

Abstract

An emergency situation like terrorism brings many dilemmas to media ethics. This thesis focuses on the question of how selected Czech journalists ethically cover the topic of terrorism, even though the Czech Republic has not experienced a major terrorist attack of the kind seen in Western Europe after 2015. First, the concept of terrorism and its forms and trends are described, then the relationship between terrorism and the media is presented. To illustrate how codes of ethics think about such events, three Czech audiovisual media codes and three foreign ones, available in English, are compared. In the empirical part, the paper focuses on data from qualitative research and follows the principles of grounded theory. Interviews with eight journalists provide insight into how they think about ethics when reporting on terrorism, what rules they have developed and what other ethical areas they draw rules from. Among the principles they name, verifying information, not publishing explicit footage without reason, or trying to suppress information about a terrorist. Another finding is that selected journalists perceive that terrorists want to gain visibility through the media and by reporting on the acts, journalists help fulfill their cause. The result of the thesis is not a comprehensive theory but an insight into the ethical principles in specific situations that the respondents follow.