the officers involved in the incident as well as senior members) can be construed to frame the initial understandings of Robert Dziekanski’s case. These claims, however, were resisted or rejected by the online social media users in the collected UGC, implying that the RCMP were unsuccessful in their ability to frame the case in a particular manner. Overall, then, the data can be thought of as a shift in the documentation and understanding of police violence, which satisfies the overall research problem. Specifically, the inclusion of social media platforms and relevant UGC, demonstrate a shift in the understanding of police violence. What was once a one-way (i.e., news media) source of information can now be thought of as two-way (i.e, social media), as individuals now have the platform to speak out in favor or against RCMP claims.

5.3 The Video

The initial discussion surrounding the video involved the RCMP’s decision to withhold its contents from both Mr. Pritchard and the public. In an article published in *The Globe and Mail*, Corporal Dale Carr states:

This video evidence is vital to the investigation and its release to the public at this time could clearly compromise the investigator's goal of conducting a fair and unbiased investigation [into Robert Dziekanski's death] (Austin, 2007).

As previously mentioned, the video was released to Mr. Pritchard on November 13, 2007, meaning that there was a span of 31 days between when it was recorded and when it was released. This period of time is significant because it represents the RCMP's controlling the initial discussion of the case in the media, while also managing the contents of the video. Put simply, the video was held by the RCMP despite its existence and importance to the initial understanding of the altercation. When asked if the public would be given access to the video, Cpl. Carr states:

They are going to see it eventually. But do they need to see it while the investigation is going on and jeopardize our ability to conduct the investigation fairly? I don't think so (Dhillon, 2007).

This data suggests that the release of the video may place the RCMP and the on-going investigation in a compromising position. This scenario is furthered complicated when one considers that Dziekanski died while in RCMP custody, thus adding to the potential skepticism surrounding the actions of the four officers involved in the interaction. Cpl. Carr adds:

With public perception of in-custody deaths, there's a need to give some details, to assure that we're going to conduct a fair, balanced investigation, as opposed to not saying anything and being accused of cover[ing] it up (Austin, 2007).

Carr's statements are important to consider in the context of the RCMP's ability to control what is being said and how it is being said during the initial news media releases. Through the use of the terms "fair" and "unbiased," Cpl. Carr maintains the integrity of the RCMP, and their willingness to ensure a proper investigation. At this point in the investigation,

there is no evidence to suggest that the officer's actions were in violation of any institutional procedures. The lack of controversy is most likely why news reports paid so little attention, if any, to the video. There are 18 occurrences of the search term "video" in news reports spanning the 31 (October 13- November 13, 2007) days during which the RCMP maintained control of the video. This is contrasted by 40 occurrences in three articles published in *The Globe and Mail* following the video's release to the public. This increase suggests that much more audience attention is directed towards the existence of the video which, in turn, impacts understanding of the case, as well as the RCMP's framing of the case in the news media.

In each of the initial references to the video, the term is followed by one or more of the following words in the same sentence: "taser," "death," "confrontation" and "RCMP." Indeed, these terms emerge throughout the news media articles – "taser" 1320 times, "death" 1132 times, "confrontation" 154 times, and "RCMP" 1523 times – specifically when referencing the events which took place in Mr. Pritchard's video. For instance, two articles from *The Globe and Mail* state, "video that shows police using a taser on a Polish Immigrant who died after the confrontation" (Bailey, 2007a) and "The video...shows four RCMP officers approaching Robert Dziekanski at the airport. Moments later he is on the ground screaming after being hit by two laser jolts." These data are echoed through the use of headlines such as: "Man who videotaped taser death sues RCMP to retrieve footage" (Dhillon, 2007), "Officers calm as they fired tasers, man who shot video says" (Bailey, November 14h, 2007), and "Analyzing a fatal confrontation; Video stirs troubling questions on tasing of man who seemed a threat to no one" (Hume, 2007).

These data suggest that the initial conceptualization of the video involved the RCMP, the confrontation, the use of the taser, and Robert Dziekanski's death. Thus, the use of the term "video" concerns only a general description of the events (i.e., the RCMP tasered Robert

Dziekanski), as opposed to specific details (i.e., RCMP's involvement in Robert Dziekanski's death) of events that occurred. Throughout the documents where these connections were drawn, there were no descriptive or specific statements issued by the RCMP concerning the actual escalation of events. Indeed, there were no statements whatsoever for a period of five days following the public release of the video. The first response appeared in an article published in *The Province* quoting RCMP Commissioner (Comm.) William Elliot. Comm. Elliot addresses: "a perception that the RCMP has been silent since the airing of the disturbing video images earlier this week..." which had left him "concerned that growing misperceptions are eroding the public's confidence in the RCMP" (O'Connor and Hunter, 2007)

In addition, Comm. Elliot urges readers not to "judge" the integrity of the RCMP by what appeared in the video. These sentiments are echoed in statements released by RCMP Deputy Comm. Gary Bass and quoted in an article in *The Globe and Mail*. The statements criticized citizens as acting "very aggressively" towards the RCMP in light of Robert Dziekanski's death (Brethour, 2007). At this point, there have been no statements released concerning the actual escalation of events in the video (i.e., Robert Dziekanski threatened the officers, thus prompting the use of the taser). Instead, the "video" is used to describe the general sequence of the events (i.e., the confrontation between the RCMP and Robert Dziekanski involved the use of taser, which resulted in Robert Dziekanski's death) leaving the interpretation of the interaction (i.e., a step-by-step outline of what actually happened) undefined.

As a response to the lack of information released by the RCMP, BC's attorney general Wally Oppal, launched the full-scale Braidwood Inquiry to look into Robert Dziekanski's death. In an article published in *The Globe and Mail*, Mr. Oppal states:

We all viewed that horrible video, and the circumstances, and I think it's safe to say we were waiting for some kind of appropriate answer from the authorities and nothing was forthcoming at all...the public deserves answers (Brethour and Hunter, 2007).

Mr. Oppal's claim is important because it contributes to the RCMP's perceived role as the providers of the "appropriate" or "authorized" version of the cases' development. Significant information, however, arises prior to the commencement of the Braidwood Inquiry. In an article published in *The Globe and Mail*, claims made by Stan Lowe, a spokesperson for the Crown counsel, read, "The force [the officers] used to subdue and restrain [Robert Dziekanski] was reasonable and necessary in the circumstances," adding that there would be no reason to pursue criminal charges against the four RCMP members involved in the incident (Bailey and Alphonso, 2008). This information is furthered through the claim – reported by a "forensic psychologist" – that Robert Dziekanski did not die as result of the taser, and instead suffered from "sudden death following restraint... a syndrome that predates the use of tasers" (Bailey and Alphonso, 2008). According to the news media article, the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT), an RCMP subsidiary, released this information following the completion of the internal investigation surrounding Robert Dziekanski's death.

These claims represent the first instances of the RCMP distracting attention from the institution by identifying factors that contributed to Robert Dziekanski's death. Indeed, the decision to not pursue criminal charges against the officers, in addition to the claim that Robert Dziekanski died as a result of restraint, distances both the RCMP and the officers from the blame in this case. This is furthered through the RCMP's decision to withhold any official statements concerning the events represented in the video. These claims, however, emerge during the Braidwood Inquiry, where the RCMP uses the video contents to frame Robert Dziekanski as

suffering from “excited delirium,” and to demonstrate that he displays a “combative”, “aggressive” and “violent” demeanor towards the RCMP officers.

The lack of information about the video, in addition to the RCMP’s ability to suppress the video following the initial incident, suggests the spokespersons’ ability to frame the release of information and the on-going discussion surrounding Robert Dziekanski’s case. Indeed, the lack of an “authorized” or “official” definition of the situation led to the creation of the Braidwood Inquiry (May 5th, 2008 – June 18th, 2010), in an attempt to clarify the sequence of events from both the standpoint of the video and the testimony offered by the RCMP officers involved in the case. These connections between the suppression of the video and the RCMP’s framing of the case are furthered through the identification of specific claims made by the RCMP officers involved in the incident, as well as during the Braidwood Inquiry when senior officers issue claims in news media articles. The claims will be presented as themes in the following order: 1) The RCMP’s definition of “excited delirium,” 2) Robert Dziekanski as suffering from “excited delirium” and 3) Robert Dziekanski as combative, aggressive and violent.

5.4 RCMP and “Excited Delirium”

The first claims made about the video’s representation of events involve the RCMP’s use of the term “excited delirium.” According a news article from *The Globe and Mail*, the RCMP define “excited delirium” as:

...a potentially fatal ‘state of extreme mental and physiological excitement’ that is characterized by extreme agitation, hyperthermia, hostility, exceptional strength and endurance without apparent fatigue (Leeder and Alphonso, 2007).

This same article mentions that the RCMP revised its taser use policy three months before Robert Dziekanski’s death, in order to allow officers to deliver multiple electric shocks to an

individual suffering from “excited delirium.” In addition, those identified to be suffering from “excited delirium” are to be tasered, handcuffed, and then tasered once more before resorting to other methods of force. Cpl. Gregg Gilles, of the RCMP taser-trainers, is quoted in the article stating, “What officers are taught is to press the trigger, release and assess,” and when asked about the dangers of exposing individuals to multiple shots he states they “...may be hazardous. We don't know” (Leeder and Alphonso, 2007). Officers enrolled in this training course are also told that individuals suffering from “excited delirium” do not experience pain. Thus, more traditional methods of force (i.e., pepper spray and physical force) are less effective. The term is often employed by Taser International, and can be identified in various articles linked to their website.²²

According to Lawrence (2005), “excited delirium” “...was used to identify symptoms associated with the sudden death of members of the public while in police custody” (pp. 1). Most recently, “excited delirium” appears in news media articles covering the use of tasers by police forces around the world. Specifically, these reports mention tasers that have resulted in death(s). For this reason, the term is often employed directly by police media spokespersons, or claimsmakers, on behalf of the institution of policing (i.e., forensic pathologists or coroners). It is important to note that it is not a medically recognized term by the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, or the DSM-IV (Leeder and Alphonso, 2007). The use of this term, then, remains highly subjective, contextual and lacks any sort of formal or scientific basis.

²² Articles can be located using <http://www.taser.com/taser-in-the-news>. What is important to note with this website are the links which Taser International chooses to display on this page. Using a search prompt, you can locate where the term “excited delirium” appears in the mass media.

Furthermore, according to “An Independent Review of the Adoption and Use of Conducted Energy Weapons by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police” (Kiedrowski and Petrulink, 2008), the use of the term “excited delirium”:

“...can be considered to be “folk knowledge” when used by the police and should not be included in the RCMP’s operation manual unless subsequently formally approved by the RCMP after consultation with a mental-health-policy advisory board” (pp. 1)

This review, published June 5, 2008, in association with the RCMP, comes eight months prior to the commencement of the Braidwood Inquiry, when psychological experts testified that Robert Dziekanski presented with symptoms of “excited delirium.” Thus, despite the information presented in the report, as well as the lack of medical support for the concept of “excited delirium,” the RCMP continued to elicit claims connecting Robert Dziekanski’s behaviour with this term. The analysis of this connection, as evident in news media articles, shows the RCMP’s ability to frame the understanding of the case using specific claims. The existence of these claims frame Robert Dziekanski’s case in a specific manner. This notion or process is further explored through the claims made about Robert Dziekanski’s behaviour.

5.5 Robert Dziekanski and “Excited Delirium”

The first association between Robert Dziekanski and “excited delirium” appears in two articles published prior to the start of the Braidwood Inquiry (December 13 and 14, 2008). These articles detail the autopsy results surrounding Robert Dziekanski’s death for the first time in the on-going cases’ evolution. Both articles print similar information, stating:

Autopsy results outlined for the first time yesterday suggest various factors could have led to the heart attack that killed the 40-year-old Polish immigrant, including heart disease associated with chronic alcohol abuse, an agitated state of delirium and an

inability to breathe while being restrained (Bailey and Alphonso, 2008).

While the statement does not invoke the term “excited,” the description of Robert Dziekanski as suffering from heart disease as a result of alcohol abuse, as well as the identification of asphyxiation during officer restraint, are consistent with the symptoms and descriptions of “excited delirium” offered by Lawrence (2005). For this reason, the terms “agitated delirium,” and “delirium” were compiled during the analysis of “excited delirium.” Focusing again on the aforementioned claim, it is important to note how the statement frames Robert Dziekanski. First, he is portrayed as physiologically susceptible to heart attacks, a symptom of “excited delirium,” which was also considered to be the cause of death. Secondly, RCMP officers, according to Cpl. Gilles, are required to use the taser against civilians suspected of suffering from “excited delirium” or, in this case, “agitated delirium.”

The terms “agitated delirium,” “excited delirium” and “delirium” appear 45 times throughout the news media documents. In each instance, Robert Dziekanski’s name or a reference to him (i.e., “man”) follows within the same sentence. For instance, a headline from *The Globe and Mail* reads, “Man in agitated delirium before tasered, MD says” (Mertl, 2009). This same article, which is 287 words long, references “agitated delirium,” “delirium” and “excited delirium” a total of six times. For instance, the first sentence states:

A psychiatrist who reviewed evidence of Robert Dziekanski’s behavior leading up to his death at Vancouver’s airport concluded he was in a state of “agitated delirium” before he was shot several times with a taser stun gun (Mertl, 2009).

The psychiatrist quoted in this article is Dr. Lu Shao-Hua, “an expert in delirium syndrome as well as addiction medicine” (Mertl, 2009). Dr. Shao-Hua was hired by IHIT and testified during the Braidwood Inquiry after having submitted a report to the RCMP identifying “...several risk factors for delirium” displayed by Robert Dziekanski. In this case Dr. Shao-Hua

can be considered a claimsmaker due to the nature of the claims he is reporting. His claim presents Robert Dziekanski in a manner consistent with both the symptoms of “delirium” and his “alcohol related heart disease.” These connections are furthered in an article from *The Globe and Mail*, which states:

An expert, the Crown said, concluded Mr. Dziekanski was in a state of delirium caused by possible alcohol withdrawal, dehydration and a lack of sleep. An autopsy also found signs of chronic alcoholism, although there were no alcohol or drugs in his system at the time of his death (Bailey, 2009b).

It is interesting to note that despite the autopsy results indicating Robert Dziekanski was not intoxicated during the incident, the use of alcohol-related withdrawal and heart disease continues to emerge throughout the identification of “delirium”-related claims. In addition, officer testimony offered during the Braidwood Inquiry describes Robert Dziekanski as “extremely intoxicated” in addition to being “combative,” “violent,” and “aggressive,” despite video evidence suggesting otherwise (Keller, 2009).

The claims that Robert Dziekanski displayed “excited delirium,” “agitated delirium” and “delirium” frame him in manner that protects the integrity of the RCMP officers, and the RCMP as an institution. Indeed, the aforementioned definition of this syndrome and the subsequent identification of its symptomology justify the use of tasers by the officers involved. For this reason, the data suggest that the RCMP members involved in the tasing incident were using this weapon to minimize the threat posed by Robert Dziekanski. Indeed, further analysis indicates that claims made by the RCMP members involved in the incident portray Robert Dziekanski as a threat to both public and officer safety, once again enforcing the definition of the situation offered by the RCMP. After reviewing the data around “excited delirium,” terms intended to frame Robert Dziekanski as a threat to officer safety emerged. An analysis of the

data suggesting Robert Dziekanski as a threat will now be presented in accordance with the overall research frame that examines the RCMP's control over the discussion of Robert Dziekanski's case, including what is being said and how it is being said. This frame and its related subthemes contribute to the understanding of this case.

5.6 Robert Dziekanski as a “Threat”

The first claims made by Cst. Gerry Rundel – one of four officers involved in Robert Dziekanski's case – stem from articles published in *The Province* and *The Globe and Mail* (Fournier, 2009a; Bailey, 2009). One article states:

In testimony yesterday at the Braidwood inquiry into Mr. Dziekanski's death, RCMP Constable Gerry Rundel also said he recalled ‘fearing for my safety to a certain degree’ when Mr. Dziekanski began acting in a ‘to hell with you guys’ manner to the officers (Bailey, 2009b).

Cst. Rundel's statement identifies Robert Dziekanski as a threat. Further testimony offered by Cst. Rundel reveals that Robert Dziekanski was “perhaps disoriented...and in a state consistent with intoxicated males” as well as “...flipp[ing] his hands up and mov[ing] away from the officers in what was deemed to be a non-compliant way” (Bailey, 2009b). Cst. Rundel then describes Robert Dziekanski as “combative,” prompting the use of the taser. This testimony frames Robert Dziekanski in a manner that is consistent with the aforementioned description of “excited delirium.” Indeed, the descriptions of Robert Dziekanski's erratic movements, disorientation and “combative” posture all contribute to the framing of him as a threat.

In addition, further testimony states, “[Cst.] Rundel said that the ‘non-compliant’ posture, accompanied by Dziekanski's ‘threatening’ use of the stapler, permitted the deployment of the

taser” (Fournier, 2009b). Here, Cst. Rundel uses the term “threatening” to directly describe Robert Dziekanski. This statement is furthered in Cst. Bill Bentley’s testimony:

...at 1:30 am, Dziekanski was ‘sweating...wide-eyed and very agitated’ as the officers arrived, then turned and threw up his hands ‘in defiance,’ picked up a stapler ‘and advanced...in a combative position’ (Fournier, 2009c).

Both of these statements suggest that Robert Dziekanski wielded a stapler in a “combative” manner, which was interpreted by the officers as a threat to their overall safety. Cst. Millington reiterates this view:

He had the stapler open, his other fist raised. He was in a combative stance as we call it and was approaching the officers, I believe, with the intent to attack so I deployed the taser at that point (Bailey, 2009c).

Each of these statements reiterates the claim that Robert Dziekanski was a direct threat to officer safety. Furthermore, Both Cst. Millington and Cst. Bentley claim that their experience with law enforcement – Millington with four years and Bentley with 18 months – had taught them to interpret these gestures as “...Dziekanski was looking to fight” (Fournier, 2009b). Thus, the meaning of Robert Dziekanski’s actions (i.e., stapler wielding) were associated with the use of force (i.e., taser), demonstrating the decision to use the taser as simply a response to the definition of the situation, not an action that was predetermined.

These claims present Robert Dziekanski as a threat to officer safety. The officers’ interpretations of Robert Dziekanski’s behaviour as “threatening” and “combative” were qualified through their claims involving the stapler as a weapon. It was these actions, carried out by Robert Dziekanski, which prompted the officers to use the taser. The data suggest that the RCMP maintain the ability to control the case’s discussion in news media documents, as

evidenced through the claims that Robert Dziekanski suffered from “excited delirium” and threatened the officers’ safety. At this point, the discussion turns to the UGC.

5.7 User-Generated Content (UGC)

5.7.1 UGC – The Role of Crowd-Sourced Policing

One of the prominent themes, which emerged during the analysis of the UGC, mirrored Schneider and Trottier’s (2012) notion of “crowd-sourced policing.” This term can be defined as “...an emergent form of collective governance among social media users” (Schneider and Trottier, 2012, pp. 57). With the increase in social media platforms, users now engage in a form of “citizen policing” using criminal justice discourse in a manner that is consistent with yet distinguishable from the modern policing institution (Schneider and Trottier, 2012). I would like develop this concept to analyze how social media users engage in this form of civilian police work, in order to analyze how the RCMP frame the case, and whether or not these frames are represented, reproduced, or changed in the UGC. By doing so, this task satisfies the overall research problem seeking to analyze how police violence is framed in emergent forms of documentation (i.e. social media platforms) and has the process altered the understanding and communication surrounding the case of Robert Dziekanski.

The data gathered (UGC) suggest that users engaged in a form of pseudo police work, though, directed against the individual police officers involved in Robert Dziekanski’s case. From this perspective, crowd-sourced policing can be considered relevant approach to analyze the impact of social media in the case of Robert Dziekanski, as this concept directly contributes the research problem.

5.7.2 Criminal Justice Discourse

Any language referencing criminal justice discourse, whether it be institution-based (i.e., policing, judicial, etc.) or offence-related (i.e., assault, murder, etc.), was considered when analyzing the UGC. The initial search term “RCMP” occurred 2720 times across 924 pages of data, netting 124 pages of aggregated data. From here, terms such as “murder,” “police,” “justice,” “taser,” and “criminal” were identified and re-entered into the original data. The following user posts emerged.

Users posts suggest that justice was not provided to Robert Dziekanski. For instance, one user writes:

Nothing has happened to those murderers and nothing will because the RCMP is a state-sponsored criminal gang. They lied about every aspect of this murder from the start, they blamed the victim, they claimed that they would return Mr. Pritchard’s [memory card] within a couple of hours but kept it in the hope of suppressing evidence of their murder, they have lied in testimony given in every investigation. And nothing will be done unless we, the people of Canada, do something (YouTube, 2 years ago).

Similarly, another user states, “Many people are distrustful of the police and this is a perfect example of why. This is an act of criminal negligence and manslaughter charges should be laid” (YouTube, 2 years ago). These posts suggest that the RCMP, and the criminal justice system examining Robert Dziekanski’s case have not resulted in a proper or fair criminal trial. The first user-post emphasizes how “...we, the people of Canada” must do something. This example demonstrates the existence of crowd-sourced policing by identifying a community (i.e., Canadians) and the suggestion to deliver justice against the officers. Indeed, other user posts suggest that the claims made by the RCMP present their institution as one involving corruption. One user writes:

It appears the RCMP not only get to investigate themselves, but also decide discipline. So you can expect maybe some token act, but nothing much of any real justice. This bunch murdered someone and got away with it even when caught lying. When you see the lies and cover up go as far up the chain as they do, it makes you wonder just how corrupt the entire force is (CBC, June 18, 4:39am).

Indeed, the term “corrupt,” and the derivation “corruption,” are echoed in other user posts that refer to specific claims made by the RCMP. Another user adds, “Law enforcement would greatly improve their reputation if there was a zero tolerance for corruption and abuse among their members” (CBC, June 19, 2:37pm). Still, other users put it more simply, stating, “These cops should go to prison for manslaughter” (YouTube, 3 years ago) and “It is up to us as Canadians to DEMAND accountability for their actions. They killed a man – plain and simple” (YouTube, 3 years ago, *emphasis original*). Furthermore, users posted links to petitions²³ directly in their posts, urging other users to sign the petition, which advised the Prime Minister and Attorney General to reopen the criminal investigation against the RCMP officers.

Other user posts suggest that had civilians taken the place of the RCMP members, the end result would have been much different. For instance, one user writes, “Under the so-called Canadian justice system a way will be found to exonerate those members of the Canstapo. Only civilians are required to obey the law” (CBC, December 27, 4:45am). This particular user compares the RCMP to the Nazi Gestapo, suggesting that the Canadian judicial system will “exonerate” RCMP members, while finding non-officers guilty for crimes they have committed. Other users, however, were more specific: “If this was civilian’s involved in this, they would have been in and out of court and be serving time somewhere...no question and we know it” (CBC, December 6, 7:13am). These posts target the role played by the RCMP in cases where

²³ <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/212/297/027/>

their members are on trial for criminal behaviour. They are significant because the users identify terms (i.e., “court,” “exonerate,” “law”) that correlate directly with the work of the RCMP. Instead, the users are attempting to “police the police” through the use of criminal justice discourse. Though these posts are generally critical of the RCMP, other users were supportive of their actions:

They have also saved the lives of many officers who have been able to safely take down hundreds of criminals. While I’m here by the way, when was the last time you took on a 170+ lb crack head? Its easy to call cops pussies from behind a computer, son. But I guarantee the one’s I know fight till there’s nothing left, on the odd times they have to. I know nothing about you and am still willing to bet that damn near, if not all the cops you know could drop you without breaking a sweat (YouTube, 2 years ago).

This user presents the institution in a more positive light, suggesting the actions of the specific officers are not indicative of the institution as a whole. Another user adds:

Maybe instead of believing these officers are criminals for doing what they thought was right at a few minutes in time, you might want to take [a] time out, was your mouths out with soap, say a few prayers for the hundreds of RCMP officers who lost their lives to save your lives (CBC, April 2, 9:25pm).

These posts suggest a more positive framing of the RCMP in lieu of Robert Dziekanski’s death, by identifying positive aspects of police work. The same user writes, “Each and everyday RCMP officers....still answer your calls when you are in danger, take drunk drivers off the roads, so they don’t wipe out your family” (CBC, April 2, 9:25 pm). The majority of user posts, however, suggest that the RCMP officers should be charged with murder:

Poor guy. He was just nervous, but didn't show any aggressivity and was just talking to the cops. Five cops need to use a [t]aser and kill him? Come on!!! They are murderers! I hope they rot in hell! (YouTube, 2 years ago).

This sentiment is echoed by another user: "I hope that one day these four RCMP murderers will get what they deserve, scum" (YouTube, 6 months ago), and again, "They are murderers, and I would love to shoot a tazer dart up each ones ass, and watch the pigs squirm! The Royal Canadian Mounted police are a disgrace, Hang em!" (pflo99, 5 years ago). These posts identify the use of specific terms (i.e., murder) that relate to police work. Thus, a large part of how the social media users discuss Robert Dziekanski's case is through language or discourse associated with the criminal justice system. This language is then reversed and reapplied to the RCMP, relating to a form of pseudo police work. The data suggests that through social media platforms, online users communicate and interact with Robert Dziekanski's case by targeting the RCMP, and specific officers involved. While this form of crowd-sourced policing differs from that proposed by Schneider and Trottier (2012), I argue that online users engaging in this form of communication and interaction reproduce RCMP claims in an effort to "police the police", thus contributing to a form of online social activism. In doing so, the users frame the case or contribute to its framing, within the confines presented by the RCMP, including what is being said (e.g., taser, aggressive, murder) and how it is being said (e.g., the RCMP tasered Robert Dziekanski).

5.7.3 The Rejection of the RCMP Claims – "Excited Delirium" and the Stapler

Using a base search term of "RCMP," the aggregated data set produced user posts also referencing the terms "excited delirium" and "stapler." Both of these terms appear as direct RCMP claims made in the news media articles. The reproduction of these claims, evident in the

user posts, suggest that users are making sense of the case through the on-going claims that RCMP officers made in the news media documents. In many cases the user posts which identify a specific claim, then critique that claim and suggest an alternative method for “policing the police” providing a development to Schneider and Trottier’s (2012) crowd-sourced policing. Those claims, which emerged during the analysis of the data, refer to “excited delirium,” and Robert Dziekanski’s use of the “stapler.” They will be discussed below.

The first claim to emerge in the UGC was “excited delirium.” Much of its use in the user posts suggest that the term allowed the RCMP to get away without being accountable for its role in Robert Dziekanski’s death. One user suggests:

“According to the RCMP they’re not even responsible. Tasers are absolutely ‘safe.’ That poor man died of ‘excited delirium.’ YEAH RIGHT! Has anyone been fired? Faced charges? Are the RCMP accountable or are they above the law? (YouTube, 6 months ago).

Similarly, another user adds:

“To thinking people – the fact that ‘excited delirium’ is still used as an excuse for killing someone after they have been excessively tazered multiple times further stains the credibility of our police forces AS A WHOLE” (CBC, June 19, 2010).

These posts suggest that the RCMP’s use of the term “excited delirium” absolves the institution of accountability and/or responsibility for its role in Robert Dziekanski’s death.

Another user adds: “Well guess what, no one dies of “excited delirium” until tazers are used!” (YouTube, 5 years ago). The connections drawn between these posts suggest that the RCMP used “excited delirium” as a tactic to distance itself from any associated blame. Indeed, users also made indirect references to the term’s vague or inauthentic nature. For instance, one user wrote: “Gotta watch out for the Excited Delirium and Female Hysteria” (YouTube, 3 years ago),

suggesting that the fictitious nature of the syndrome elicits comparisons to a historical term used to diagnose women, who presented with symptoms similar to that of “excited delirium.” Another user echoes this sentiment, writing:

The term has no formal medical recognition and is not recognized the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. There is also a link between “excited delirium” deaths and the use of Tasers to subdue agitated people (CBC, June 19, 2010).

This particular post mentions how “excited delirium” remains a syndrome that is not medically accepted. In addition, the use of the term “agitated” is of particular interest, seeing as how the RCMP refer to Robert Dziekanski as suffering from “agitated delirium” in news media articles. Another user directly references the police in a post, stating:

What I mean is that every death caused by using a tazer is actually skirted around. The victim was doing this or on this (Robert was totally clean of anything by the way) or the victim had a medical condition or the cops say the victim has “excited delirium.” But they don’t acknowledge the fact that he wouldn’t have died if they didn’t taze him, they just say the ‘excited delirium’ killed him (YouTube, 5 years ago).

The user reproduces police claims by using the term “the cops say.” Instead of simply explaining his or her personal interpretation of the case, the user references the claims that Robert Dziekanski was intoxicated, that he suffered from a medical condition, and that the RCMP used the term “excited delirium” to explain Robert Dziekanski’s death. Thus, three separate claims made by the RCMP are reproduced in one post. And then, all are denounced, implying the RCMP was unsuccessful in its framing of Robert Dziekanski. Another user contributed to this notion, stating:

Okay, why is it when you beat someone up with a bat and they have a heart attack, you caused their death by beating them up with a bat- but if you taze someone and they die of

a heart attack (or whatever else happened) its not your fault and the tazer had nothing to do with the hear[t] attack. The guy had excited delirium (YouTube, 5 years ago).

This post references the RCMP's decision to not pursue criminal charges against the four officers involved in the incident. Here, the user compares Robert Dziekanski's case to one involving two civilians. These civilians are engaged in an altercation where one is subsequently killed with a baseball bat. In Robert Dziekanski's situation, however, the user suggest the taser was not what led to his death, and instead, it was the heart attack suffered during the altercation, as a result of the "excited delirium."

These posts reference the RCMP's ability to frame Robert Dziekanski's case, though they are presented in a manner that disqualifies the RCMP's presentation of events. The use of the term "excited delirium" is one which initially was reported and defined by the RCMP in the news media articles covering the case. Users, then, reproduced this claim in their posts, in a manner which discredits it or, at the very least illustrates that it is an invalid description of what actually transpired. This is also evidenced through the identification of user posts involving Robert Dziekanski's use of a stapler as a weapon.

5.7.4 The Stapler

User posts referencing the term "stapler" represent a reproduction of this RCMP claim. These posts, however, questioned the authenticity of the original claim produced by the RCMP. This is evidenced in a large number of the posts focusing on the RCMP's claim that Robert Dziekanski wielded a stapler in a "combative" and "aggressive" manner. These data are significant because the users reproduce specific claims made by the RCMP in an effort to "police the police" or denounce their frame. This data also contributed to the conceptualization of crowd-sourced policing. Put simply, the users identify the claim that Robert Dziekanski used a

“stapler” as a weapon, criticize this claim on the basis of a working knowledge concerning the disproportionate use of force that the RCMP engaged in, and thus resisted or rejected the overall framing of this aspect of case.

One user suggests:

The police did not witness Dziekanski throw anything. They had no grounds to use force at all, other than the lie ‘he brandished’ a stapler and swung at them ‘20 or more times.’

The taser is not intended as a replacement for firearms. It is classified as a ‘pain compliance’ device at the same level as a fist or a baton (CBC, April 1, 2010).

This post implies that the RCMP could have avoided using the taser by instead using hand-to-hand force. Interestingly, the user identifies the taser as a weapon classified in the same range as a “fist or baton,” thus suggesting that the level of force that the officers used indicates that the threat posed by Robert Dziekanski was not severe enough to warrant the use of a firearm. The post also contains specific terms in quotations, such as “he brandished.” This post reproduces the use of the term “brandished” issued by Cst. Monty Robinson during the Braidwood Inquiry, and that subsequently appeared throughout news media articles (Fournier, March 24, 2009).

Another user adds:

The RCMP offered their apology in such a timely manner too! But they still don't admit any excessive force. One tired man with a stapler against four men with batons, mace, self defense training, and supposedly brains besides the tasers and guns (CBC, April 1, 2010).

Here, the user suggests that a disproportionate amount of force was applied to Robert Dziekanski. The use of the term “excessive force,” the identification of the array of weapons the RCMP are licensed to use during civilian interaction, and the officers outnumbering Robert

Dziekanski four to one demonstrates this connection. Furthermore, this user specifically identifies an RCMP member, Cst. Monty Robinson, the officer whose testimony focused on Robert Dziekanski's use of the stapler as a weapon. These data suggest that the RCMP officers used their tasers as a response to Robert Dziekanski, who was perceived as a threat, as opposed to the officers predetermined decision to use the taser (Hall, 2009). Interestingly, other users noted this connection. One user wrote:

For those of you who say Mr. Dziekanski's death was his own fault, I implore you to watch the cell phone footage of the event on youtube. In the video you can clearly hear one of the RCMP ask if they can use the taser before they even confronted Dziekanski. The answer from Monty Robinson, the lead officer, was a very clear 'yup.' The officers had already decided they were going to taser Dziekanski before they even entered the room[;] saying he threatened them with a stapler was just an excuse (CBC, April 1, 2010).

This post suggests that the users' understanding of Robert Dziekanski's case arises from both the video and the RCMP claims made in news media articles. In addition, we can assume that the user posits that the decision to use the taser was made prior to arrival, and the focus on Robert Dziekanski's use of a stapler as a weapon was just "an excuse" used by RCMP. Another user also references the video, stating: "You cannot see his hands at that point in the video [but] the RCMP officers testify that Robert had a stapler in his hands and they felt threatened by it" (YouTube, 3 years ago). These data are significant because, even though the video depicts the incident from the point of view of a bystander or non-RCMP, the users are largely rejecting the RCMP claims which frame the case in a particular manner. This is a significant finding because the users, though reproducing the RCMP claims and thus staying within the overall frame of the case, are nonetheless engaged in publicly shaming the RCMP as an institution. From this

connection, one could suggest that social media platforms have the potential to present a space for online users to engage in a form of social accountability. This finding contributes to the overall research problem, providing evidence to recommend that social media platforms, as an emergent form of documentation, have altered the understanding of Robert Dziekanski's case.

5.8 Summary

The analysis of both the user-generated content and the news media articles suggest that the RCMP framed the initial discussion surrounding Robert Dziekanski's case. This was evidenced through both the production of claims made by the RCMP in the news media documents, and the subsequent rejection of these claims in the UGC. With respect to the overall research problem – How is police violence framed in emergent forms of social documentation (i.e., news media and social media documents) and has this process altered the understanding and communication surrounding specific cases? - the data imply the RCMP were unsuccessful in portraying their initial frame of the case, as evidenced in the UGC presented from both YouTube and CBC social media platforms.

In addition, the theme of crowd-sourced policing - where online media users attempted to “police the police” using criminal justice discourse and rejecting specific RCMP claims – contributes the research problem. This theme, which can be considered as a result of emergent forms of cultural documentation (i.e., UGC), demonstrates a point of development within the sphere of police violence. As opposed to a one-way news media article, which reports information from claimsmakers to an intended audience, this form of crowd-sourced policing identifies two-way communication bridged by social media platforms and their users (Best, 2008; Altheide & Snow, 1979). Examples such as users rejecting the claims presenting Robert Dziekanski as suffering from “excited delirium” and acting in a “combative,” “aggressive” and

“violent” manner provide justification for this claim. Social media platforms, then, could be used to identify a specific form of crowd-sourced policing involving users “policing the police,” which suggests that a new form of understanding has emerged as a result of this form of documentation, which directly relates to the overall research problem.

6. Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the findings presented in chapters three and four in relation to the initial research problem and theoretical commitments of this project. As a theory, SI is useful for studying police violence because the levels of social interaction (i.e., police-civilian, civilian-document) and the acquisition of meaning (i.e., media platforms) are central tenets to this theoretical orientation. This process was analyzed in conjunction with two case studies, identifying a dominant research frame and related themes. First, the RCMP's ability to frame the initial understandings of both cases will be presented. This will also be done within the confines of the research problem, identifying social media platforms as an emergent form of documentation for the understanding of police violence. Second, the theme of crowd-sourced policing will be examined as a potential site for the existence of social accountability. Using contemporary research conducted by Bonner (2009) it will be demonstrated that crowd-sourced policing offers a bridge between social media and social accountability. Third, an emergent theme regarding national identity in the case of Robert Dziekanski will be outlined from the UGC. Finally, future directions of this research will be identified.

6.1 The Changing Nature of Police Violence

Police violence is a result of police work. Officers are given license to use violence as a means of regulating violence, thus perpetuating the degree of violent interaction within society. In certain instances, however, the use of violence by police officers exceeds socially agreed-upon contingencies, resulting in the claim of police violence or, in the cases of Mr. Buddy Tavares and Mr. Robert Dziekanski, the use of excessive force. Recently, the emergence of mobile communication technology (e.g., smartphones) and social media platforms allow

individuals the ability to record and comment on instances of police violence. The existence of these videos and the resultant UGC represent sites for the analysis of social media in conjunction with police violence, which represents an emergent form of documentation that has altered the understanding and framing of cases involving police violence.

The selected case studies involving Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski represent two documented instances of police violence, which generated online interaction and communication. In both cases, the initial release of information came from mass media news agencies (e.g., *The Globe and Mail* and *the Province*), claiming that an individual had been assaulted (i.e., Buddy Tavares) or died (i.e., Robert Dziekanski) as a result of an altercation with police officers. In addition, both cases involved the existence of a video spotlighting the actions of both the police and citizen. These videos served as one bridge between social media and news media in each case, as it is these videos that were uploaded to YouTube and commented on in CBC, spawning the identification of UGC in both social media platforms.

As Blumer (1969) notes, the third premise of SI holds that meaning making is constantly changing as a result of social interaction and interpretation. This tenet holds true when examining the shift in mass media discourse, from a news media document towards a social media document perspective. The word “video” was mentioned 1,640 times across the two data sets, suggesting its prominence in both the development and understanding of each case. Furthermore, direct quotations or claims made by RCMP spokespersons validate the utility of videos during the consideration and accusation of police violence (Nieoczym, 2011b).

The data suggest that the use of the term “video” in news media documents became symbolic for the events endured by both Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski. This sentiment is echoed through the isolation of the term “video” across the UGC data sets. One user, from the Dziekanski data set, noted, “This is a case of cold blooded murder, that is a fact and cannot be

debated, there is video evidence” (YouTube, 1 year ago). This post suggests that the “video” contributes to the understanding of this case. Moreover, another user from the Tavares data set adds, “I also believe the uproar from social media, has had it’s (sic) effect on this [case]. Much less is allowed to go quietly under the radar these days.” (CBC, June 18, 2010).

These user posts demonstrate a connection the role of the “video” and the impact of social media on the understanding of each case. Indeed, the changing nature of online social interaction resulting from the increase in social media represents an emergent form documentation, which as altered the understanding of police violence. In both cases, the initial role of the RCMP in producing claims and the control over the parameters of discussion framed the understanding of the cases’ evolution. Interestingly, specific UGC resisting the RCMP frame was noted in both cases. This research theme identified users rejecting claims made by the RCMP, implying that the RCMP’s attempt to frame each case was unsuccessful, in the realm of social media users. This theme represents a significant finding about social media, as it represents a site to analyze how understandings of police violence are changing. Furthermore, this connection can also be analyzed as a means to encourage social accountability of the police.

6.2 Crowd-Sourced Policing and Social Accountability

The most prominent theme that emerged during the data analysis stages of this project involves a version of Schneider and Trottier’s (2012) notion of crowd-sourced policing. This term refers to a form of “collective governance among social media users,” emphasizing the use of criminal justice discourse by users despite an affiliation with this institution (Schneider and Trottier, 2012, pp. 57). Crowd-sourced policing, in this project, differed from that original version proposed by Schneider and Trottier (2012) through the incorporation of social media users posts “policing the police.” This notion is evidenced through the use of criminal justice

discourse and the rejection of RCMP claims/frames made in both the Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski cases. Here, I offer a development of crowd-sourced policing, which engages with Schneider and Trottier's (2012) consideration of online users "policing" themselves. I take this development in crowd-sourced policing one step further, by considering this online form of social interaction as one which encourages social accountability of the police through its connection with the RCMP's framing of events.

Bonner (2009) argues that the members of the media exist as agents of social accountability. Bonner's (2009) argument is as follows:

...the media act as a mechanism of social accountability by not only shaming and activating mechanisms of horizontal accountability (reactive forms of accountability) but also providing a forum for debate for a plurality of actors to establish *who* should be held accountable, *what* they should be held accountable for, and *how* they should be held accountable (pp. 297).

With respect to this research project, I would like to include social media in Bonner's definition (2009). In each case study, the UGC heavily emphasizes criminal justice discourse, condemning the actions of the officers, and suggesting punishments that parallel practices of the criminal justice system. Indeed, these posts contributed the conceptualization of crowd-sourced policing as a way for online social media users to "police the police." The posts were identified for their use of the term "accountable" when referencing the events depicted in the video and the claims that the RCMP spokespersons made in news media documents.

One user from the Robert Dziekanski data set notes, "Finally, someone with common sense. Anyone who watched the video could see that excessive force was used. Those involved need to be held accountable" (CBC, June 16, 2010). Similarly, another user from the Robert Dziekanski data set adds:

According to the RCMP they're not even responsible. Tasers are absolutely 'safe.' That poor man died of 'excited delirium.' YEAH RIGHT! Has anyone been fired? Faced charges? Are the RCMP accountable or are they above the law? (YouTube, 4 years ago).

These posts suggest that the social media platforms act as sites to encourage social accountability, within the parameters set by the RCMP. In both instances, users identify the RCMP as denying any accountability for the actions of its officers directly involved in Robert Dziekanski's case. This sentiment is furthered in the Tavares UGC. One user states:

“RCMP management continues to cover up and deny unacceptable police activities. It seems, from the outside, that a real shakeup at the top is needed to try to get rid of this old entrenched attitude that they are not accountable to the Canadian public. Their attitude is anachronistic and self-destructive” (CBC, January 26, 2011).

This post invokes similar questions surrounding the accountability of the RCMP as an institution. Using these posts as examples, each of Bonner's (2009) who, what, and how tenets of media as agents of social accountability have been satisfied. The posts identify the RCMP as being guilty of police violence. The posts say that the RCMP should be held accountable by admitting its guilt to the general public. Through crowd-sourced policing then, the emergent version, in which users attempt to utilize social media as a means of “policing the police,” acts a bridge between social media and accountability. This is evidenced by the use of criminal justice discourse directed towards the policing institution, as well as the reproduction of RCMP claims in a manner that negates or challenges the RCMP's parameters of discussion. This idea could inspire future research investigating the connection between crowd-sourced policing, social media, and social accountability.

6.3 National Identity

The significance of national identity, and more specifically being Canadian, was identified in the UGC surrounding Robert Dziekanski's case. Users identifying as Canadian, in many instances, distinguish themselves from the violence sustained by Mr. Dziekanski. One user notes:

As a Canadian citizen I am deeply ashamed and disgusted by the way the situation at the Vancouver International Airport was handled by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. I see no reason why Robert Dziekanski should have been tasered in the first place, yet alone three more times. The video recording clearly shows the Polish immigrant surrounded by the RCMP with his arms lowered to his sides (YouTube, 3 years ago).

The user identifies him or herself as being a Canadian citizen that is 'disgusted' with the treatment afforded to Mr. Dziekanski. Indeed, users identifying themselves as being 'Canadian' or a 'Canadian citizen', often attempt to separate or distinguish the RCMP's actions as not indicative of Canadian values. In addition to the term "Canadian citizen", the theme of national or civic identity explores user posts dedicated to condemning the national identities of others. One user notes: "I'm American but I thought Canada was against capital punishment!" (YouTube, 5 years ago). Another user adds, "Gotta love these Americans in the comments hating on Canada when their country does [this] type of shit every fucking week" (YouTube, 2 months ago). These users condemn the associated national identities through the existence of police violence among their specific nations. Indeed, other users engaged in a form of self-shame through the identification of tenets usually associated or understood to be a crucial aspect of their national identity.

For example, one user notes, "As a Canadian, I am embarrassed by what happened in my country, by people that wear the uniform of the RCMP" (CBC, April 1, 2011). Another user

adds:

This should anger all Canadians. That these four goons have only been charged with perjury Is the most damning Indictment of our legal system (you cannot call It a justice system) that I can think of. These four monsters beat an unarmed man to death on national television and the only thing they are being charged with Is lying about It! This Is an outrage (CBC, May 12, 2011.

These users express their shame in connection with Mr. Dziekanski's death. Thus, each user and their associated post contributes to the notion of national identity through the disassociation between Robert Dziekanski's case and what can be considered 'normal' Canadian conduct. Others, however, feel that it was the officer who deserved the blame, demonstrating another attempt to separate or distinguish Canadian values from this case. One user adds:

“This was/is the shame of Canada and you dolts are still trying to justify your buddies sickening shame of Canada! Do us a favour, go be a cop in China where you can act like rogue, we don't need anymore like these folks!!! thx! (YouTube, 5 years ago)

In both instances, the posts present a “Canadian citizen” theme. The users claim to represent the penultimate “Canadian” through the use of “As a Canadian” and “This should anger all Canadians” statements. Other users, however, defend the RCMP's actions through the identification of their institution as representative of Canadian values. This user notes, “Its not Canada's job to cater to the needs of people coming here. RCMP did nothing wrong”(YouTube, 1 year ago). Others put it more candidly, “Welcome to Canada.....next beatdowns g20 Toronto” (YouTube 2 years ago). This particular statement references the G20 summit which took place in Toronto, Ontario, Canada during June 2010. Still, other users note “[Robert Dziekanski] came to Canada for what he thought would be a better life...only to have the RCMP end his life” (YouTube, 2 years ago).

In both the news media documents and social media documents Mr. Dziekanski was presented as being unable to speak English, resulting in a complicated interaction with the RCMP officers, as displayed in the video. Indeed, Dziekanski's inability to speak English was spotlighted among user-posts as both a way to defend the RCMP's actions, and as a way to criticize these particular officers – and the RCMP as an institution – for their inability to communicate with non-Canadians. One user comments:

Living in one of the most immigrated-to cities in Canada, being well-trained in the ethics of dealing with non-English speaking immigrants should, in all fairness, be a major priority for our officers. It blows my mind that anybody could be so ignorant to the plight of somebody arriving in a completely foreign country for the first time after having known only one culture (YouTube, 3 years ago).

In opposition, another user suggests, “Ask yourself this: how would YOU deal with a big, fat, violent guy? Wrestle him to the ground? Also no excuse can be made for his lack of English...he was planning to come here for EIGHT YEARS” (YouTube, 3 years ago). Other users noted: “please don't come to Canada if u [sic] can't speak English or French. U R putting lives of these poor policemen in danger...” (YouTube, 4 years ago). Thus, user posts demonstrate both sides of the argument, condemning Canada as an English first nation, and blaming Mr. Dziekanski for having no knowledge of the dominant language.

This emergent theme is relevant to this overall project, as the social media platforms allow users to form a sense of identity through the association with specific ethnic terms (i.e., Canadian) and claims (i.e., the construction of the Canadian citizen). The data suggest that the users' understanding of the case stems from their conceptualization of national identity and whether this construction is in line with or against the violence experienced by Mr. Dziekanski.

6.4 Future Directions of Research

The analysis of social media platforms, as emergent forms of documentation, addresses a gap in the literature examining violent interactions between police and citizens. Whereas previous literature such as that by Lawrence (2000) and Simon and Hirschfield (2010) examined news media narratives, a great deal of information exchange and communication is now taking place through the use of social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr. This study placed equal emphasis on social media documents (e.g., UGC) and news media documents in attempt to fill this research gap. The information gained by analyzing the UGC demonstrates the importance of social media in the understanding of police violence, a process that is changing as a result of these platforms.

For instance, many RCMP members are using Twitter and Facebook accounts as an aspect of their work. These social media channels offer insightful data when exploring various facets of police work such as citizen-officer relations, social media policing, and surveillance. Social media websites can also serve a prominent role when investigating instances of police violence, in order to analyze police media spokespersons' statements in response to these incidents. For instance, in both cases studied in this project, officer testimony was prepared in advance, and likely screened prior to public release. Having access to individual officers' Twitter accounts would allow for unfiltered and unedited access to direct information relating to the officers' roles in said interaction as well as their thoughts surrounding mass media, the citizen, etc. In addition, the RCMP's Facebook pages may serve as a platform for critical discussion following newfound cases of police violence.

The multitude of RCMP Facebook pages release articles relating to the institution's history and influence in Canada, deaths of officers on duty, international influence, and crime-stopping tips. The page currently has 35,601 "likes." Likes function as a form of online

endorsement by current Facebook users. Each article posted by the RCMP Facebook moderator can be commented on and “liked” by users. These comments, though, serve as potential sites to speak out against or in support, depending on the user, and can be included as UGC during the analysis of policing-related research topics.

Both the Buddy Tavares and Robert Dziekanski cases have dedicated Facebook pages, whereby users have created a space to post comments, opinions, editorials, links to other information (i.e., media articles), etc. These pages contain a great deal of information relating to the cases. Future research endeavors examining these cases may explore the UGC available on these platforms to track further emergent themes and patterns relating to social media impact. Thus, the multitude of approaches available for the study of police violence through social media documents is plentiful, lending to its importance in the arena of academic research.

As future directions for research, the incorporation of social media platforms and UGC allows for a broad array of implications both for police violence and other areas of social life such as, but not limited to: politics, policy change, judicial system, education, and medicine. Indeed, the result of this style of research may contribute to an increased awareness of social accountability for the policing institution, as previously identified in this research project. Another implication may involve the RCMP or various policing institutions decision to adopt the user of personal recording devices which may serve to counteract the use of these devices by civilians. These implications may result in several institutional changes, including the advancement of RCMP or policing institutional presence within social media.

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Appendix A: Protocol Construction

Protocol Outline – News Media Documents

- 1) Publication Title -
- 2) Date of Publication -
- 3) Section of Report -
- 4) Length of Report -

Headline:

Author:

- 5) Topics covered:
- 6) Focus of Report:
- 7) Sources:
 - a. Police
 - b. Civilians
- 8) Language Used:
- 9) Theme(s):
- 10) Claim(s):
 - a. RCMP -
 - b. Other Institution -
- 11) Frame(s):
- 12) Summary of Article:
- 13) Points-of-Interest:

Protocol Outline – User-Generated Content

- 1) Source:
 - a. CBC News

b. YouTube

Username:

Date added:

Topic(s):

2) Theme(s):

a. RCMP Claims -

b. Crowd-Sourced Policing -

Frame(s):

Summary:

Point(s) of Interest: