

Student journalists and news literacy

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One of the questions framing this conference asks whether we are educating journalists to be investigative. Weinberg (1996) argues it would be wonderful to say every journalist *is* an investigative journalist, but it would be untrue. Rather, every journalist *can* be an investigative journalist. This paper reports on a strategy to help students become better (investigative) journalists by becoming news literate journalists. This is essential grounding for our future journalists at a time when “a cacophonous and uneven information ecosystem”, populated by “partisans, charlatans, experts, and amateurs of all stripes and competences”, delivers a daily torrent of “news” and commentary – much of it not vetted or sourced (Adler 2014). Journalists and news consumers alike need to know what information or source is trustworthy, how to determine the accuracy of sourcing and why these things matter.

Dianne Jones is a lecturer in broadcast journalism at the University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba. She was a broadcast journalist, editor and presenter for 20 years in television and on ABC radio. Her research on the news media and democracy, and gender representation in the sports media, has been published in refereed journals in Australia and overseas, including Media International Australia, Australian Journalism Review and Pacific Journalism Review. Her work has been cited in international sports and media textbooks, by two Federal Government inquiries into women's sports coverage in Australia, and in a Federally-funded report on women's sports and the media. Dianne was instrumental in introducing News Literacy to the Journalism undergraduate major at USQ, where journalists in training learn how to understand the news and discern fact from fiction.