

Why should you care about the difference between News and Opinion Journalism?

1. Read the following information and answer the questions below:

The goal of news reporting is to give you the information you need for your role in our democratic society.

The goal of opinion journalism is to help you make up your mind about that information.

Like reporters, opinion journalists should provide facts, using the discipline of verification to tell the stories. But the goal of opinion journalists is to use what they've learned to suggest solutions to civic problems and promote and provoke discussion by picking sides and arguing forcefully. In other words, Opinion journalism is, by definition, one-sided. You may be misled if you only hear one side of the situation.

Questions

(a) Read the following information and answer the questions below:

(b) Can you think of any occasions where you have been initially misled by hearing only one side or angle of a news story and then later realised this?

2. Read the following information and respond to the prompt below:

*The journalists' **Code of Practise** has been referred to previously. Here is what it says in relation to opinion journalism:*

Press Council of Ireland Code of Practise: Principle 2 - Distinguishing Fact and Comment

The press is entitled to advocate strongly its own views on topics.

Comment, conjecture, rumour and unconfirmed reports shall not be reported as if they were fact.

Readers are entitled to expect that the content of the press reflects the best judgment of editors and writers and has not been inappropriately influenced by undisclosed interests. Wherever relevant, any significant financial interest of an organization should be disclosed. Writers should disclose significant potential conflicts of interest to their editors.

Questions

(a) Do you think that 'Principle 2 Distinguishing Fact and Comment' is an important Principle? Why or why not?:

(b) Can you think of any examples from the news or current affairs where opinions have been presented as facts?
