

# Refining your approach: from search to storytelling

## Tutorial 2 - Media Suite - *Refining your approach*

*MAKE Teaching Fellowship*

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# How to approach searching and making creative stories with the Media Suite's cultural heritage content

Second co-creative lab session:

- › What is a **visual exhibition** and what is expected?
- › What do we want to focus on in our VE (working in different steps towards a **proposal**)
- › How to refine your approach **from search and close/distant reading to storytelling** (to, ultimately, produce a multimodal storytelling product)
- › The importance of **(self-)reflection and tool criticism** within the context of storytelling and design thinking with digital heritage materials, especially focussing on affordances for reuse/remix, access to media types (i.e., genres) and search strategies

How to *refine* your approach: from search and close/distant reading to storytelling  
(to, ultimately, produce a multimodal storytelling product)

We made a 'miniature' visual exhibition as an example and will take you along in the narrative creation process  
*(explore, refine, produce)*

Of course, there are different ways to go about this, depending on what story you wish to tell, using which media types (narrative capacities), and for which audience!

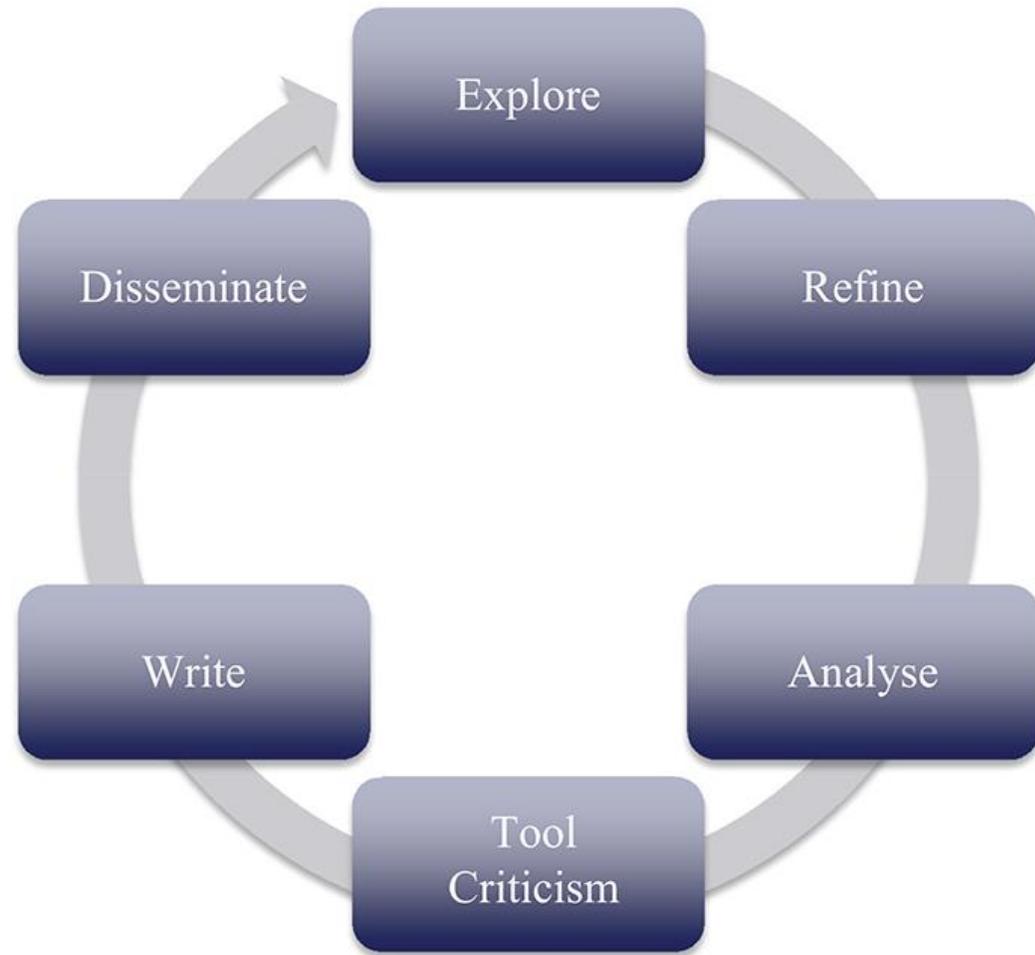
# Thinking the other way around

## Thinking the other way around

- Immediate results vs. inductive results
- Impact of the tool on your approach
  - Iterative information extraction
  - Storytelling through data

...and, therefore, alters **the way one makes sense of the world**

# Exploratory search using the Media Suite



“Exploratory search can result in new perspectives and approaches which in turn benefit the initial research” – Media Studies researcher (Hagedoorn & Sauer 2018)

**Iterative approach!**

Figure *The Research Journey*

from: Hagedoorn, B. and Sauer, S., 2018. The Researcher as Storyteller: Using Digital Tools for Search and Storytelling with Audio-Visual Materials. *VIEW* <http://doi.org/10.18146/2213-0969.2018.jethc159>

# Distant vs. Close reading

Can't see the forest for the trees? → Don't look at the trees!

**Close reading:** searching the story

**Distant reading:** finding the story (the exploratory approach)

([Moretti, 2000](#))

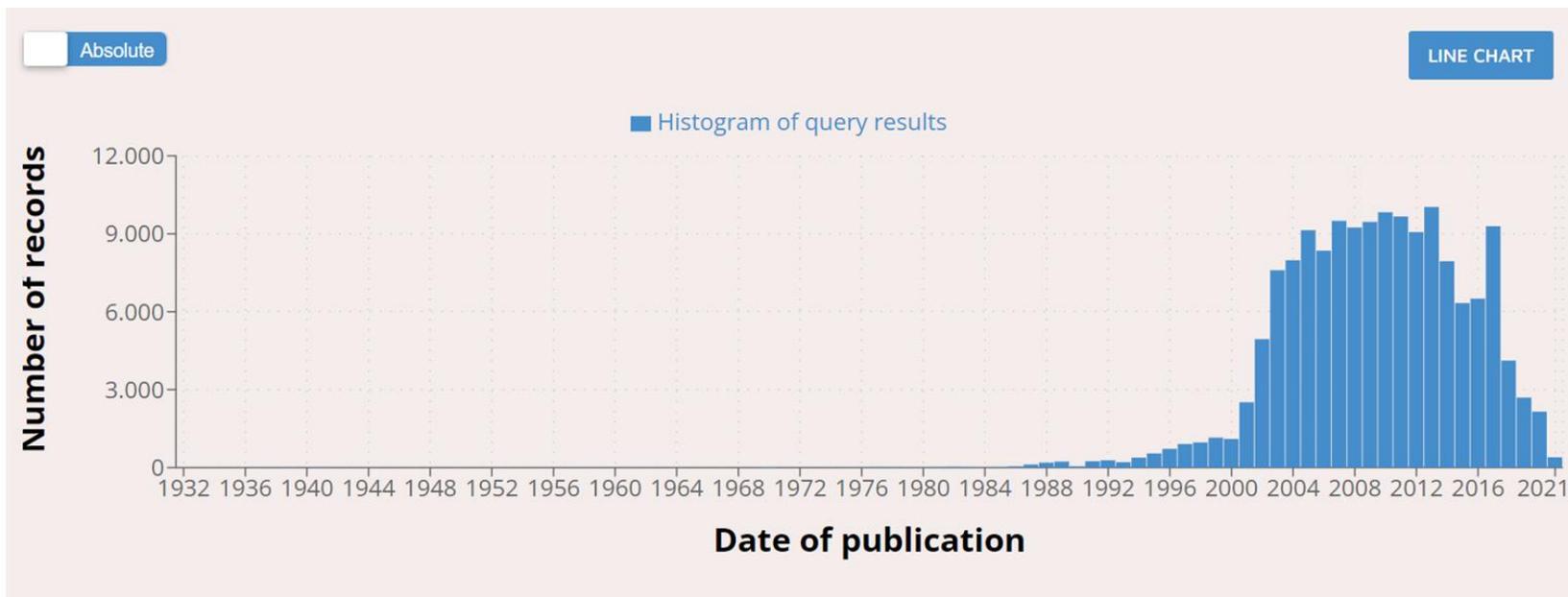
A new tool requires new tactics:

- Google: harvest information by using an already defined concept (i.e. keyword)
- Media Suite: define a concept by harvesting information (i.e. **thinking the other way around**)



# Distant reading using the Media Suite

Definition: “a method of criticism that uses computational and data-analysis techniques to identify meaningful patterns by aggregating and analyzing great amounts of data” Source: Cheema, M., Jänicke, S., Scheuermann, G. (2016). Enhancing Close Reading. In Digital Humanities 2016: Conference Abstracts. Jagiellonian University & Pedagogical University, Kraków, pp. 758-761. <https://dh2016.adho.org/abstracts/339>



Results **157.325**

[+ ADD A NEW FACET](#)

**mediaType**

Search facet ... 5 terms

Empty field 0

audio 108775

image 3

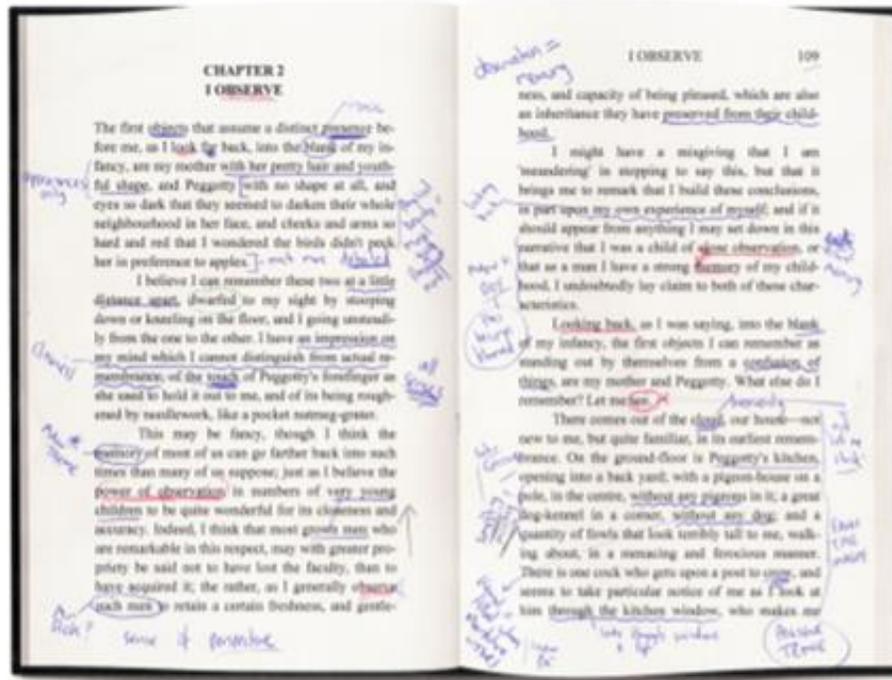
text 18

video 48529

# Close reading

Definition: “close reading is the thorough interpretation of an item by the determination of central themes and the analysis of their development.”

Quote & images from: Cheema, M., Jänicke, S., Scheuermann, G. (2016). Enhancing Close Reading. In Digital Humanities 2016: Conference Abstracts. Jagiellonian University & Pedagogical University, Kraków, pp. 758-761. <https://dh2016.adho.org/abstracts/339>



(a) Traditional close reading.



(b) Digital close reading with eMargin.

# From reading to storytelling

Distant reading + close reading = inductive interpretation

Inductive interpretation + context = empirical narrative

Empirical narrative + empirical narrative + etc. = making sense of the world (*i.e. storytelling as socio-cultural practice*)

So, how would you define the notion of distant/close storytelling?

# Integrating distant and close reading in storytelling

→ **Storytelling** = product of narrative creation

→ **Distant storytelling**: empirical narrative creation derived from a distant reading approach

→ **Close storytelling**: empirical narrative creation derived from a close reading approach

Both are used to **engage a certain target group** in your **sensemaking process** of a certain **concept**. Both are a **result** of your **research process**.

# Storytelling through a visual exhibition (1)

Our example RQ: **In the news genre, how has the use of the notions ‘fake news’ and ‘conspiracy theory’ changed over time in spoken media artifacts?** (based on Media Suite content i.e. public service broadcasting)

Step 1: Select the right keywords and facets in the Media Suite to inspect, search and explore

Step 2: Use ‘select datefield’ in order to narrow down the search

Step 3: Inspect the results and refine your search query if necessary

Step 4: Select relevant data, annotate\*, analyse and interpret

Step 5: Repeat until you have created your desired empirical narrative

Step 6: Produce, add annotation\* and share your story :-)

\* first Search, Enrich (e.g. add bookmarks); then after you have done part of this work; then best Select; Contextualize... (see also the overview on slide 4)

\*\* add reference in the video itself: provide in-text information on the used collections: which content (e.g. which tv programmes, which date, etc) you used. Add annotation in APA for all sources and add a bibliography at the end of the video.

# Example of a visual exhibition created with the Media Suite

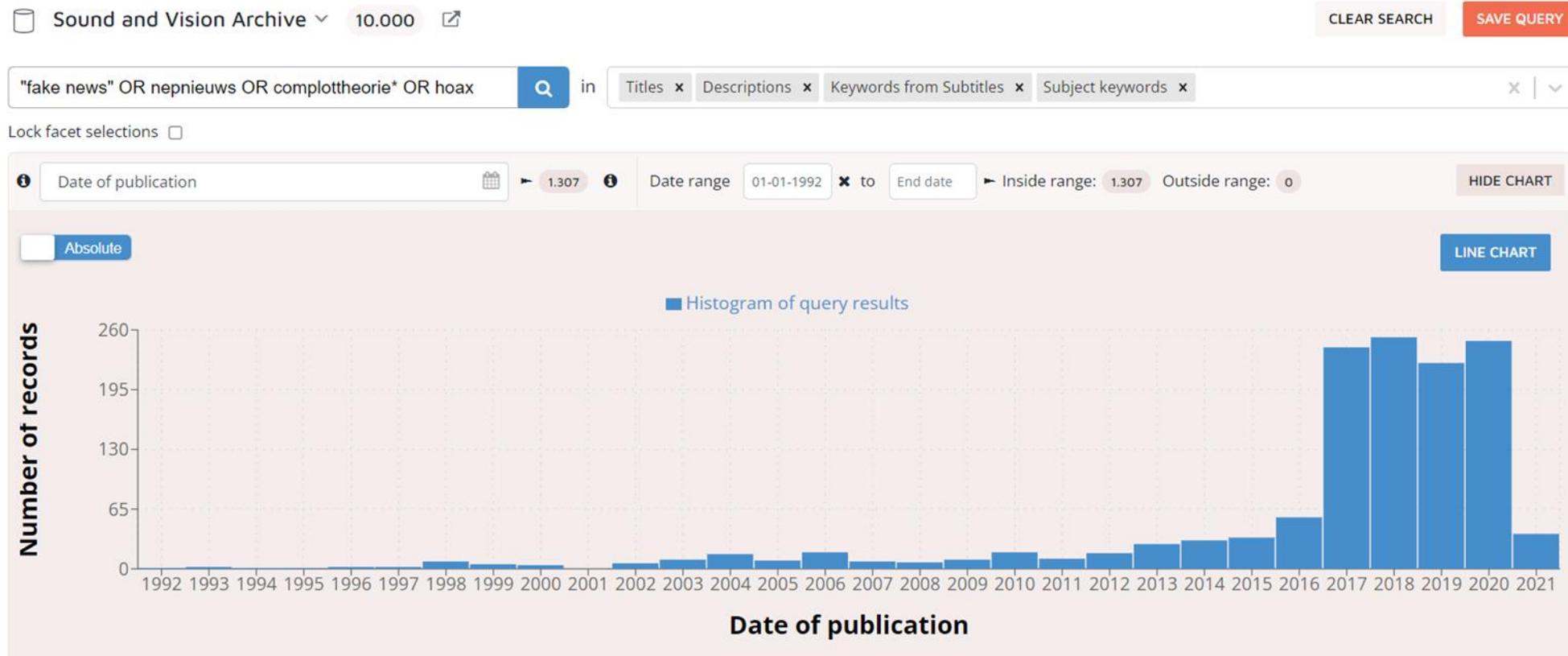


This video demonstrates an example of a visual exhibition: **multimodal timelines**

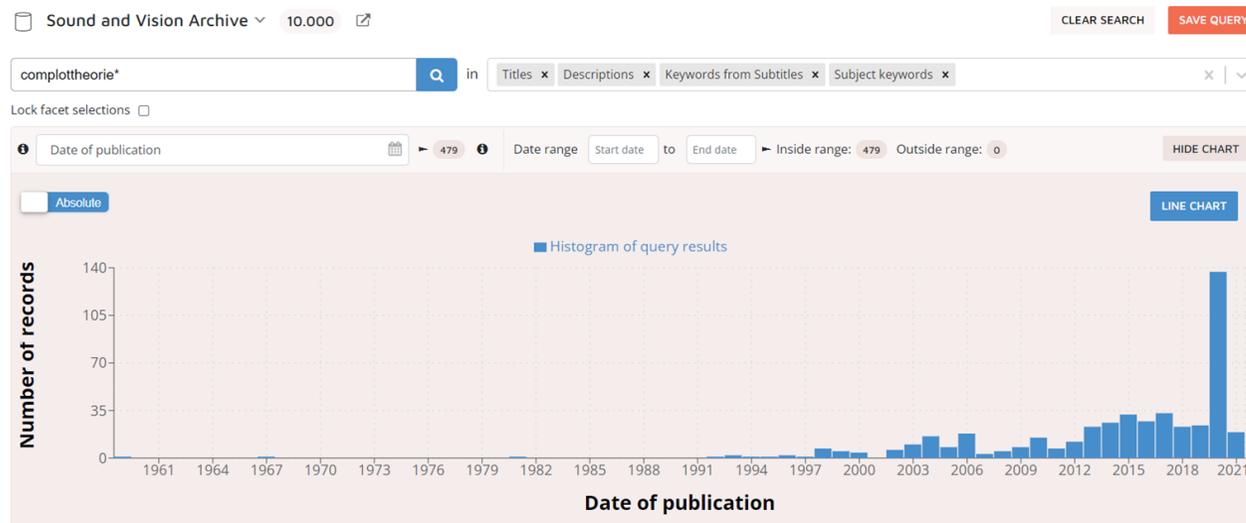
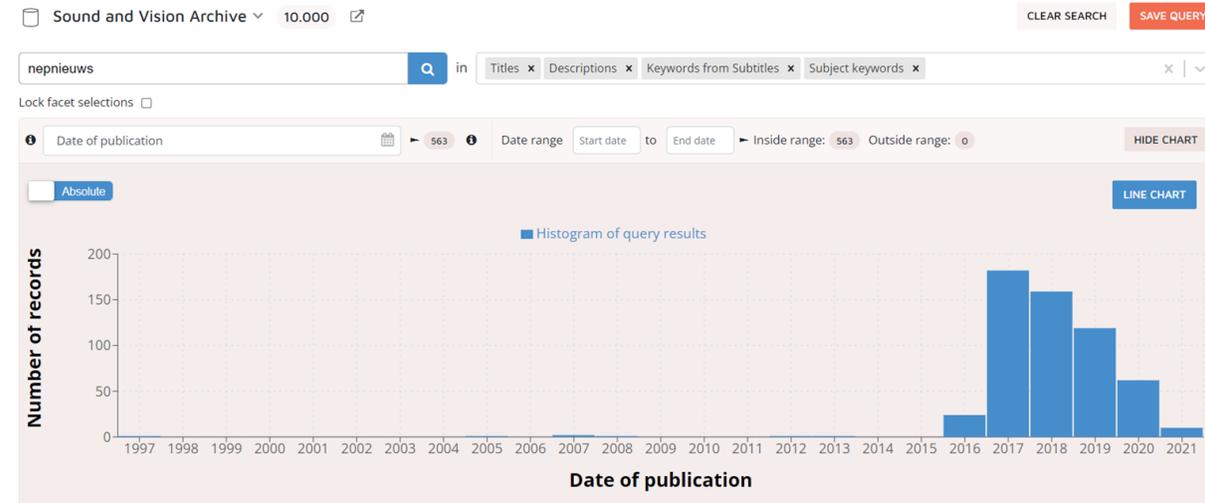
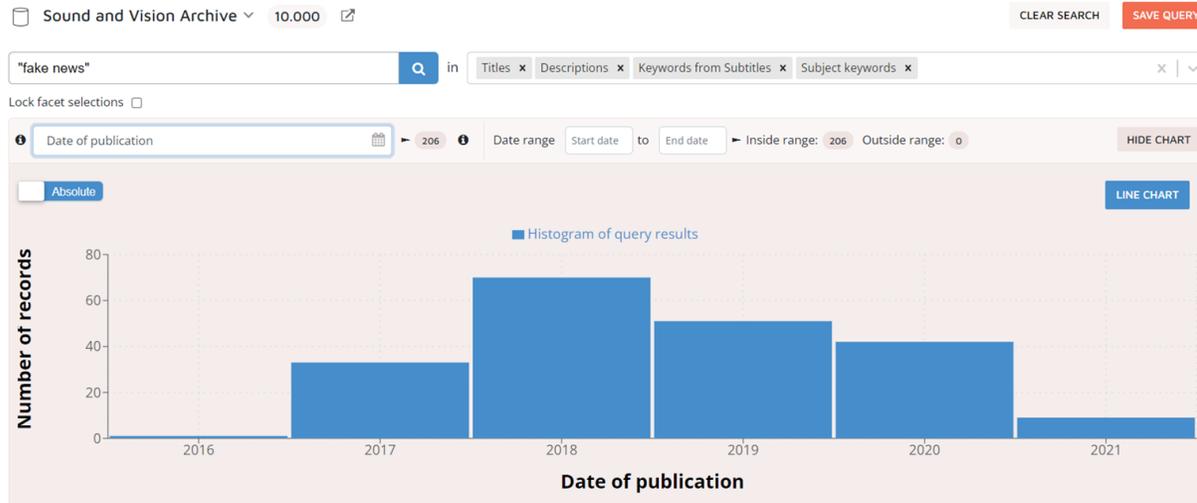
Our example Research Question (RQ): *How has the use of the notions 'fake news' and 'conspiracy theory' changed over time in spoken media artifacts in the news genre, based on Media Suite content (i.e. Dutch public service broadcasting)?*

# Storytelling through a visual exhibition (2)

First, we created an quantitative overview of the appearance of the concept in the archive



# Storytelling through a visual exhibition (3)



Then, we used boolean search to get more accurate results

Notice the difference between the occurrence of the various keywords

# Storytelling through a visual exhibition (4)

## *Work with what you can access!*

Functionalities in English but most content is in Dutch → therefore **find creative ways** to use the content **without having to understand the content completely**

### **For example:**

- Comparative research (YouTube vs. Media Suite)
- Quantitative methods using keyword search, ASR or subtitles
- Focus on other aspects than language (such as guests and producers for instance)
- Overview International collections and English language content in the Media Suite  
<https://mediasuite.clariah.nl/learn/main/overview-international-collections-in-the-media-suite>
- Tutorial: Analyzing Dutch Content In English Using Online Translation Tools  
<https://mediasuite.clariah.nl/learn/subject-tutorials/work-arounds-for-analyzing-dutch-content-in-english>

# Examples

- A desktop documentary
- A blog or vlog with video fragments – providing background information  
<https://www.beeldengeluid.nl/en/knowledge/blog>
- A data story or digital storytelling product
  - [“15 years of the popular Dutch chat show 'DWDD' - in data”](#)
  - <https://mediasuitedatastories.clariah.nl/>
- A soundscape (e.g. an audio walk)
- A curator story
- A remix experience (e.g. the explored case of [Palestine Remix](#))

# More examples

- A Tilt story <https://www.beeldengeluid.nl/tilt/griezelig-echt> (you could e.g. use the desktop documentary format and record your screen with e.g. Screencast-O-Matic or these tips: <https://mediasuite.clariah.nl/learn/subject-tutorials/desktop-documentary-for-television-history>)
- A video essay: you could offer a nice combination of going beyond the video and, for example, write a text (e.g. include written information too or add a voice-over) <https://necsus-ejms.org/category/audiovisual-essays/> ; <https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/audiovisualessay/about/about-the-audiovisual-essay-website>
- ... or any creative / digital storytelling product or experience that represents the contextualizing of Media Suite content!

# Copyright and creative commons

The Media Suite should be considered as an **archive** for doing media research, containing copyrighted media artifacts, instead of just a search engine.

## **Solutions:**

1. Request access via the Media Suite (see 'Contact');
2. Come up with semantical equivalents for your keywords;
3. Google/Youtube/etc. as a backup;
4. Work with what you can access (e.g. in terms of language, content, tacit knowledge, etc)
5. Gain awareness which collections are open for remix/reuse (Open Images, Desmet). Reflect on the importance of creative commons standards for reuse, different creative commons licences, and on copyright regulations.

# Empirical storytelling (= your preparation for today)

Media Suite as a tool for exploratory search:

- Come up with a domain of research related to forms and formats, using the Media Suite as an exploratory tool
- Which empirical narratives (RQ's) can you derive from this domain?
- Which collections in the Media Suite would you use?
- How would you use the select option/select date field?
- Specify your approach in order to answer your RQ

Tip: Keep track off (write down) each step of your search process

## *In-class assignment:* Empirical storytelling (1/2)

Keeping in mind the iterative exploratory search process (distant + close reading), how could you concretize your research approach and domain?

Let's find out: <https://mediasuite.clariah.nl/>

**Try to explicate this process in your own words**

Tip: use Google for semantical equivalents of your keywords/background information/etc. and the Media Suite's tools (select tool, faceting, date field, etc.) to narrow down your search

## *In-class assignment:* Empirical storytelling (2/2)

**In your work groups, translate your approach to a research proposal:**

- Refine your research question (**RQ / empirical narrative**)
- What type of **materials (i.e. items)** will you be analyzing? *Think of affordances for reuse/remix, access to media types (i.e., genres) and search strategies.*
- **Operationalize** your analysis / approach: to what extent do you analyse the materials quantitatively/qualitatively?
- How will your analysis **contribute** to **answering** your RQ?

*If you need more inspiration, reflect together on the examples provided*

# Some final tips and tricks

- 1) How to **refine your approach**, and how to translate your approach into a research proposal: i.e. what do we want to focus on (in broad strokes; what do we want to research specifically and why) and how can we work in different steps of the process
- 2) **Process takes time**: start with inspecting the material: what is in the archive? (e.g. use the quantitative overviews to trigger a RQ and then ‘jump off’ to explore the visual information)
- 3) Goal visual exhibition = **contextualizing** Media Suite materials by means of a multimodal storytelling product or experience for a specific audience. Your RQ can be more creative; and/or more geared towards tool criticism: both add to the research field!
- 4) Follow the steps **explore, refine and produce** (Sauer, 2017) and *reflect* (Tutorial 3)<sub>22</sub> in your essay

*Questions? Please contact:*

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