

A journalist's guide to inclusive reporting for journalism students

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Everybody In: A Journalist's Guide To Inclusive Reporting For Journalism Students

Bob Calver, Diane Kemp, Marcus Ryder and supported by Birmingham City University School of Media

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Introduction

It is a dispiriting fact that our profession remains unrepresentative of the UK population. We're still overwhelmingly male, white and from mid to upper class backgrounds (1)

This is a real problem for us in terms of doing our job properly. With the best will in the world, it's hard seeing the relevance of some stories, getting particular contacts and avoiding unintended stereotypes if we work in monocultural newsrooms. It becomes unenviably easy to fall prey to 'group think' (2)

So this ebook is an attempt to help us, as student journalists and trainers, from falling into some of those traps.

If we just talk about diversity we can fall into 'doing diversity' stories. These, as any story, should be part of what we cover, but a better approach surely is to seek to be inclusive in all our news coverage: to reflect the interest and voices of our audience, wherever we are based. Any town, city or region offers us a diverse audience. That diversity might be in terms of social class, economic status, gender and age as much as religion, ethnicity or disability. So in this ebook we are looking to question our attitudes and assumptions about a range of issues and then offer some ideas for embedding a wider world view into that staple for BJTC courses, newsdays.

We wanted to make this a practical guide for our vocational students who're already packing a lot into each day on the course. So the sections are short and written by current and former journalists to show the relevance of these issues to their working lives. We asked them to write a short opinion piece on a topic which affects them, personally or through professional interest. These form the starting points for a discussion in class, to be followed up by working through some of the suggestions in the 'everybody in' section; developing contacts and doing newsdays from a different angle.

As some of our employers are keen to introduce their newsrooms to an understanding of 'unconscious bias' we've started this ebook with that topic, so individuals can do a quick audit to have a sense of where their, and our, own biases lie.

This isn't by any means being presented as a definitive publication. We are looking forward to updating and expanding the subject sections and we'd also like to include more ideas for greater inclusion in newsdays. So please get in touch and share your own practice and suggestions for supporting journalism to include 'everybody in'.

Bob Calver Diane Kemp Marcus Ryder

(1) www.suttontrust.com

www.theguardian.com

(2) Janis, Irving L. (1972). *Victims of Groupthink*. New York: Houghton Mifflin

Unconscious Bias

Robin Britton, Head of News at ITV News Meridian, made a presentation Unconscious Bias the main event of the **ITV News Diversity Conference** in 2015. He had seen the presentation at another diversity event and was so impressed with the message it conveyed that he took the decision to make it the keynote session of ITV News' annual conference.

"The ITV News Diversity Conference is attended by more than 80 senior colleagues from across ITV News, Good Morning Britain, our nations and regions newsrooms from around the country and our online ITV News team. The session grabbed the audience from the start. Most of the room hadn't heard of unconscious bias – but very quickly it gave everyone in the room an incredible insight into the behaviour we all adopt – unintentionally – as we grow up and from the range of influences around us, in the home and outside of it."

"All newsrooms know that if an effort isn't made to be consciously unbiased then those making the decisions that set the news agenda or are involved in recruitment, can fall into a pattern of behaviour that replicates what we have always done, meaning we interview the same people as experts or invite them to be contributors, and by doing so run the risk of not reflecting change across society – our audiences – so we can become less engaging and less relevant."

The presentation Robin referred to was by Femi Otitoju who's written this introduction to Unconscious Bias for 'Everybody In'.

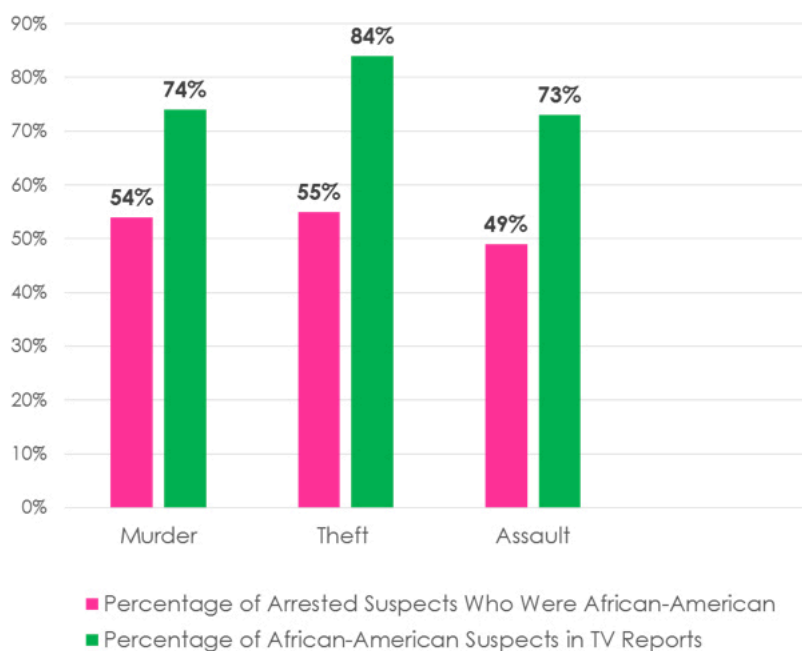
Check your bias!

As a diversity consultant I have always worked to encourage people to dump phrases like, "I don't see skin colour; I just see people" or "I treat everyone the same." I know that most of us would like to believe these things about ourselves but the first statement is not true and the second, even if it were true is undesirable. Experiments have shown that the brain categorises people by race in less than 100 milliseconds, about 50 milliseconds before determining sex and once we have noticed the differences we often have a very real physiological response.

The fact is our unconscious biases affect all of us all the time. Unconscious biases are the default associations that we make about people on the basis of their individual attributes or circumstances. These associations are mostly shaped by our previous experiences with people like them or the messages we have received from all sorts of sources including – yes, broadcast news. They shape our thinking and affect which stories we choose to tell, who we decide to interview and even who we choose to work with.

The impact is often stark; research conducted by [The Colour of Change 2015](#) found that there was a distorted representation of black people as perpetrators of crime when compared to NYPD statistics. The bias is evident, but I would bet large amounts of money that if you asked any of the journalists or editors responsible for writing or selecting those crime reports none of them would willingly admit that racial bias affected their decisions.

Percentage of Black suspects in TV crime reports vs Average NYPD Arrest Rates



More recently, as demonstrated in reports following the horrific mass shooting of 50 LGBTQ revellers at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, the rush to name Islam by mainstream media as the motivation behind gunman Omar Mateen's killing spree has meant many journalists have missed one of the most reliable indicators of a propensity for mass murder – – [a history of domestic abuse](#).

You can learn about your unconscious biases by taking an implicit association test at implicit.harvard.edu It was displeasure with my own implicit association test results that made me want to explore ways of minimising unconscious bias, in the hope of getting rid of some of mine altogether. It was also the beginning of my work on unconscious bias that I have been using in diversity training with a diverse range of organisations across the country to ensure that unconscious bias does not affect recruitment and while total eradication is unlikely, the evidence is for example, that working closely with people different from ourselves can help to override biases.

If you are resolving to check out your unconscious bias right now, allow me to offer two pieces of advice, 1. Do it on your own, when you have a bit of space as the test will not give you a result if you get distracted and take too long to complete it. 2. Don't tell anyone you are doing an unconscious bias test, then, if you don't like the results, you can start working on aspects which need some attention with no pressure.'

www.challcon.com (@challcon)

by Femi Otitoju



Femi Otitoju is the founder and Training Director of Challenge Consultancy. She and her team have designed and delivered unconscious bias training course for numerous broadcast media organisations including The BBC, ITN and ITV.

1. Class

The Journalist's view:

Class Act.....

It was a depressingly all-too familiar scene. The same old do-gooders hunkered down in the trenches sparring about diversity in the media.

Then it suddenly got exciting. "What about class," piped up someone clearly bored. "Do you mean working class?" came the incredulous retort. "We don't talk about class anymore – it's social mobility", chipped in the smart one. "What the hell does that mean?" we all sneered.

And what the hell does it mean? That's the crux of the issue. What is class these days?

And even more perplexing how do you measure it?

Those same "right-on" diversity die-hards tried to determine how you would ascertain if someone was working class.

"Would they know how to use a knife and fork?" Stifled snigger.....

"Do they shop in Argos?" More of a chortle.....

"Would they go up in flames because they wear too much crimplene (crimplene!) and man-made fibres." Unrestrained hysterics....

Now remember these were the flag-waving diversity champions. But it was ok to insult the working class in a way you wouldn't dream of ridiculing others.

That was about eight years ago. Sadly, I don't think we've progressed that far.

However, social mobility is mobile; it's higher up the agenda.

There have been some well-meaning attempts to measure the class or background of new entrants trying to break into our industry. They are asked questions such as "Did you have free school meals?" "Was your family on benefits?"

If you asked my proudly working class mum if she'd ever taken a penny in benefits or fed her children free school meals you'd get a working class earful!

My Dad was a builder and then retrained to be a social worker. My mum was a dinner lady and cleaner. And still is in her 70s. We holidayed at Pontins (maybe that would be a more accurate measure!) And we were brought up on a council estate. (But Mum, a single mother, worked hard enough to buy our house.)

I didn't go to uni. I was desperate to start work – I'd always wanted to be a journalist. I started in local newspapers with the three year NCTJ – I suppose the apprenticeship of its day. I got my break in TV working on That's Life with Esther on her major campaigns. I suspect I got the job because I was a "wonderful piece of rough" who could bluff her way undercover into the blue collar jobs. I was different. I celebrated and exploited my difference.

Problem is 30 years on, I'm still different. The only chav in the village!

But it's no joke. Breaking into our wonderful, vibrant industry has never been harder. It's **still** those with the contacts who make it. **Still** those who can blag the work experience. **Still** those with mates in London where there is always a spare room. **Still** those who can afford to pass their driving test. **And still** those who can go months living off the Bank of Mum and Dad doing unpaid internship after unpaid internship.

Why is class such an important part of the diversity debate? Because we are missing voices. Missing critical stories. Missing killer new shows.

We need all perspectives on our hospitals, immigration, consumer affairs.

We must open the invite to all.

Trust me the working classes do have bookshelves as well as mega TVs. We do know the difference between salad cream and mayo. And we won't go up in flames. Promise.

We don't need daft and offensive questions. We are immensely proud of our working class backgrounds. We love telling our stories. But maybe for some it doesn't feel safe to reveal our upbringing in case we don't get membership to the exclusive club.

So when you're casting, looking for stories, experts and contributors, cast your net wide. Challenge assumptions. You will reach the widest audience by listening and speaking to the widest audience. Diversity – in all its forms – is your day job. And it is your job. It's not optional and it's not an add-on.

Listen to the working class, seek them out – on air and in your teams. They will tell you their stories and they will work really hard. The clue is in the label.....

by Donna Taberer



Donna Taberer started in local print and spent more than 20 years at the BBC. She's been a commissioner at Sky and Channel 5 and worked with more than 100 indies. Donna rose up the ranks from researcher to Exec Producer and ran many key brands including Watchdog and Crimewatch, going on to hold senior managerial roles at the BBC.

Donna is now a Consultant and Training and Events Specialist.

‘Ordinary’ people

I don't want to hear from press officers, spokespeople and MPs when covering a breaking news story. Yes they have their uses and can fill graphic scripts and give you a quick and easy soundbite. But what about the people involved? Who was there? Who saw the event? Why could it have happened? These answers won't come from a press release. They will come from the people on the ground "Real people" and when scrambling with the pack to cover a news story, these people are often harder to find before the news bulletin and when people are too busy delivering live broadcasts with lines that everyone has – are not found at all. You will never find me with the press pack who descend en masse to cover breaking news stories. You will find me knocking every door on that street, getting information first hand and going on from there. I will leave the local spokesperson and the "community voice" to someone else. I want to speak to the subject of the story's family, if that's too raw, extended family, if that's too raw, neighbours, colleagues, people who knew them, recently.

I worked for nearly 10 years at ITV News working from the newsdesk up to UK Producer, working on some of the highest profile stories of the last decade. From the hacking scandal, Woolwich terrorist attacks to the effect of ISIS in the UK I have witnessed journalists arriving at an "estate" or with hostile communities – and they stop dead in their tracks, or have to knock doors together which is the biggest turn off to people when they answer the door.

It's the quiet conversation with the neighbour, or the person at the end of the street, or the next street over. Gleaning information in this way is so important and first hand information is key. This is where you get all of the background, pictures, video and so on that go beyond a police press release.

This is how I have beaten the opposition working on breaking news, during my time working on Home Affairs which is one of the most picture-challenged and difficult briefs where no one wants to talk to you – I have often won by being the person who goes back a few days later after the press pack has gone and the national media don't care about the story until the next diarised update.

I have planned my door knocking strategically around when people might be in, when they are most likely not to be annoyed, I use local information to find out the sensitivities around my door knocks.

I have won 4 RTS awards and been part of a team who won a BAFTA for home news coverage, I sometimes look back on it and wonder how I got here, from being a girl from Cov, with Indian Heritage.

What I say to future generations is never be afraid of where you are from. If you have the qualities to communicate with people from all backgrounds, from any location in the UK, you will go far, not everyone in the journalism game can do that, and that in itself is depressing, but for people like me it has become my biggest power.

by Sandi Sidhu



Until March 2016, Sandi was a Producer for ITV News working with the UK Bureau on home affairs stories, having been a Desk Producer before that. In two years her team won three RTS awards and a BAFTA for Woolwich Coverage and Home News.

Sandi is currently freelancing as a TV News Field Producer based in Hong Kong.

Problem of privilege

It may already seem like distant political history, but it was one of the defining moments of modern British politics. In May 2010 the newly installed Prime Minister David Cameron and Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg stood side by side in the sunlit rose garden of Number 10. The two politicians exuded all the effortless charm that their exclusive education had equipped them with. Their privileged upbringings (Eton, Oxford and Westminster, Cambridge respectively) however immediately prompted **suggestions** that their rise to power reflected the country's low social mobility levels and the failure of state schools to produce people who make it to the very top of society.

Yet for me the bigger problem was highlighted when the TV camera lenses momentarily swiveled around towards the audience greeting the leaders of the newly formed Coalition Government. Seated in neat rows were the country's elite ranks of newspaper and broadcast journalists. If you ever wanted a parade of alumni representing all the country's most exclusive private schools then this was it.

Forget fanciful past notions of being a 'trade'; news journalism is a profession of highly privileged elites, dominated by graduates from exclusive universities and prestigious public schools.

We know this because of several studies produced by the Sutton Trust. In 2006 when still a journalist, I authored a study on the educational backgrounds of news journalists. The **findings** were highly revealing. More than half the UK's top 100 journalists had been educated at private schools, despite these schools making up only 7 per cent of the country's school population. A further 33% went to grammar schools and just 14% to state comprehensives.

The proportion of privately educated journalists had risen since 1986 from 49% to 54%. More than half of those with degrees had been to Oxbridge. The report pointed to a systematic bias towards those from privileged backgrounds at the crucial entry stage into the industry. The problem was that those from richer backgrounds who are based in or near London are simply more likely to cope with the low pay and high insecurity endemic at junior levels. The informal nature of recruitment also led some to suggest that nepotism was often at play.

Tellingly, the report was **ignored** by many national newspapers: it seemed that journalists were reluctant to shine a light on their own workplace. Subsequent studies in 2012 and 2016 produced similar findings: just over half of today's journalists were privately educated.

Why should all this matter? Well for one it suggests that we are missing out on a huge pool of potential journalistic talent in the 93% of the population not fortunate enough to afford private school fees. It also means that newsrooms are dominated by those from a tiny slice of society: sharing the same backgrounds, experiences and preferences. The crucial decisions about what makes the news are made from this very narrow perspective.

Seven years later on from the rose garden love-in both Cameron and Clegg have been ejected from power, amid accusations that their political elite were increasingly detached from the people they were intended to serve. That's how democracy works. Yet there will be no such rude awakening for the privileged journalists who we entrust with providing us with news that is relevant to the majority of the population outside the Westminster bubble. If anything I fear that the profession will become even more privileged, not less so. And news journalism will be poorer for it.

by Lee Elliot Major



Dr Lee Elliot Major is Chief Executive of the Sutton Trust, the UK's leading foundation improving social mobility through education. He was a former journalist working for the Guardian and the Times Higher Education Supplement. He is currently writing a book on Britain's social mobility problem.

The Newsday – Bringing ‘Everybody in’

Look at the demographics for your city/county. Get the facts about the proportion of the population you’re considering. Also look at the information about where working people tend to live and work in your area. You could base a newsday in one of those areas, reporting bulletins and producing a current affairs programme for that audience.

If there’s a community station or hyperlocal new site set up there already, offer to run a newsday for them.

Travel on public transport (particularly buses) and listen to what people are talking about/what concerns them. How is that reflected in the news prospects meeting? Talk to each other. Make good use of the diversity in your own newsroom/course. What contacts do you have which will broaden the news agenda?

Are all suggestions for news angles given equal weight in morning meetings? Are you making assumptions about what’s important based on your background?

Spend a day working up your contacts book to reflect people with concerns, expertise and strong views who come from a different class to you.

Look at the day’s news output online, radio or TV. Count the times you hear and see working class people (apart from during vox pops). Of course there are issues here about stereotyping, but begin to become aware of how often the same accents, assumptions etc take centre stage. Does that match with your demographics research?

Actively seek out different sources for news which broaden the range and possibly take you to unfamiliar places.

Double check your own assumptions when speaking to possible interviewees on the phone. Are you equating accent or manner with expertise?

2. Disability

The Journalist's view:

Charming ignorance

“My word! How long have you been in that for!?” The opening words of the MP upon meeting me for the first time.

Having pre-interviewed the MP at length over the phone before inviting him onto the programme, it had never occurred to me to mention I use a wheelchair to get around, and why should it have? However, in the ten minutes from the time I greeted the MP in reception, up until the time he went on air, the subject of our conversation was my disability. To be clear at this point, I was at no point offended by anything that was said, it was all very charming ignorance. But it did get me thinking. Could it be that a prominent MP and activist had most likely never spoken to, or possibly even seen a disabled journalist before? To be fair, even I'd only ever seen one or two disabled journalists, but there is no way it should be such a 'shock' to see a person with a disability working on a news programme.

While I waited to escort him into the studio, I thought he may want to ask about the on-air discussion he was about to take part in. “Do you have any questions?... “Yes, what happened to you?”, “how fast does your chair go?”, “how often do you charge the battery?”...not the type of questions I was expecting or hoping to answer. He wasn't nervous or worried about going on air in five minutes, he was well versed in appearing on the news, he was more interested in me. How flattering. I've grown used to people staring or taking 'pity' on me or the occasional verbal or physical abuse that comes as standard for many people with a visible disability. But this was different, this was at work, this was my career and livelihood. On the phone I was a journalist, but when we met in person I became someone 'interesting in a wheelchair.'

I noticed that when I looked around the newsroom, I couldn't see anyone that looked like me. It was not something that bothered me in the past. I thrived on my originality. I'd never seen myself a disabled journalist, rather a journalist who has a disability. Representation of disabled people in the news and in the newsroom needs to increase massively. Editors need to make sure every news department and newsroom has someone with a disability.

News should, most importantly, include people with disabilities in the news without always focusing on the disabilities. In terms of news reporting, we need to get away from the 'inspirational porn' of disability. We are not heroes or pity cases. We wake up, we eat, we pay the mortgage, we participate in community and working life, just like anyone else, in our own way. This should be the focus of how the newsroom and the audience see disability. Though when it comes to news, disabled people are spoken about, but not often listened to.

by Saad Bashir



Saad is a Senior Broadcast Journalist working in Social Media for BBC News online.

His career began presenting a news and sports show on community radio. He joined the BBC in 2007. During his time there he's worked as a broadcast journalist on Newsnight, BBC News Channel, Radio 4 and BBC Midlands Today.

The Newsday – Bringing ‘Everybody In’

How many times have you seen or heard disabled people commenting on news stories that are not about their disability?

If you are sent out to record a vox pop would you consider approaching someone using a wheelchair, or a person with a guide dog or white cane? And what about those people whose disabilities are not instantly visible?

As with most of the areas covered in this book the key is to take the time to be aware of your audience. Statistics from the Disabled Living Foundation offer an idea of just how many of your listeners and viewers might have a disability. [www.dlf.org.uk] (<http://www.dlf.org.uk/>)

There are more than 6.9 million disabled people of working age. That’s 19 % of the working population. Of the more than 10 million disabled people in Britain half are over state pension age. There are just over three quarters of a million under 16s who have a disability.

Much of the discomfort people feel about disability may stem from a lack of understanding.

Scope, the charity which says it ‘exists to make this country a place where disabled people have the same opportunities as everyone else’ pointed in a 2014 report on attitudes to people with disability to a lack of understanding.

“Not enough people know a disabled person – nearly half (43%) of the British public say they do not know anyone who is disabled – and many are concerned that they will do or say the wrong thing when talking to disabled people or about disability. Our research shows that both the general public and disabled people believe that more everyday interactions and greater public education about disability will increase understanding and acceptance of disabled people.”

Remember as a journalist you need to have as diverse a contacts book as possible and to use that in your everyday reporting as well as in covering topics directly affecting any one group.

Saad Bashir has some useful words of advice on how to ensure that disabled people are not pigeonholed as brave battlers or victims: “Disabled people need to be listened to and the best way, in my opinion, to do this is to have disabled voices included in non-disability related stories. This could be done through a higher representation of voxes/case studies/commentators.”

Take that idea forward in your own stories to include people with disabilities. Disabled people certainly need to be seen and heard talking about stories that are about disability. Again, Saad has some important pointers: “The most important thing for me is humanising the subject through language. ‘The man in the wheelchair’ is a father, accountant, brother, football fan, who uses a wheelchair. The ‘blind woman’ is a mother, wife, lawyer who happens to be blind.”

Saad adds: “Even today I will hear older editors using out of date terms like ‘wheelchair bound’, ‘suffering from’ ‘battling with’.

So when you write a script, make sure your writing avoids any language like that. www.disabilityrightsuk.org All this will pay off in terms greater access to a range of contributors. In Saad’s words: “This would give disabled people a sense of togetherness through shared experiences with the majority non-disabled public. This type of inclusion could combat alienation many disabled people face and

also encourage disabled people to be more forthcoming when it comes to being approached by journalists.
After each newsday review the stories you've covered and the people you've spoke to and ask how these reflect people of all abilities.

3. Ethnicity

The Journalist's view:

'Who you know is what you know'.

When black guests appear on current affairs programmes, nine times out of ten they're there to discuss a "black issue", which is a problem in itself. And when it happens, I imagine the majority of the show's black viewers are watching with tight mouths watering in anticipation of that familiar sour taste of disappointment. Why? Because [producers so often get these stories wrong](#) from contributors to the way the story itself is framed and an anchor ill-equipped to moderate any meaningful discussion. It leads to issues that matter to black communities being trivialised on a public platform with damaging consequences, such as reinforcing negative stereotypes or dumbing down the level of debate.

Diversity done badly is worse than none at all. The [now-infamous segment](#) involving the rapper Dizzee Rascal who [appeared](#) on Newsnight alongside Baroness Amos to discuss Barack Obama's historic election victory in 2008 is one example. ([This piece](#) by journalist Jasmine Dotiwala sheds light on yet another Newsnight disaster.) Pairing the voice of a young musician with someone like Amos, the first black woman to hold a cabinet position, might have seemed like a good idea at the morning news meeting where I'm quite confident there was no person of colour to suggest otherwise. During the segment, Dizzee, though clearly a fish out of water, was jovial and genuine enough, but [left many critics wondering](#) why he – out of hundreds of thousands of young black voices – was chosen to speak on this particular topic. Was his inclusion an innocent miscalculation or a symptom of an out-of-touch media outfit that doesn't understand or even respect the topics they attempt to tackle? Viewers were left frustrated by host Jeremy Paxman's at-times [patronising](#) and irrelevant questioning – referring to the musician as "Mr Rascal" before asking him, like a slap in the face, if he "felt British".

Whether we're talking about newspapers, TV, or radio, black contributors always seem to fall into one of three categories: the completely left-field person who happened to be available, the Rent-A-Quote who is wheeled out to discuss [insert any black issue here], and the rare contributor who is bang on the money. Sometimes, their performance is so on point they become the unofficial spokesman on every issue to do with black people ever whether it's their area of expertise or not and then we're right back to square one: a handful of gatekeepers trying to speak for a community that is far from being one homogenous group.

Until newsrooms become less white and middle class, journalists on tight deadlines with scant knowledge of different communities will continue casting too small and too shallow a net when it comes to telling stories that reflect Britain in its entirety. They can't land bigger or different fish because they don't know who they are or, worse, that they even exist. The people closest to the story who can add something beyond entertainment value or box-ticking simply don't work by their sides, aren't on their radar, and so nothing beyond the surface is scratched. Good stories are incomplete or missed altogether. A range of voices are left speaking into the wilderness on topics from education, economics to the EU.

There's a line I recycle whenever I'm asked to give career advice, and is relevant particularly on the topic of diversity: in journalism, who you know is what you know. That doesn't always bode well for a level playing field, but it means journalists are either limited or strengthened by their range of contacts. Who you know is often who you hire, who you commission, who gets a seat at the table, and who holds you to account. Who you know is who gives you information or access to an exclusive. Who you know is whose stories you tell and how; who you include in your reports; and who you book on your shows. Who you know is often whose work you read and, therefore, what you learn. Who you know is (who you engage) [<https://storify.com/symeonbrown/turns-out-young>]. We will never get or give the full picture by relying on the same people doing the same things. Britain is a society of different ethnicities and cultures. You're failing your audience, in fact you fail as a journalist, until you make conscious steps to get to know them.

by Elizabeth Pears



Elizabeth Pears is deputy news editor at BuzzFeed UK. Before this, she was news editor at The Voice, Britain's leading black newspaper, where she championed and developed young talent. Previous roles include work on The Guardian's Reading the Riots project, a data-driven study into the causes and consequences of the 2011 London riots, and senior news reporter at the Haringey Independent where she started her career.

The Journalist's view:

TRUST is at the heart of Newsroom Diversity

The statistics are screamingly obviously when it comes to a distinct lack of colour in British newsrooms today. According to a recent survey carried out by City University London, the UK's journalism industry is 94% male and 55% white, with almost all ethnic groups significantly under-represented (*)

So how on earth do we solve a problem like diversity when news agendas are being set and stories are conceived and told – in the main – by white males?

Of course, it's bonkers to imply that because of these figures, all white men don't recognise or understand the importance of having a newsroom of staff which looks more like Britain, with a fairer representation of ethnicity, race and faith. Not at all. That would be crass. And during my career every white news editor I've worked with has always been fair to me. However, as well as experiencing a few oddities during my career as a journalist, I've also listened to peculiar tales from black journalist friends of mine which you couldn't make up if you tried. The consistent threads being that they've been ignored and undervalued by white bosses in newsrooms, and overlooked when it came to secondments or promotions.

From my very first job I was cloaked in a shroud of low expectation. But I shrugged it off the minute it tried to drag me down. Whenever I delivered my work – whether it was a two-way from a courtroom or inquest verdict for a bulletin, a pre-rec package for drivetime, or a live for the News Channel, I was always greeted afterwards

with a 'WOW'. A big open-mouthed 'WOW, Marv'. Almost like they didn't expect me to deliver. Yet I truly never felt like I was over-delivering, or doing anything exceptional. I was just being a bloody good journalist. Giving my news ed what he wanted, on time. No mess, no fuss. And I wasn't breaking sweat over it.

My experience isn't uncommon. And neither is the stench of conspiracy in the air, whenever an unknown BAME journalist walks into a newsroom. Speculation over whether or not that person deserves to be there and if they're even qualified for the job begins. It's palpable and it needs to be eradicated. I know darn well the attitude exists, because I've been within earshot of accusatory mutterings in the canteen like 'Who is she? Why is she here? Has she ever done this before?' So goodness knows what was said behind my back when I landed in my first job. Me with my BA Hons and my PgDip in Broadcast Journalism. With plenty of media work experience under my belt. The audacity of it.

As a BAME journalist it seems you're on the backfoot before you even start. So my advice is this. **TRUST US**. All this bad attitude needs to be thrown in the trash where it belongs. And it needs to stay there. We need to get this industry to a stage where it's being acknowledged as one which embraces the vast mix of people and their experiences and stories, which is what makes Britain great. How do we do that? A culture shift needs to happen. From the top down. From news editors and the hirers and firers to the support teams. Fast. The shift needs to stream down the hill like a runaway cheese being chased down Cooper's Hill. Plus I believe that entire swathes of journalistic staff need to upskill and get Unconscious Bias training. We all need to be aware of our prejudices so we can put them in check, and we must get genned up on cultural differences so we can understand each other better. We must have faith in diversity, that it will increase audiences, reach more people and promote inclusivity.

And media outlets need to widen their search for journalists – not everyone who has the journalist's nose is going to head to a university to study it as a BA, MA or PgDip. Stronger, more meaningful and long-term relationships need to be forged with state schools and colleges, across regions, in working class and urban areas.

But then the onus is not just on the media orgs. It's on the journalist too. I've been mentoring aspiring journalists and broadcasters for a decade now. And there are gems I tell them that are essential to helping you get on, wherever you end up. The show isn't over once you get the job. The show has only just begun. You've got to find the lie of the land, and then get involved. Swiftly. There is a way of handling yourself in a newsroom which is unique to every business. You must have tenacity, resilience, the ability to temper your sensitivity, and that all important, very meaty book of contacts and original stories which you can deliver at any given moment. Anyone armed with this little lot, plus a healthy dose of chutzpah and self-belief, will thrive.

(*) www.journalism.co.uk

by Marverine Cole



Marverine Cole has worked for many of Britain's most watched and listened to broadcasters. She's a multi-award-winning journalist, who's produced and presented well over 3,000 hours of live television & radio programmes for BBC News, ITV News, Arise News, The International Business Times and Sky News. Working with the BBC Academy, Marverine has trained and mentored over 100 aspiring journalists and expert presenters. For the last five years Marverine's been shortlisting budding journalists wanting to receive bursaries from the NCTJ's Journalism Diversity Fund.

The Journalist's view: Being part of the solution

I moved into sports journalism in 2007, having spent nearly the best part of a decade as an anti-racism campaigner in football. I never thought I would get a chance to report on sport, mainly because I never saw any black journalists or presenters who weren't former athletes. If you don't see people like you represented, you hardly feel you are welcome to be part of something.

So when I stepped into the BBC I was buzzing, but still slightly sceptical about how far I could go. Nevertheless, I had a foot in the door – and I was not going to let this opportunity pass me by.

One of the initial challenges I faced was moving from campaigner to storyteller. But, as I found, the instinct to agitate for change never really leaves you. So it wasn't long before I found myself monitoring all of our output – constantly. Why were we only speaking to male sports fans for voxes about an issue that day? How come we weren't covering the West Indies or Pakistan victory in the cricket? Who decided the clip we were running in the bulletins was most relevant to all of our audiences? It became an obsession. The good news was the bosses I had at the time were excellent – they welcomed input and were open to feedback. We were a progressive team.

That instinct to monitor, question and at times challenge, unintentionally helped me to make my on screen TV debut and – more importantly – make history on the BBC News Channel. The coverage of the USA presidential elections in 2008 drove me up the wall. It wasn't the quality of the reports, but the delivery appeared to be from one position. How on earth could we have a black candidate of mixed race running and have so few reporters involved from BAME backgrounds? And why oh why had no one – in the trillion different angles examined – dared to look at his mixed roots and what he meant for the millions and millions with this shared identity?

So I took the plunge and dropped the Head of BBC News an email. I read that email back a lot before pressing send. I wanted to be proactive – but equally had to share my dismay... anger. The reply came swiftly. "Let's have a chat about this", the big boss responded. So we did. He said his bit. I respectfully said mine. Then he asked me to be part of the solution. I went away and found some answers.

What followed was a VT fronted by myself for the BBC News at 1 on being mixed race in the UK. It was entirely relevant to our audiences, as mixed race was the fastest growing ethnic minority group in the UK – and what better angle than Barack Obama becoming US President. And there was more, I produced a 'mixed race' day of live discussion on the BBC News Channel. While I certainly wouldn't say this 'solved' the problem, it showed me that you are often in a position as a journalist where you can be a catalyst for change. So my advice to any journalist is always to think audience, never be scared to challenge respectfully, and to try and have a solution to every problem you identify.

by Leon Mann



Leon Mann is an interviewer, film-maker and sports consultant. Last summer he worked for ITV Sport at the European Football Championships as one of the networks two reporters at the tournament and was a BBC feature reporter at the London Olympics in 2012. He has made two widely praised documentaries on Usain Bolt for BBC TV, and is the founder of BCOMS (Black Collective of Media in Sport) - a network lobbying for greater diversity in the sports media.

The Newsday – Bringing ‘Everybody in’

What exactly is ‘ethnicity’?

‘The fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition’ www.oxforddictionaries.com

Do you know what different ethnicities are represented among your audience?

Don’t assume from your own perspective or people you know. Look at the demographics – via your local council or similar – to check. You might be surprised to discover the variety of countries represented or cultures who are all part of your potential audience and all sources of stories.

Broaden your horizons into what stories would be of interest to an ethnically diverse audience. People with links to other countries usually have great contacts and insight to international stories enabling you to get local angles/voices on otherwise hard to cover news. Research where different communities meet, both in real life and on social media and get in touch.

Take time to cultivate your contacts – make it a project. You will not only build trust but access exclusive stories.

On a newsday, look for a broad range of views when taking soundings. This might mean doing vox pops in different parts of the city/town. City/town centre high streets aren’t always representative.

Many ethnically diverse community groups run social media news sites or radio stations. Contact them and get to know the editor. Offering to run a newsday for and with them is often a great way to gain valuable experience and insight into different concerns and views of the world. This also pays dividends in terms of developing contacts for stories at a later date.

One of the most effective means of making contacts within hard to reach communities is through community groups. These are often run on a voluntary basis and are self-funded. The people who organise and run them are generally very active in their communities so are amazing contacts to introduce you to the community as a whole. Find them via social media or posters in local community centres.

Contact the Police Community Liaison group. They generally meet regularly with community activists who are also great contacts to reach the wider community. Often local authorities will have a directory of community groups too. If you’re not from that community, and invariably you will not be, you need to spend time getting to know them as, in general, they may not trust the media.

Be aware of this lack of diversity in our newsrooms.

According to Clive Lewis MP at the NUJ’s 2016 Claudia Jones lecture, ‘94 per cent of all UK journalists were white.’

There’s useful guidance on reporting: [www.nuj.org.uk/racereportingguidelines] (<https://www.nuj.org.uk/documents/nuj-race-reporting-guidelines-may-2014/>)

4. Gender

The Journalist's view:

Making new rules

Over the last five years as BBC Hague correspondent I've covered some of the biggest stories in Europe - the refugee crisis, the shooting down of flight MH17, the Paris attacks, the Belgian bombings... and not once during this time have I ever felt disadvantaged by being a woman.

Of course I've been big footed by more senior journalists but that's standard for the territory. So I approached impending motherhood with (naive) optimism. After an emergency c-section I started working within minutes of leaving hospital. My newborn daughter sleeping by my side in the back of the car, I started recording a radio feature about the Dutch maternity system. Overnight the drugs wore off and a reality dawned. I needed to learn the basics about how to care for a baby before I could try to juggle. I never felt under pressure to return to work.

I'm contracted as a BBC freelance foreign correspondent, as such I faced choices others may not. I could take time away from work - unpaid, I could find a crèche or nanny prepared to care for my newborn or I could try to do both myself. I didn't want to give up either my career or my baby.

Within a few weeks of my sharing photos on social media (Sharon Stone kissing my daughter's head, the ICC prosecutor grinning at her, a judge in robes clutching her outside the Peace Palace) and doing a couple of BBC radio interviews about this subject, my editor got in touch. There were no BBC rules about what I was doing because it hadn't been done before. So they had to come up with some. After a few weeks of discussions involving lawyers, health and safety teams, editors, they came up with a new policy. It permits me to take my baby to work providing her presence doesn't jeopardize the job, interfere with the interviewees or put her life in danger.

For purely physical reasons there are some things I can't do. Like take a baby to unpredictable places like the Calais Jungle - last time I was there protesters hurled rocks, police fired back with tear gas. We were in the middle.

Suffice to say things are different for male colleagues embarking upon parenthood. One of my friends had a baby a couple of months after me. A few weeks later he was back on the frontline.

I find it frustrating I can't be deployed anywhere at a moments notice anymore - I won't bore you with the logistics of breastfeeding.

I'm still trying to figure out a solution for the future. A traveling nanny perhaps? There is a definite presumption that it's the woman's 'problem'. My husband hasn't once been asked if he's made arrangements for the baby.

To avoid compounding these attitudes I'd suggest student journalists consider the language they use and, it may sound obvious, forget the old gender roles. Women's bodies might have the superpower to give and then nurture life, but in newsrooms we must be equal. If women feel they're being pushed aside or patronized the whole operation risks losing a vital perspective.

I read an article once about a woman's decision not to have a baby. One of the reasons she gave was that she liked to travel. I don't think having a baby should

have to stop you doing the things you love. You just have to work a bit harder.

At six months old my daughter recently embarked on her eighth flight. We were recording a radio documentary in Denmark. I used to always be the last to the gate, now I leave an extra hour before flights for feeding and changing. Motherhood on the job forces you to be organized and efficient.

It's a lifetime away but I hope when my daughter grows up she'll feel I made the right choices for us, hopefully by then it won't be such a novel concept.

by Anna Holligan



Anna Holligan is an award winning multi-media journalist, film and documentary maker. Over the past decade she has reported from North and Southern Africa, the Middle East and covered breaking stories for BBC News throughout Europe. Before joining the BBC Anna won the biggest commercial radio Aquiva award for her documentary 'Caught in the Crossfire' about the New Year's shooting of two Birmingham schoolgirls. She is currently based in the Netherlands working as the BBC's Hague correspondent, and full-time mum to Zena.

Why women experts need you!

Monitoring done over the last five years by students at City University London has shown that until recently, male experts dominated on the flagship news and current affairs programmes in the UK, by a ratio of four men to every woman. A relentless campaign to improve the ratio now means it is nearer three to one. But some programmes, like the big national ten o'clock news programmes, still drag behind. The first realistic question for a journalist is not, should you be aiming to change this for ideological reasons, but should you be aiming to change this because it's not a proper reflection of society. The answer to the question is definitely – yes!

Over the past few years journalists have countered the complaint about lack of women experts by saying it's not their job to be social engineers, and that men have more authority in society, so tough. But a quick look at the facts shows that they are actually under-representing women experts. We could have a long debate about what constitutes authority – but for the sake of this article let's just accept that by authority and expertise we mean having a respected opinion, or being in a position of power. How do we measure this? Well in a nutshell, if you look at the law, at expert witnesses in courts, at female politicians at cabinet level (a bit hard to measure as I write this in 2016!) and at academics, we find that men still dominate but at a rate of 2.5 to one, not the 4 to 1 of the flagship news programmes. Of course journalists say that they are hampered by the fact that if they have to, for example, interview the Pope, they have no option, but to interview a man. Good point – or is it? Broadcasters are also obliged to provide balance. Why not then, if the occasion demands a response, interview a female theologian or female campaigner, to balance the Pope?

But what about women experts themselves? Journalists frequently allege that they “play hard to get”. Why? Well, survey research done by City shows that even women who call themselves experts, are hesitant about appearing on air. A high proportion (over 10%) volunteered that they were anxious about seeming ‘pushy’.

Academic research (Watson, C., & Hoffman, L. R. (2004). The Role of Task-Related Behavior in the Emergence of Leaders: The dilemma of the informed woman. *Group & Organization Management* 29 (6): 659-685.) has shown that women who take on leadership, however competent they are, are more likely to be disliked than men. So no wonder women don't want to be seen to be in authority. Who wants to be disliked? In fact over 50% of a wide range of young entry level journalists from all sorts of programmes, said that women were more difficult to get on air. Maybe this is why.

Despite all this broadcasters are now realising that under-representation of women is wrong and that more women have to appear. And when it comes down to that individual booking – it's up to you. And it's not easy. There's evidence that some senior journalists pay lip service to getting women on air, but that really, they like their male sparring partners and their reliable old contacts. So you have to be able to argue the toss. You have to have the guts to say – let's try someone different? You have to explain that it might take you longer, and broadcast management has to go with this. And then you have to go to your woman expert and persuade her to do it. Sigh. A young broadcaster's life is not an easy one! But if you persevere, you will be assured you are doing the right thing. And the really good news is that the programmes with more women experts have seen ratings rise. Far be it from me to think it might be cause and effect – but it certainly doesn't seem to be doing any harm.

by Professor Lis Howell



Lis Howell is Director of Broadcasting and Deputy Head of the Department of Journalism at City, University of London. Prior to that she was an award-winning journalist and broadcasting executive who worked for BBC, ITV, Channel 4, and Sky News. When she was Managing Editor of Sky News she produced their coverage of the first Gulf War from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. She also won a Royal Television Society Award for coverage of the Lockerbie disaster from ITV Border when she was the first female Head of News at ITV.

The Newsday - Bringing 'Everybody in'

Challenge yourself with the 'unconscious bias' test at the beginning of this e-book. Most of us know very well that engineers, company bosses and police-officers are also women, but we probably don't picture them when we think of the role. Once you've challenged yourself, you'll start to notice women's absence on discussion programmes and in key interviews.

Listen to BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour. It's been going for nearly 70 years and covers every topic (what would be a 'woman's issue' anyway?), it just favours women interviewees. You don't have to love the programme, but you can hear the way in which women experts are just treated as experts.

On a newsday, listen for the sound/watch the images in a bulletin. To what extent is there a balance of women and men in terms of experts (not vox pops) or the main protagonist in a story?

On a newsday, set out to balance the ratio of women to men you contact/fix for interview. This may take some extra effort: asking a press office for a woman to comment if one is not put forward, having to persuade a woman expert to take part if she hasn't been interviewed before, etc.

Listen back to the sound of a mix of voices and opinions which greater gender balance gives. What did it take to achieve that? Do you need to spend some time updating contacts to get a better mix of genders? Do you need practice asking for a female contributor and do you have a rationale to give if you're challenged?

On newsdays, double check who is covering which stories. Evidence demonstrates that while women journalists are more likely to get published in digital media, even there they're still likely to be covering one of the 4 'F's - family, food, furniture and fashion www.newstatesman.com. So if you're a woman, go for the finance stories, the political ones or anything else which is outside your comfort zone.

Double check your writing or story angles for any clichés about women and women's roles or attitudes. As in the section on sport, you'll find plenty of examples of how lazy writing will be pilloried on social media and elsewhere: www.theguardian.com. Reading this could act as a useful early warning.

5. Immigration

The Journalist's view:

It's hard to pinpoint exactly when "Immigration" became an offensive concept. Clues in my own family suggested it was a reality long before I was born. I always knew that my grandfather, a refugee from Jewish Berlin in the 1930s, had changed his name from "Hans" to "John" in an attempt to divert attention. But it was years later I discovered just how hostile a country he was entering. "The way stateless Jews from Germany are pouring in from every port of this country is becoming an outrage", a magistrate said the year my grandfather arrived, fleeing for his life. The sentiment was already decades old. "So-called refugees", wrote the Daily Mail, repulsed at Jewish immigrants at the turn of the century, "hid their gold and fawned and whined, in broken English".

Where the press has led, political rhetoric has followed. In the mass of EU Referendum hysteria it is easy to forget the climate 15 years ago, when Labour Home Secretary David Blunkett proposed that the children of asylum seekers should attend special schools to prevent them "swamping" local ones. news.bbc.co.uk It was during that period that the first immigration detention centre opened at Yarl's Wood, at the time the largest in Europe, still the subject of almost continuous protest.

Immigration is the incendiary political topic of our time. When a group campaigning for Britain to leave the EU produced a poster implying 76 million Turks would be heading for the UK and threatening security, www.theguardian.com the ensuing row boiled down to one, stubborn question: is anti-immigration sentiment inherently racist?



As a journalist, reporting these fault-lines with balance and nuance is crucial. Even the police have voiced their concern about the role of the press, warning that "ill-informed, adverse media coverage has contributed to heightened local tensions and resentment of asylum seekers". www.theguardian.com Fear over immigration has led to the creation of new parties and fundamentally changed the orientation of existing ones. New laws have been enacted to realise very real restrictions on immigrants' rights. www.migrantsrights.org.uk

The press is cause as well as effect, and in playing my part, the fact that I, as one of the few non-white journalists in my newsroom, have a family story of immigration, should be neither here nor there. Of course it triggers an inner emotional repulsion

when I hear “immigrants” described as vermin, but the best way to deal with that and all other extreme views is to stay focused on the integrity and balance of my reporting.

Yet... if only it were that simple. I might want to keep my personal views out of the story, but editors often have different ideas. When the time comes to conduct a delicate interview on immigration, they find the pull towards the non-white journalist in the newsroom irresistible. Such a person can “approach the subject with sensitivity, or construct long-form news features that “include a personal anecdote to powerfully punctuate the point”.

It’s an ironic case in point – as a nation we are reluctant to embrace immigrants, but depend on them once they’re here. Newsrooms are no different, but given their role shaping the public mood on an issue so fundamental to our political, social and economic identity, the stakes are exceptionally high.

by Afua Hirsch



*Afua Hirsch is a writer, broadcaster and lawyer. She appears on Sky News flagship debate show *The Pledge*, and reported social affairs as well as anchoring the international news channel. Before that she was the West Africa correspondent for the *Guardian* and legal correspondent. Her background is international law and development, and she is the author of *Brit(ish)*, a book being published this autumn by Jonathan Cape.*

The Newsday – Bringing ‘Everybody in’

Are there accurate figures for immigrants in your area? Do you know what they are? Check you’re clear about definitions as these words become used interchangeably when they’re not: refugees, asylum-seekers, immigrants.

Discuss the image you have of who is an ‘immigrant’? Is that borne out by the facts from your area? Check out the Office for National Statistics, among other sources.

Do you know any immigrants (maybe you are one)? Ask around, you may be surprised to know how many people of your acquaintance are immigrants, or have migrated elsewhere and become immigrants in other places. For example, the UK has more citizens living overseas than any other European nation – 4.9 million British people live in other countries around the world. ([World Economic Forum 2016](#))

Spend some time getting to know immigrants from a variety of backgrounds/-countries of origin. Interview some of them to broaden your (and your audience’s) knowledge, sharing them with the rest of the newsroom.

Who speaks for immigrants when there’s a ‘bad news’ story? Who would you turn to for a rebuttal? If you haven’t already got links with groups who support immigrants, make contact now. Double check they’re not representing a charity or campaign which would further repeat a stereotype, unless that’s the subject of the story.

Challenge clichés in thinking, writing or interviews when you hear ‘what we all know about immigrants’. Ask who here is the ‘we all’?

6. Islamophobia

The Journalist's view:

Treading the delicate path

“So, what do you think of that then?” said an editor as he turned to me in the newsroom with a look of suspicion. It was in relation to an undercover documentary looking at radical preachers in mosques. He wanted to know what I thought about what the preachers said. I suddenly felt all in the room's eyes on me, along with an uncomfortable feeling of people waiting in judgement.

I was the sole Muslim present, so I guessed they wanted to know what kind of Muslim I was. I didn't go for drinks with colleagues after work, so this was a chance to verify if I was the good kind or the bad kind. That was in a newsroom, somewhere I hoped my work would speak for itself. Where I had gained a space on the merits of the stories I had brought in, particularly the array of exclusives I delivered.

After that incident I began to question my role in the organisation and eventually decided to leave. I had managers celebrating me as a diversity success, patting themselves on the back. I was south-Asian, Muslim, working class, or maybe just another non-white face in their ranks. I did also have some colleagues believing I was only there because of diversity, a tokenistic gesture at representation and nothing to do with journalistic ability.

Then there's the reporting on Muslim communities: 4% of the UK population, 2.7 million Muslims, 1.6 billion globally. I knew the challenges; I sometimes have to remind colleagues that my opinions and views are not necessarily representative of the entire Muslim populace. We are not one homogenous body, but many communities. We often tend to discuss Muslims as the 'other', or through Eurocentric and orientalist paradigms – there's 'us' and then there's 'them'. For those groups we don't actually know about, a lack of knowledge enables the ability to project our selected narrative onto them.

There exists a tendency for white upper middle-class people to recruit people of colour exactly like themselves in terms of class – but diversity is more than that. It's more than just a brown or black face; it's entails a diversity of background, approach and outlook.

Sometimes I don't want to do the 'Muslim stories'. I get tired of doing them. I'd simply like to do something on health or Brexit. It's far too easy for editors to think Muslims as journalists can or should only, report on one issue.

But you're dragged into it. You see the headlines, one in five British Muslims sympathise with ISIS. See misreporting about communities where you grew up. Coverage of areas where your family still live that you know to be grossly untrue. Try and stay impartial and objective as the press slate people like your mother for not being able to speak English (she doesn't), or accuse the people in your neighbourhood of not integrating or self-segregating.

Then there's accountability. If I get it wrong, people in my community tell me on the street, from Coventry road in Birmingham or Whitechapel in London. I also understand the impact that my presence on screen has on communities that see me as one of their own – I'm supposed to get it right when the headlines get it wrong –

it's a delicate path to tread.

I recognise, however, I'm in an incredibly privileged position – people share stories with me that they wouldn't otherwise. I'm granted exclusive access to people, and I tell their stories in a way that I feel is different from how other journalists would.

by Assed Baig

www.assedbaig.com



Assed Baig is a journalist who has reported from around the world and is currently working as a reporter for Channel 4 News.

He specialises in Muslim communities, Islam, radicalisation and terrorism. Born and bred in Birmingham he's currently working out of London.

The Journalist's view:

“If diversity isn't on your agenda, you're not doing your job.”

In the often-polarised world we live in right now; 'diversity' and 'inclusion' are sometimes seen as hollow buzz words or worse still, as sticks used by do-gooders with which to beat others. These words are too often seen as an impractical burden. Diversity may now be a referenced term but it has in fact always been an essential part of journalism. A good journalist uses diverse sources, distills diverse information and incorporates diverse views into their output.

In my work, diversity has meant a multitude of things:

In 'Webcam Boys' (1 x 60 for BBC Three) a doc about British men who make money from performing sex shows online, it meant telling the story of a straight man from Telford who ended up having sexual encounters with other men because, in his words "It helps me pay for my girlfriend and the baby we're having." Exploring this narrative allowed the audience to understand the role Britain's economic climate plays in the rise of webcamming. It also allowed an exploration of class, income and often complex definitions of sexuality.

In 'Hazara's, Hatred and Pakistan' (1 x 30 for BBC Radio 4) it meant telling the story of the Hazara Shi'a community in Quetta. The community has been persecuted widely because they are a religious and ethnic minority.

In 'Muslims Like Us' (2 x 60 for BBC Two) a documentary series about the British Muslim experience, it meant getting access to great contributors amongst communities that often shun media attention because they feel they are unfairly scrutinised. This was only possible through assembling a casting team that was diverse in age, gender, sexual orientation, class and geographic location.

In all these examples, diversity is not an add on. It's central to the objective of each project. It's reflected in the teams that contributed to bringing a project to fruition, in the voices that are provided with a platform and in regards to how

stories are told. Without diversity, these stories wouldn't have the same richness. They would have fewer layers. They would serve the audience to a lesser extent.

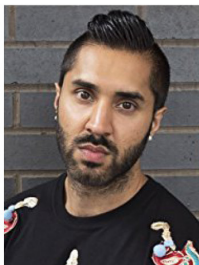
It's a privilege, not a chore

There can be a culture of cynicism amongst journalists. This can manifest in an unwillingness to accept that journalists individually, and our industry collectively, can be better.

In our industry, white people are over-represented in senior roles and the industry remains predominantly middle class. Anecdotally, I know of many British Asians who have established careers as journalists and programme makers. Many of them have done so with the support of their families who have bridged the funding gap that comes from unpaid internships. Some have benefited from private school educations. Increasing racial diversity is great but it's not good enough if the majority of people making it in the industry are middle class.

Public service broadcasting is important. British journalistic institutions are respected and envied around the world. This is precisely because public service broadcasting allows for and encourages broad perspectives and stories to be explored in a fair way. In this context, diversity is a tool which brings us closer to fulfilling our duty and our potential as journalists. Diversity in our stories, our contributors and in our journalism allows us to more adequately represent the world in which we live. That opportunity should be cherished.

by Mobeen Azhar



Mobeen Azhar is a Journalist and Film Maker .

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The Newsday – Bringing ‘Everybody in’

As with most of the suggestions in this ebook, start by doing some basic research. How many people identifying as Muslims are in your patch? Are they Sunni or Shia? Assed Baig writes: ‘knowing Sunni and Shia is fine, but let’s add Salafi, Deobandi, Sufi. These are sub Sunni groups and make up large numbers in the UK. For example, Sufis have the largest numbers in terms of people but Deobandis have more institutes’. Would you know the difference? www.mcb.org.uk The more you find out about anything you’re not part of (religions, different age groups, etc) the more you realise that talking about ‘them’ as a homogenous group, isn’t accurate.

Assed Baig suggests that when covering stories which relate to Muslim communities in the UK: ‘treat Muslims as individuals and recognise that there is a great deal of diversity within the many communities. Muslim communities are not exempt from the class struggle or any other issues. Being Muslim is very politicised even within Muslim communities.’

Two recent documentaries on BBC2 ‘Muslims Like Us’ are well worth time seeing for pointing out just these differences: www.bbc.co.uk by Mobeen Azhar. Also see What’s life like for British Muslims? www.youtu.be. Assed also warns against unquestioning use of quotes from community leaders: ‘what their so-called leaders say is usually not representative of what people actually feel. Always best to get real and raw voices rather than approach the first Muslim with a website.’

Make contact with different organisations where you might find Muslims in your patch. Maybe local mosques, but also community centres, community media, sports clubs and arts centre, as well as charitable associations. Arrange to go down and meet people, conduct some interviews to get different perspectives on what your audience is concerned and interested in. There are a great many stories and angles you will get on a newsday by having contacts and networks from across your audience. As with most of our valued contacts, these will take time to develop, to build trust, but they are then more likely to take your call when you’re looking for a clip or some background on a fast-moving newsday. There’s also much information already out there if you’re looking for strong stories to tell. A> For example: www.tellmamauk.org is often a good source for academically researched articles. Also the Islamic Human Rights Commission: www.ihrc.org.uk

British Muslims for Secular Democracy www.bmsd.org.uk offer yet another set of perspectives.

See how many diverse views you can find in just an hour’s research, from this one section of society: Muslims.

7. Older People

The Journalist's view:

I am a grandfather and every month I get a pension payment from a previous employer. I'm also a university teacher, Norwich City supporter (no sympathy, please), a regular Parkrunner, the owner of a second home in France and more besides. Each of those is part of what I am but not one of them defines me.

That said, I'm prepared to bet that if I find myself in the news tomorrow, next week or next year I will be described as a pensioner or a granddad. In fact, if a quick trawl through some recent news stories is a guide, I'm more likely to be labelled 'granddad' in a good news item and 'pensioner' when I'm some kind of victim.

These aren't just the rambling thoughts of some old codger. The National Union of Journalists in 'Change the Record', its guidelines on reporting issues of age www.nuj.org.uk is quite clear that words matter. The guide says: "Language can be a powerful tool in shaping our views and reflecting public attitudes and perceptions – both of which can form barriers that prevent people of every age from integration and participation in society." To emphasize the point it adds: "Old itself is loaded with assumptions of neediness and ineptness that terrify the young and undermine the old, robbing them of self-respect, damaging their health and welfare."

So, just as we would refer to someone's race in a news story only when it was absolutely relevant – would you mention race if the person was white? – ask yourself whether the fact that someone is a grandparent is directly relevant to the story at hand. Imagine a headline that said 'Middle-aged woman to the rescue'.....doesn't work really does it?

Of course someone's age is a fact that can add detail to a story whether they are 27 or 72 but it's the damaging impact of the labelling that goes with the latter that we need to guard against.

There has been a subtle change in reporting older people, not least all those claims that 60 is the new 40. Some of us, it seems, still look good – especially from behind www.dailymail.co.uk.

But the changes are not all positive. Roy Jones, an NUJ member of honour (now there's a great way of saying he's not a youngster) wrote in November 2015: "In the past, older people were treated somewhat patronisingly by the media, 'reaching for their slippers', for example, but generally in a kindly way. Nowadays, the following comment is more typical: 'The young tax-paying population has to fund, to its detriment, an ageing society,'."

In March 2015 Dr Ros Altman, then the Pensions Minister, produced 'A new vision for older workers: retain, retrain, recruit'. It contained recommendations specifically for the media, including action to promote positive language, stories and updated images of older workers and making greater use of older presenters.

Much of the debate about age and media has centred on that point about presenters and discrimination on screen against older women in particular. That's a discussion for another day, for now I'll settle for less reaching for the lazy stereotypes before I reach for the slippers.

by Bob Calver



Bob Calver has been a journalist for forty years working in broadcasting, newspapers, magazines and for online publications. At Birmingham City University he teaches principally on the BJTC accredited course. He is currently researching for a PhD by Journalism Practice based on his work as a magazine editor and has lectured on journalism and media ethics in Norway, India, Bagladesh and China where he holds an honorary professorship in the College of Culture & Media at Shenyang University.

The Newsday – Bringing ‘Everybody In’

Among the many divisions in our society thrown up by the EU referendum result was the gap between older and young voters. One snappy post-Brexit Tweet alluded to older voters loving their country more than they did their grandchildren.

Leaving aside the analysis of which groups voted which way, the debate underlines one of the ‘fault lines’ that lay beneath the surface of our public life and one of which journalists need to be aware.

Like all issues of diversity it affects us all but is, perhaps, most keenly felt in the profession where many of you will take your first steps in local radio. That’s fine if you work for a commercial station where the target audience may be made up of people a bit like you – but what if you get your big break in a BBC station? The latest version of the [Service Licence](#) issued to the Corporation’s 39 stations is clear:

The target audience should be listeners aged 50 and over, who are not well-served elsewhere, although the service may appeal to all those interested in local issues. There should be a strong emphasis on interactivity and audience involvement.

For that reason alone, then, you need to think about how you reach that audience. There are some questions you need to ask yourself – and they are equally relevant wherever you are working. A report from the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism into [media consumption](#) concluded last year that older people make up more of the TV news audience.

So here are some questions to be going on with.

What comes into your head when you think of an older person?

Consider the fact that you are probably wrong. If we are talking about people in their 50s they’ll be a lot like your mum and dad. Move to the 70 + age group and they’ll be pretty much the same as your grandparents.

Given that people in their 50s, 60s and probably even their 70s have broadly the same concerns and interests as those in their 30s and 40s the next question should be:

What issues are of specific concern to older people?

Your parents, for instance, are probably more concerned than you are about the rate of return on their savings. That means a rise in interest rates, which is bad news for a young person buying a home, maybe better news for your older audience members even though a significant number of them will still have mortgages to pay off.

What about health, fitness and ‘lifestyle’ stories?

Look at the starting line-up for the London Marathon, the Great North Run, the Great Manchester 10k and a host of similar events round the country and you’ll see lots of older (even really old) people raring to go. Statistics show we are living longer and part of that is a desire to go on being fit and looking good. That was underlined by Channel 4’s [Fabulous Fashionistas](#) documentary about six women – average age 80 – determined to go on looking wonderful and redefining ‘old age’ along the way,

There are, of course genuine health issues that come with aging but we need to take care, here, too, not to paint a picture of [victimhood](#). Older people are also as likely to be [carers](#) – for spouses, partners or parents – as they are to be cared for.

Where can I find older people to talk to?

Don't forget the majority of people in their mid to late 50s, through their 60s and even into their 70s are likely to be in work (there is no such thing as 'the retirement age', these days we talk about the [State Pension Age](#)) so you'll find them alongside their younger colleagues. If you're looking for those not at work a few minutes on the web will point you at scores of lunch clubs, good neighbour sessions, drop in centres and over-60's keep fit classes in your area.

How do I make my story relevant to 'them'?

Every story you report on and write should always be produced with the audience in mind. But think about the words you choose and use, think of the images you are shooting and showing and think of the voices in your piece.

None of the above will have come as a surprise to you but the challenge – as with all the areas covered in this book – is to have this kind of thinking in your everyday practice.

So here's something you can try. The next time you are taking part in a newscast or you are asked to find a story or an interviewee look deliberately for a story that will resonate with an older audience (you can always bounce an idea off a family member) and search out someone from that 50+ target audience.

Or – perhaps with some fellow students – produce a short programme designed with that audience in mind. It doesn't mean every item has to feature older people but every second should be of interest to them.

One final test, when you play back your efforts if anything sounds condescending or like you are trying really hard to reach out to an alien group or if any part of it is open to a charge of pandering to a stereotype then ditch it and come up with something else.

Your audience may be old but your ideas must be new.

8. Poverty

The Journalist's view:

Reporting on poverty

As we navigate the unhappy turmoil of post-referendum Britain, there's a critical lesson to be learned for journalists. The balance of media attention has to shift decisively from what's happening in Westminster to what's happening everywhere else.

A lack of consistent, reliable reporting from around the country feeds into a sense that a metropolitan elite – both political and journalistic – has lost touch with the rest of the country.

When this balance is wrong, then the focus of reporting is on abstract arguments over immigration targets and not on the experience of changed immigration patterns in the parts of the country most affected; attention gets fixed onto the script of belt-tightening budget announcements made in parliament and not on the long fall-out of six years of austerity measures on the country's most marginalised.

The way news organisations are structured can make this difficult. Regional newspapers and television bureaux are closing, pulling the centre of gravity back to London. More challenging is that the kind of reporting that explains the impact of government policies and global economic trends on Britain's residents can rarely be sold as headline news. It's the opposite of news – it's a daily state of being.

When politicians in Westminster are arguing about the “bloated” state of the welfare system, about the need for poverty to be redefined as something less exclusively about money and more about unwise behaviour and begin dismissing the phenomenon of food banks as the natural consequence of a decline in cookery skills, we need journalists to turn in the other direction and report on reality. When a narrative of scrounging and shirking becomes mainstream, and we're told that “hard-working people” are losing out from a welfare system that rewards those who “do the wrong thing”, we need reporting that reminds readers that much of the welfare budget is paid out to people who are in work, on low wages, getting up every morning and doing the right thing.

On a practical level, the way to force this subject on to the news agenda is to make sure that the coverage is interesting, and not just worthy. People have to want to engage with the subject, otherwise your efforts are wasted. This might mean seizing an extreme example, the death of a vulnerable man after his benefits were sanctioned, to explain the broader problems of sanctioning. www.theguardian.com Or it could mean finding one person ready to explain how policy decisions on tackling poverty have shaped their life www.theguardian.com. Sometimes we've experimented with radically different forms to explore the issue – see this microplay on food banks. www.theguardian.com

Reporting on poverty, when people are experiencing profound difficulties with housing and just getting by, isn't always easy. Think about whether you would want details of your spending budget in the newspaper, and photographs of your empty fridge in the paper. If it's easier for people to talk anonymously about their situation, that doesn't necessarily make it less powerful. Some people are so enraged at the

situation they find themselves in that they positively want a platform to explain why something has gone wrong.

Both the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Church Action on Poverty have published helpful reports on reporting in this area. They recoil from the notion of case studies served up to illustrate a point, human experiences packaged up and summarised for a three-paragraph sidebar. Ideally, reporting in this area should take the audience in deeper, to help build a world view that isn't based on the tropes peddled in Westminster.

www.church-poverty.org.uk www.jrf.org.uk

A call to shift the balance of media attention to the rest of the country shouldn't be viewed as an unpalatable, heavy responsibility. We ignore what is happening in the UK's marginalised communities at our peril, but in any case, life is more interesting beyond Parliament Square.

by Amelia Gentleman



Amelia Gentleman writes on social affairs for The Guardian. She won the George Orwell prize 2012 and Feature Writer of the Year at the British Press Awards in 2011. Previously she was New Delhi correspondent for the International Herald Tribune, and Paris and Moscow correspondent for the Guardian.

The Newsday – Bringing ‘Everybody in’

We know there are issues of underrepresentation in newsrooms and one of them is allied to the issue of money, or lack of it. This can sometimes lead to a lack of understanding when reporting a story where poverty is at its root.

As with all things, our starting point is to get clued up. Firstly to the fact that poverty doesn’t always look like the Dickensian imagery of people starving and destitute.

According to Professor Peter Townsend, a leading authority on UK poverty, relative poverty is when someone’s “resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities” www.jrf.org.uk

In the BBC report by Justin Parkinson about the newly coined ‘just about managing (JAM)’ he quotes figures of six million working-age households on low to middle incomes. They are spread across “areas as diverse as Pendle in Lancashire, Sandwell in the Midlands and North Devon”. Jam households have at least one person in work, but are half as likely to have a degree as the rest of the population. www.bbc.co.uk

The Guardian quotes Shelter as saying ‘more than one in three families in England are a monthly pay packet away from losing their homes’ www.theguardian.com

So on newsdays we need to think about the demographics of our audience when covering, say, the opening of a new shopping centre, to avoid the assumption that everyone could afford to go there or even travel to it in the first place in the way we write about it.

As with other sections of this book, think about going to areas of the town/city which typically are lower income and find stories which have a meaning there. If you spend time getting local contacts you will undoubtedly get material which reflects different opinions and voices, not to mention uncover concerns which perhaps aren’t ones you’ve thought of.

Back in the newsroom, think about those concerns when weighing up stories for inclusion on the bulletin and how they’re written up, to ensure they don’t only reflect a more privileged lifestyle.

In interviews or getting clips, challenge assumptions experts and others make about ‘us’ and what ‘we all agree about’. Who are they talking about or for? Do a feature on the local foodbank and see the range of people who are using it. Ask how councils will ensure access to books or the Arts if libraries close or free museums have to charge.

9. Regionalism

The Journalist's view:

Northern exposure

I'd like to apologise to viewers in the North. It must be awful for you. Imagine the scene. It's January, 2010. Children are crawling on their hands and knees to get to school, because the roads and pavements are too icy to stand upright.

This has come about because of a rare weather phenomenon where lying snow and ice has begun to melt, then frozen suddenly as temperatures drop sharply. You'd think it would be a huge story for journalists - pictures! Human interest! Once in a lifetime event! Did I say pictures?

But it hardly got a mention outside West Yorkshire, because it happened in Holmfirth. Not Holborn. For a while the BBC website marked the unseasonal weather with a picturesque shot of a snow-flecked red London bus passing by the tower of Big Ben. That's unusual. Winter just happens in the North.

It's a classic example of regional discrimination, in its own way as bad as sex or race discrimination, where a story which happens "in the regions" is perceived as less important than one which affects the capital. It comes about less, in the main, from metropolitan conceit than from something more human.

Journalism is an art as well as a craft. Beyond objective news criteria we apply values to stories on the "ooh gosh" scale of pure, visceral gut feeling. It's what (for now) differentiates the living journalist from an algorithm. That gut feeling is informed by my daily lived experience. The price I pay for milk, the ethnic origin of people I mix with, the frequency of public transport, the films showing in the cinema are all unconsciously internalised as the norm. Even when they're at odds with the lived experience of a majority of my audience.

I have an idea of what "the elsewhere" is like, of course - I've never been to Inverness, but I've been to Scotland so I apply my internal Scottish template to a story there and I probably won't be far wrong. The problem arises when places become stereotypes. Like my home patch of Bradford.

I remember the day I took a phone call in the newsroom at Pennine Radio from a TV film crew. "Hello, I'm looking for poverty". So how could I help? "Can't find any. Where should I go?" Resisting the first reply that came to mind I asked if he was looking for visuals - stray dogs, bricks in the road, that kind of thing? "That's right - been driving for hours all round Bradford - can't find shots anywhere". They'd chosen their location because Bradford, to them, was synonymous with deprivation. Likewise a documentary that chose to illustrate the prosperity of the South East with pictures filmed inside a very ordinary Arndale Centre - the twin of which exists in, you've guessed it, Bradford.

This isn't just a "London versus the North" issue. Far from it.

My own station was based in Bradford, but covered the neighbouring towns of Huddersfield and Halifax. The same issues applied - we were more likely to do a vox pop yards from the studio in Bradford because it was easier than driving half an hour to Halifax to do it. Guests from the Alhambra Theatre or City Hall were convenient, those from the Huddersfield Choral Society or Calderdale Council required more

effort. It was Drury Lane and the Westminster bubble in microcosm.

The message from all this is that it's important to be genuinely inclusive of people and stories throughout the editorial area we serve, whether that be local, regional or national. That takes effort. Effort to avoid stereotypes, lazy assumptions and tokenism (it's almost worse to include news of little merit to meet some quota of "stories from the sticks"). Effort to apply the same tests we routinely use when deciding if a story is racist or sexist.

A bit like the effort the kids and teachers had to apply to get to school that winter's day in Holmfirth, West Yorkshire.

www.dailymail.co.uk www.youtube.com

by Richard Horsman



Richard Horsman is a journalist, media skills trainer and award-winning lecturer based in West Yorkshire, where he teaches Radio at Leeds Trinity University. Formerly news editor at The Pulse in Bradford, he also delivers media training for both public and private sector organisations. Richard is active in projects to encourage greater diversity in broadcast news, and blogs on radio, journalism and related matters at RichardHorsman.com and posts on Twitter as [@leedsjourn](https://twitter.com/leedsjourn).

RichardHorsman.com [@leedsjourn](https://twitter.com/leedsjourn)

The Newsday – Bringing ‘Everybody In’

Anyone who has ever worked for a regional daily newspaper will be well versed in looking at national (and international) stories from a closer-to-home-perspective. “Get us the north angle on that,” was a phrase in daily use by one news desk we know.

Regional and local broadcast newsrooms will also recognise the technique. The problem comes not in regional journalists putting stories in context for their audiences but in news about any region being reported from elsewhere.

To the long list of attributes required of aspiring journalists we would like to add another – a good knowledge of the geography of the British Isles. Test yourself by taking an outline of the counties of England, for example, and seeing how many you can identify.

Knowing where places are is a first step in getting to learn more about them and it certainly avoids that irritating attitude of ‘well it’s all the north to me.’

You need, too, to have a detailed knowledge of your own editorial area. Not every part of it will look and feel the same as every other part. This is the UK so even the weather can vary within a relatively small area. Again you can test yourself with an outline of your area to see how many communities within it you can name and place correctly.

Don’t assume that because you live and work in the main centre of population that people in other towns or more rural areas will automatically be interested in everything that happens there. It’s the equivalent of the metropolitan thinking that sees everywhere outside the south east as being either ‘up north’ or ‘the sticks’.

The [BBC’s Public Purposes](#) set out its aims clearly. *“Across the range of its network output, the BBC should portray and celebrate the range of cultures and communities across the UK at national, regional and local level.”*

For your next news day do some research to enable you to suggest stories that ‘portray and celebrate’ different parts of your area.

When you are reviewing how your news day has gone think about how much of your area has been included in your output. If a significant area is missing then ask yourself why that is.

When you are looking for local reactions to a story, ask yourself if there is just one view which you need to reflect or are different parts of your area likely to see a development or announcement differently. One local person may object to a planning scheme as an intrusion into her space while another may welcomed it as bringing new jobs.

Remember, too, that the local/regional reaction you get should become your story. So, for example, if you are pursuing a local view on a Government initiative that local voice is most likely to be your top line.

10. Religion

The Journalist's view:

A matter of life and death

Pedantry is often boring, but it's almost as often necessary. For journalists it can be a positive virtue, and that's why I used to get quite worked up with viewers and listeners (and especially with colleagues) who called me "the BBC's religious correspondent". That suggested that I was there to cover religion itself, and it was why I'd get earnest letters and 'phone calls from people who were convinced they had found the secret of eternal truth and wanted me to pass it on to the BBC's audiences.

I'd point out to them (patiently and politely, I hope, but probably not) that I was the BBC's religious "affairs" correspondent, which meant primarily that my job was to cover religion when it got into the news bulletins, and at no other time. I wasn't there to publicise any religion, or even to argue that religion was a good (or a bad) thing in itself.

Religion can be a marvellously news-packed subject. It looks at the moment likely to be one of the defining forces of the early 21st century, as though we did not already have plenty of ways of defining ourselves and rejecting the definitions other people choose for themselves.

Mind you, the religious affairs correspondent anxious to make a reputation in the newsroom will have to accept definitions which may help to build a career but which actually do little to enlighten audiences. Twenty years ago, I would sometimes suggest to the newsdesk that there was an important story to be reported about the shifts in power - and survival prospects - between some of the old-established religions in the Middle East. "Oh, Islam, you mean", replied one output editor. "That's boring. Have you got any dirty vicar stories instead?" (Dirty vicar stories were sad accounts of some religious figure who had been found committing acts judged sexually wrong, perhaps by one or other religious group, perhaps by the law. Some were serious offences, some weren't offences at all. Their stories were almost invariably depressing. But they got you near the top of the news agenda for days on end.)

Sometimes the religious affairs correspondent would be brought out to perform on big state occasions, often royal funerals. They were a sure-fire way of getting a prime spot in the news bulletins. But prominence came at a price: there was often very little to report, and there are only so many ways of saying nothing in suitably hushed and polished tones.

Yet I enjoyed my stint covering religion, for two reasons. I found that, unlike so many other subjects where news entrusted coverage to specialists, this was an area where colleagues were much less likely to try to tell you that they knew better than any specialist (this may have been because they had learned that religion is a horribly easy subject to get wrong). And it is an intensely human subject: it's almost impossible to cover religion without talking about people's lives and deaths, their hopes, dreads and resignation, their losses and - sometimes - their fulfilment.

I remember interviewing a prominent humanist for a radio package. I asked him

what he thought religion was. “It’s something that makes bad people worse”, he replied, “and good people better.” People motivated by religion can create hell on Earth, and they can sacrifice everything for the sake of a stranger. There are stories clamouring to be told, stories which meet the most rigorous definitions of secular news values. And you don’t even need to have any religious faith of your own to cover it – in fact, it’s quite likely easier if you’re an atheist.

I’ve known a number of journalists who became religious affairs correspondents with a lively faith of their own, and finally left the job as atheists. The physicist Albert Einstein once said: “Remember your humanity, and forget the rest.” That’s not a bad definition of what you need to be a journalist. At least it should make sure that you’re filled with curiosity. And a journalist who can’t be bothered to be curious is a threat to all of us.

by Alex Kirby.



Alex Kirby was the BBC News religious affairs correspondent from 1996 to 1998, but spent most of his career with the Corporation reporting on the environment. In 2013, with three former print colleagues, all former science and environment specialists, he set up the Climate News Network, a pro bono news service aimed at developing world journalists.

The Vicar knows...

“If you want to know what’s going on in your local community, ask the vicar.” The trainee reporters to whom I gave this advice over a decade ago in Birmingham looked a little bemused and slightly incredulous at this advice. I was asked to justify my view.

Wherever you live in England you are in a parish of the Church of England. You don’t have to find yourself in or be attached to any of its 16,000 buildings – although with more outlets than Tescos, Sainsburys and Waitrose combined, you’re never far away from a church building. Rather it’s because the job on the church’s 12,000 or so clergy is to have “the cure of souls” for every person in their parish. In other words their job isn’t to look after those who come in on Sunday it’s to look out for all the people in the parish, whoever they may be. That duty is enshrined in law and is an oath undertaken by every vicar of a church when they take up their job. It’s part of the contract that comes with being the established Church. So in communities of economic deprivation where all those with the means to do so have left sometimes the only professional resident in the community is the vicar. Whilst doctors, social workers, police officers and teachers may all commute in and out to do their work, the vicar remains embedded within the parish. And in those rural villages where the post office has gone, the pub has closed down and bank has long gone, the church remains as a place of gathering and meeting for those of all faiths and none who may come for the church’s convening role even if not for its liturgical splendour.

That means that when tragedy strikes, it is the vicar who often becomes the focal point of a community and its reactions. The example I gave 12 years ago was that

of the Rev Tim Alban Jones, described by the Cambridge News as “the vicar who united Soham after the murders of schoolgirls Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman” www.cambridge-news.co.uk

A year later I was working with John Sentamu, the then Bishop of Birmingham, who spoke for a city and its loss after the murder of Charlene Ellis and Letisha Shakespeare leading a vigil for their memory and calling out for justice. www.bbc.co.uk

These examples of the church playing out its role as convenor of hope or lament during times of tragedy or crisis mean that in its most local manifestation it remains the one of the most basic units of community in England.

This role was seen most recently with the murder of Jo Cox MP. On the day she was killed people gathered at St Peter’s Church in Birstall for a vigil led by the local vicar Paul Knight and Bishop of Huddersfield, Jonathan Gibbs. The 400 people who packed in at the church that night were not all regular worshippers, They were not all Christian or even CofE. But they came together under a common roof, open to all in the heart of its community. www.theguardian.com

by Rev Arun Arora.



The Rev Arun Arora is Director of Communications for the Church of England. He's a former employment lawyer who was Diocesan Communications Officer and Bishop's Press Officer in the Diocese of Birmingham (his home town) before training for ordination. He served as Director of Communications for the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu before taking up his present post.

The Newsday – Bringing ‘Everybody in’

As far as journalists are concerned that old saw that advises that we never talk about politics or religion is clearly nonsense. But what do we know about different faiths and within them their different denominations?

Perhaps we don't know very much, largely because – like most of the population – we have little direct contact with churches and religious groups although in the [2011 Census](#) only a quarter of us indicated we had no religion. A further 7% declined to answer the question about religion, which was the only voluntary element of the census.

Journalists, though, are not ‘like most of the population’ and we do need to know about all the organisations, movements and pressure groups that are involved in the society our stories are supposed to reflect. Just over half the population call themselves Christian. What's this, you may ask, got to do with diversity or inclusive reporting? In short the answer is that religious groups vary widely from one another – even within the same faith or denomination – and being aware of that is just as important as understanding more about all the groups in this book.

The Church of England is unique in being part of the fabric of state. It is the Established Church – that's why we have Bishops sitting in the House of Lords. The Church of Scotland and the Church in Wales are not established, so at the very least you should have a sense of what that means.

So, check out the details of the faith groups in your area – and find out what they are up to. Churches – or groups of churches – run food banks as well as drop in centres for homeless or older people which can be useful places to get in touch with those people.

In 2015 it was [reported](#) that faith based groups, Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Jews, etc, were giving the equivalent of £3 billion worth of time to social projects and were helping fill the gap left by funding cuts. Of course. Many secular groups are doing equally valuable work but new can't afford to ignore a potentially rich source of stories

Remember ‘the church’ doesn't exist. There are lots of them and just because one group is objecting to a new night club it doesn't mean that ‘the church’ is against the development.

Make sure your contacts include people from a range of active groups – and don't forget that each of the areas (dioceses) into which the C of E is divided will have a press officer. Similar posts exist within all the denominations.

Don't get hung up on titles. It doesn't matter if someone is Venerable or Very Reverend, least of all to the man or woman involved. They will be happy to be reported by name alone.

Other religions are also available!

11. Sexuality

The Journalist's view:

Changing perceptions

“This guy, however he dresses up his bigotry and hatred, is someone who hates gays. If he went in to a synagogue and murdered Jewish people, we'd call it out for what it is”.

The openly gay columnist Owen Jones became increasingly exasperated during a Sky Newspaper review when the clearly homophobic motivations of Omar Mateen to kill 49 LGBT people in an Orlando night club were conspicuously absent from early news reports. www.youtube.com

Sky News anchor Mark Longhurst told an incredulous Jones it was an attack on all human beings. Right wing commentator Julia Hartley Brewer questioned whether it was a solely homophobic attack and claimed Mateen would be just as angry at her for “being a gobby woman”.

BBC News, on the night after the massacre, barely mentioned the homophobic overtones. Even President Obama called it an attack on all Americans. Only the huge LGBT vigils across the world coerced media outlets in to refocussing the story on to those people who it had struck at the heart of.

I think Jones was right to say that attacks on other minority groups would be – and have been – called out for what they were, not presented as a footnote and touched upon days later.

In a media landscape full of openly LGBT journalists, this seems odd. But attitudes towards LGBT people are, I think, still the last taboo of acceptable prejudice. It's still acceptable to flippantly describe something as “a little bit gay”. You couldn't use the word black, Muslim or Jewish in the same way.

Nor do you often see a gay couple presented in news reports merely as a couple, regardless of their gender or sexuality. It has to be a “gay” thing. Gay adoption. Gay marriage. Gay rights.

49 years since homosexuality was legalised in this country, there is still a way to go before LGBT people are treated fairly in all walks of life, let alone the media. But it's understandable; the LGBT community is changing before all of our eyes, and our understanding of it is struggling to keep up.

Half of 18-24 year olds questioned last year by YouGov said they weren't 100% heterosexual. yougov.co.uk LGBT has added two new initials recently – Q for Queer and I for Intersex. Many young people are identifying as “non-binary” or “gender-fluid”. The Queer subculture almost transcends sexuality.

And therein lies another minefield; should we separate issues of sexuality from issues of gender? A transsexual isn't necessarily gay, for example. As a relatively young gay man, understanding these intricacies is tough enough. For the public, and media, at large, it's even harder.

Political correctness will dictate that media coverage of these issues will continue to be at times retrograde. It isn't necessarily indicative of homophobia or even ignorance of gay issues. But as those more liberated 18-24 year olds grow up to be our correspondents and news producers of the future, attitudes will change. Media

coverage of “gay issues” will no longer seem as significant.
by James Bovill



James Bovill is an award winning journalist with more than 8 years' experience in local, regional and network radio and television. While at BBC WM, James won a BBC Gillard Award for his part in the station's coverage of the Trojan Horse affair, and a Gold award in the 2015 New York Festivals World's Best Radio Programs, for his documentary about the 40th anniversary of the Birmingham Pub Bombings. Following a stint as a producer at BBC Radio Five Live, James is now a Political Reporter.

The Newsday - Bringing 'Everybody in'

Check you understand the different terminologies. As James says, they're changing all the time and even if the media tends to be slightly more cautious in using new words, we as journalists should know what they mean. Stonewall has useful information along these lines

www.stonewall.org

According to research Stonewall and YouGov carried out in 2012 into society's attitudes, three quarters of people (77 per cent) think the media still rely heavily on clichéd stereotypes of lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

On one of your newsdays, double check assumptions you make about your audience or interviewees when writing copy/ thinking through questions. Gay, lesbian and bisexual people comprise 3.7 million of the UK population and one in five of us in Britain (19 per cent) say we have relatives who are lesbian, gay or bisexual (Stonewall 2012). That includes your audience and your newsroom. So for example, do you need to write 'husband and wife' in a piece about marriage or family if it's not the topic of the story?

Most large cities have a gay quarter, or similar. Why not ensure you always do some of your vox pops there, as well as in general shopping streets, to counter the sense that gay people are only ever asked to comment on 'gay issues'.

If you are covering a story such as a Pride march, check whether you're falling into easy stereotypes with whom you pick to interview or film. For every "flamboyant" character, there will be 1,000 ordinary LGBTIQI people going about their business. A drag queen is about as representative of all gay people as Tony Blair is of all Labour supporters. It's a broad church; reflect it.

Be careful of lumping everyone who isn't straight under one umbrella. LGBTIQI is such a catch all term that can never accurately represent everyone it describes. One size most definitely doesn't fit all, so think carefully about the terminology you're using and what is most appropriate.

Non-heterosexual people are not one big homogenous group with the same beliefs and values and shouldn't be grouped together as such. You would never run copy describing the "straight community". Instead of saying "in the gay community", use something like "amongst gay people".

Media too often describe issues involving gay people as controversial. Controversy is in the eye of the beholder. The fight for gay men to receive PrEP on the NHS was somehow controversial solely because it was seen as promoting promiscuity; another lazy stereotype. Would a campaign for sexually active straight women to get a pill to prevent chlamydia have been subject to the same frenzy?

12. “Sport now...”

The Journalist’s view:

Are you with him?

1987 I have achieved my childhood dream and become a sports reporter on a morning newspaper. I’m paid to watch rugby, football and tennis, but this also involves being pointed at for being the only woman in the press box, putting up with smutty comments from rugby players, dealing with obnoxious football managers and stupid questions from media colleagues: “Oh. I thought you were someone’s girlfriend.” Fortunately, I have a big mouth and can stand up for myself. Over the course of four or five years, I don’t meet any other women covering sport.

2012 I’m invited to attend a racism in sport conference. I get chatting to a black female football reporter in her 20s. She says that sexism is still prevalent and far more of an issue for her than racism. I’m depressed that so little has changed in 25 years.

Don’t get blasé at seeing former women sports stars in our press boxes. They’re not sports journalists – they’re pundits at best and cheerleaders for their mates at worst. Perhaps it’s best not to get me started on this issue, particularly after the [BBC employed Sally Gunnell as a ‘reporter’](#) – and the 400m hurdler (a fabulous athlete if not much cop as an interviewer) complained she hadn’t been trained properly. I fancy being a brain surgeon – can I turn up at the General on Monday and demand training before wielding my scalpel?

Pundits have a key analytical role, but they’ll never replace the trained journalist who can interview skilfully and spot a story at 20 paces. It’s not that women don’t want to be sports journalists – university journalism degrees can put paid to that misapprehension. You don’t have to have played sport at a high level to report on it with authority. Rugby players used to find it amusing to grill me on the laws of the game – they soon got bored when it became clear I knew them at least as well, if not better, than they did.

And why on earth do female sports reporters have to put up with the most ludicrous comments? Jacqui Oatley, [the first woman commentator on Match of the Day](#), had to put up with a barrage of abuse. Honestly, not all women cricketers are lesbians ([and why would it matter if they were?](#)) West Indies cricketer [Chris Gayle has past form](#) for making toe-curling comments to women journalists. And TV presenter John Inverdale inexplicably blamed hay fever after he made sexist remarks about [French tennis player Marion Bartoli’s looks](#).

We’re slowly seeing a wider range of women’s sports on TV and in newspaper sports pages. But only one national paper sports editor is a woman – Alison Kervin of the Mail on Sunday was appointed in 2013. Suzanne Franks speculates on why there are [so few women in sports journalism](#). But one thing we have to get past – and quickly – is the idea that women can only report on women’s sports. Otherwise, all we have is men talking about men.

by Sharon Wheeler



*Sharon is a freelance journalist and media consultant, who has worked on newspapers, magazines and websites, and also lectured full-time in three UK universities. She is co-editor and co-founder of Crime Review (www.crimereview.co.uk), an independent crime fiction review website. Sharon is the author of *Feature Writing for Journalists* (Routledge, 2009), co-author with Richard Keeble of *The Journalistic Imagination* (Routledge, 2007) and contributed to *Print Journalism: A Critical Introduction* (Routledge, 2005).*

www.crimereview.co.uk

Blazing a trail

We are having the diversity conversation too often these days. So often, even I, - a black British, female sports journalist - am getting bored with it.

Unfortunately we still live in a world where the gender or ethnicity of a sports reporter is often more important than the top line.

I went to a friend's book launch and it got me thinking. She had written 'thanks for being one of the trailblazers', when she signed it for me. It was weird because I don't see myself that way, that's how I see the people who came before me. But then it clicked, we're all still blazing a trail because our role within our profession is still considered a novelty. Only by some admittedly, but still by too many.

The notion itself sounds ridiculous, but nowhere is that more true than in the world of sport. While we watch tech and science professionals encourage a more healthy diversity split, the world of sports - media, and otherwise - still fight it.

Remember the kid who always held onto the ball at school, regardless of his right to do so? Well, he never let go, and he probably works in sport!

As we plummet towards a strange land where political correctness is God, is sport the last bastion for the archetypal man?

It certainly seems to be.

Sports webpages are littered with semi-clad women who happen to date sports stars, professional athletes are belittled with very little recourse and female employees are often treated with a disregard that their male colleagues rarely suffer.

It's harmless they tell us, because sports is a man's world. Except it's not, not any more. Nor has it been for a long time.

We can rule countries, fly planes and drive tanks; but people get their pants in a twist if we read out the football results. And not because they're being read wrongly, just because the person reading them isn't a tenor.

The silliness of it fits sports media down to a tee.

Has no one reminded them that boxers weigh themselves in their pants to fight a man over a belt, while also winning a purse?

I'm not sure it could get less masculine.

But all jokes aside, the fact that I'm still considered a trailblazer in 2016 isn't lost on me. Or any of the other women who work in sports media. In fact, it keeps us strong and ensures we don't give anyone the chance to blame our gender. In the same way we try not to blame theirs.

Because despite what the dinosaurs tell you, we are good enough and we won't let them forget it.

So what if they don't want us in their gang, we'll just create our own. We all have the ability to be trailblazers, and it's vital we don't forget that. We all need reminding that sport isn't just there for them, it's here for us all.

And if me blazing a trail makes life easier for you, then pass me a match.

by Natasha Henry



Natasha Henry is a sports journalist who has worked for a number of print and online publications, including The Voice and talkSPORT. She has also been a freelance sports writer, pundit and broadcaster for The Guardian, BBC 5 Live, BBC World Service, Mail Oline, Arise TV and London Live. In March 2013 she launched Women in Sport magazine as publisher and editor-in-chief.

The Newsday - Bringing ‘Everybody in’

There are twin challenges in sport in terms of diversity. One is the diversity of the sports reporter and the other is the range of sports covered and their coverage. In the Rio 2016 Olympics, there were many examples of comments made about what women reporters wore www.mirror.co.uk and under-reporting of sportswomen’s success www.huffingtonpost.com This led to some ‘helpful’ advice in The Guardian’s Comment is Free pages: www.theguardian.com

So on a sports newsday, check your writing of women’s sports against an earlier bulletin copy covering (for example) men’s football. Is the language similar? Is any comment about the professionalism, the strength, the flow of the game? If not, why?

Do some research into what sports are played in your area. You’ll find a greater variety than you might have thought. Step away from football, cricket and rugby, what else is there? Check out the numbers of participants to see how popular they are. Quite apart from widening the range, they will be played by people of different ages and genders, different abilities or ethnicities [www.sportengland.org] (<http://www.sportengland.org/>)

On your sports newsday, cover as wide a range of sports as possible. Go and spend time at some local clubs to do short features on them. Investigate the rules if you don’t know them, commentate on the atmosphere, speak to the players.

Discover the variety first and then add in the main spectator sports towards the end of the day. Be aware of slipping into clichés and assumptions in your coverage as you do so.

Ensure that everyone in the newsroom does some sports reporting. Notice how ‘non’ sports fans will often approach the stories in the same way as any other news item. Question what’s useful in that (anything that gets us to rethink our writing is an opportunity to improve).

Double check that the same people aren’t always getting the ‘popular’ sports to report on. That’s often about conferring value and worth to the reporter as well as the team and can lead to missing better angles to stories if the relationship gets too cosy.

13. Young People

The Journalist's view:

Lack of positive portrayal of young people in the media

Before joining the BBC I taught for four years in a secondary school through the Teach First programme. I was focused on how to help young people from disadvantaged backgrounds realise their potential. But when I started working as a TV journalist, it dawned on me that teachers have got an uphill struggle in helping young people feel positive about themselves. A lot of the stories in mainstream media are about young people doing bad things. As the Home Affairs producer for BBC London, I regularly produced stories about teenagers committing crimes. A gang murder by sixth form college students at Victoria Station; the shooting of a 5-year-old by three young black men and the London Riots, were typical of the stories we regularly covered. www.bbc.co.uk

But some groups of young people have even more of an image problem than others. The other day, a video went viral showing what comes up in a google search result if you type in “three black teenagers” compared with “three white teenagers”. Can you guess? Lots of mugshots of young black criminals compared with lots of generic happy smiley shots of white teenagers. www.theguardian.com

Now, obviously as a BBC London journalist, I had a responsibility to report on crimes that had taken place in my local area. Viewers have a right to know about court cases going on. But couldn't journalists also report more on positive stories about young people? The reaction of many journalists is – good news isn't news. Why? Because it's not unusual enough. Or it doesn't make such great headlines.

This isn't fair. First, because it's not an accurate portrayal of all that young people are about. And second, it reinforces negative ideas about young people, particularly those from poor or ethnic minority backgrounds.

But actually, I think things are slowly changing. Research shows that people are more inclined to share positive news stories on social media. “BuzzFeed editors have found that people do still read negative or critical stories, they just aren't the posts they share with their friends. And those shareable posts are the ones that newsrooms increasingly prize.” [ideas.time.com] (<http://ideas.time.com/2013/08/21/how-the-news-got-less-mean/>)

The BBC is also working hard to make sure that audiences – especially young and diverse audiences – get what they want from our content. Serving them better is one of our main objectives. The BBC's even set up a panel of staff who are under 30, who will feed into the big bosses making decisions on the editorial board. www.bbc.co.uk I'm now working on a new bulletin called BBC Minute. It's sixty seconds of the world's most shareable news, updated every half an hour 24/7, aimed at young people. Because we reflect what's being talked about on social media, we inevitably report on more positive news stories. Like Rihanna starting a university scholarship scheme; the three year old who solved a Rubik's cube in less than a minute, and Malala becoming the youngest ever Nobel Prize laureate. [www.bbc.com/minute]

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03q8kd9>)

So things are moving in the right direction. And when, in a few years' time,

young journalists who have grown up with social media – who have worked at the likes of BuzzFeed or those parts of the BBC aimed at young audiences – when they start holding senior editorial positions on mainstream news programmes and newspapers, I reckon we might notice a fairer portrayal of young people in the media.

by Victoria Laurie. Senior Broadcast Journalist on BBC Minute.



Victoria Laurie is a Senior Broadcast Journalist for BBC News. She began her career as a secondary school teacher with Teach First, presenting on hospital and local radio at weekends. She joined the BBC in 2010 and has worked as a producer for BBC London, BBC World News and BBC News Social Media. She is one of the producers and presenters of BBC Minute - world news bulletins for young global audiences.

The Newsday - Bringing 'Everybody In'

With all the groups referred to in this e-book the task of a broadcast journalist is to ensure he/she understands as much as possible about the group and the stories which relate to it but equally importantly to ensure members of the group are heard and seen talking about all stories.

Nowhere is that challenge more starkly seen, perhaps, than in talking about young people. Older audiences will have strong opinions about 'youths' and vice versa.

The notion of a gap in understanding between young people and 'their elders' is nothing new. As far back as 20 BC Horace wrote in 'Odes III; 'Our sires' age was worse than our grandsires'. We, their sons, are more worthless than they; so in our turn we shall give the world a progeny yet more corrupt.' Fast forward to 1965 and The Who were singing about their generation - 'People try to put us down just because we get around.'

To underline that the rift remains, we need only look at the reaction to the Brexit vote and claims that older voters had betrayed the young countered by reports that young voters had failed to turn out. More evidence of a lack of understanding came with the social media reaction to Teen Vogue running a political story after Donald Trump's election.

A BBC Newsbeat online [article](#) began: "It's hard to decide whether people are more surprised that Teen Vogue published a piece on politics, or that teenage girls might have read it."

It went on to explain that those teenage girls are better educated than their grandparents and more socially and racially diverse. The story goes on to add:

"There were a lot of conflicting statistics around young people's voting habits during this year's EU referendum, but a report by the London School of Economics revealed that [64% of young people registered to vote](#), did actually vote. That's the highest turnout in two decades."

Having been involved with the [Speak For Yourself](#) project working with young people across the West Midlands we can vouch for the fact that 13 to 19 year olds from a range of backgrounds have worthwhile opinions on all areas of politics, social policy, the media, their home areas and much more besides. Not only that but they really want opportunities to air those opinions.

For broadcast journalists the task of involving young people is complicated further by working to a given audience. So if your listeners are 55 plus where do under 20s fit into your news coverage?

So just as in the chapter on older people, here are some questions to think about.

What comes into your head when you think of young(er) people?

Just because you're in your early 20s, don't assume they are all like you or care about the topics which interest you.

Are there subjects which don't work for a younger audience?

The short answer is 'no'.

Just consider the current crop of stories about the collapse of the care system. It would be easy to dismiss them as irrelevant to an 18-year-old but they have

grandparents who are directly affected. More broadly young people care about social justice and fairness.

After all you wouldn't think twice about interviewing an older person about an issue in education.

*Where can I find younger people to talk to?

Allowing for [guidelines](#) on approaching and working with younger people, the key may be to think what kind of interviewees you are looking for. You'll find different opinions and responses outside a school or college to those you might get at a skate park or local football pitch

Social media is an invaluable tool for learning what issues are engaging younger people – and for contacting them.

The next time you are taking part in a newscast or you are asked to find a story or an interviewee look deliberately for a story that will resonate with a younger audience

Or think how you can use younger faces and voices in a story which might not seem directly relevant to them.

Remember, too, when you play back your efforts if anything sounds condescending or like you are straining to reach out to an alien group then ditch it and come up with something else.

14. Acknowledgements

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Marcus Ryder has 25 years experience in television and was Head of BBC Scotland Current Affairs for almost ten years. He has a strong commitment to diversity and was Chair of the RTS Diversity Committee for five years. He also gave evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee on diversity in TV. He now works in Beijing as the Chief International Editor for CGTN Digital (China's largest news broadcaster) trying to increase the international diversity of perspectives in global news.

About BCU/BJTC

Birmingham City University

With more than 24,000 students from 80 countries, Birmingham City University is a large, diverse and increasingly popular place to study situated in the heart of Britain's second city. Its early history can be traced back to its five individual colleges including the Birmingham Government School of Design opened in 1843, which would be brought together as The City of Birmingham Polytechnic in 1971.

The University has four faculties. One of which, Arts, Design and Media, houses the Birmingham School of Media.

www.bcu.ac.uk

Birmingham City University recently appointed Sir Lenny Henry as Chancellor. He has said of the appointment:

'Exporting ideas of diversity, equality and creativity is a concept very close to my heart, and the deciding factor for me, when accepting this post, is that Birmingham City University share those ideas.'

Broadcast Journalism Training Council

The Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC) works in partnership with leading media employers in the UK broadcast industry; BBC, ITV, ITN, Associated Press, Sky News, Channel 4 News, National Union of Journalists, Thomson Reuters and Radiocentre.

www.bjtc.org.uk

'Our primary responsibility is to accredit UK journalism courses. Our Council members are all experienced employers and trainers who participate in forum meetings to discuss the development of training programmes, to improve the skills and knowledge across the Broadcast Journalism industry. Together they set the criteria for accrediting courses, then teams of professional journalists and tutors advise and review the courses. Our accreditation standards are based on direct and practical experience and all accredited courses are valued by teachers and students, employers and employees, as they are relevant and responsive to the operational demands of the multiplatform media industry'.

Further reading

We would like to encourage people to share resources in the field of inclusive reporting.

Please email the authors if you have links to examples, good practice guides and exercises.

In the meantime, there are various useful websites and resources to use, some of which have already been referred to earlier in this publication:

www.implicit.harvard.edu
www.nuj.org.uk
www.suttontrust.com
www.dlf.org.uk
www.disabilityrightsuk.org
www.equalityhumanrights.com
www.bbc.co.uk
www.ons.gov.uk
www.jrf.org.uk
www.migrantsrights.org.uk
Channel 4 – 360
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www.creativediversitynetwork.com
www.leonmann.co.uk
www.media-diversity.org
www.coe.int
www.coe.int
www.youtu.be
www.youtu.be