

## **J463/563: Solutions Journalism – Finding the Impostors**

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Due: Jan. 11

### **To Do:**

Read the below pieces of journalism. (Some are solutions journalism impostors and some are not.)

- Examine each piece for the Four Qualities.
- In a written analysis that includes at least two paragraphs per story, identify which ones are SoJo and which ones are impostors, and explain why. For each impostor, say what type(s) it is.
- Include your Four Qualities analysis. For the impostors, explain how (theoretically) the stories could become solutions journalism stories. In other words, what is missing?
- Refer to specifics within each story to buttress your claims.

Stories:

- 1) “Colorado’s Efforts Against Teenage Pregnancies Is a Startling Success,” by Sabrina Tavernise, The New York Times, July 5, 2015  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/06/science/colorados-push-against-teenage-pregnancies-is-a-startling-success.html>
- 2) “This Woman Invented a Way to Run 30 Lab Tests on Only One Drop of Blood,” by Caitlin Roper, Wired magazine, Feb. 18, 2014  
<http://www.wired.com/2014/02/elizabeth-holmes-theranos/>
- 3) “A Prescription for More Black Doctors,” by Nikole Hannah Jones, The New York Times, Sept. 9, 2015  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/13/magazine/a-prescription-for-more-black-doctors.html>
- 4) “99-Year-Old Wins Shopping Spree At 99-Cent Store, Buys Gifts for Kids in Need,” by Kimberly Yam, The Huffington Post, Dec. 14, 2015  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/donna-goldstein-stocking-stuffer\\_566b2e39e4b011b83a6b3f8e?ir=Good%2BNews&section=good-news](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/donna-goldstein-stocking-stuffer_566b2e39e4b011b83a6b3f8e?ir=Good%2BNews&section=good-news)
- 5) “Oregon School Shooting: How Can I Help?” by Molly Young, The Oregonian, Oct. 2, 2015  
[http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2015/10/oregon\\_school\\_shooting\\_how\\_can.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2015/10/oregon_school_shooting_how_can.html)
- 6) “Five Students Just Created a Game-Changing App for Women’s Health in Uganda” by Amy Fallon in takepart, Dec. 7, 2015  
<http://www.takepart.com/article/2015/12/07/uganda-female-app>

# J463/563: Impostors Assignment Rubric

Total points possible: 60 (40 for content and 20 for edits)

- Edits will be graded according to editing scale in syllabus; editing scores will be converted to a 20-point scale. (See third page for synopsis of syllabus.)
- Content will be graded according to the table below.

## Content

	High (8-10 pts.)	Mid (4-7 pts.)	Low (0-3 pts.)
SoJo stories	Addresses Four Qualities in each of the six stories	Addresses some of the Four Qualities in six stories	Addresses few of the Four Qualities in six stories
Impostors	Correctly identifies the type of impostor and explains why for all six stories; also explains what's missing with respect to the Four Qualities	Correctly identifies the type of impostor and explains why for most stories; also mostly explains what's missing with respect to the Four Qualities	Correctly identifies the type of impostor and explains why in few of the stories; also barely explains what's missing with respect to the Four Qualities
Identification	Correctly identifies all six stories as either SoJo or impostors	Correctly identifies four stories	Correctly identifies fewer than four stories
Expectations	Response covers all six stories and includes at least two paragraphs per story	Response covers six stories with fewer than two paragraphs per or covers fewer than six stories but has two paragraphs per	Response does not hit all six stories AND has fewer than two paragraphs per story

Partial examples:

- 1) “Hawaii’s trailblazing healthcare underscores disparity” is an example of solutions journalism because the story contains all of the Four Qualities. The story addresses the limitations of Hawaii’s solution – “the state’s trailblazing health system and its long history of universal health coverage” - by noting that the response “has not solved all the state’s health problems,” particularly among less resourced residents, such as Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. (Etc. ....)
- 2) “How to Help Charleston After Church Shooting” is an instant activist solutions journalism impostor. The article provides four ways the public can help victims, such as donating to nonprofit groups working with the community following the tragedy, which is an example of responses to a problem. In some of the examples the author details how the organizations help; for example Coastal Crisis Chaplains ushers affected families to the crisis command center. But the article provides no evidence of the efficacy of that group or any other’s work. The article focuses on one specific event and does not include insight about ways to assist other communities affected by similar tragedy. To qualify as solutions journalism, this article would need to be framed as successful responses to the problem of communities traumatized by mass shootings. (Etc. ....)

## Editing Criteria

### *Basic Edit Examples*

Spelling error, fragment, missing period, factual error, poor content

### *A (4.0 or 90-100): Excellent*

**You can make between zero and three advanced edits.** Your work exhibits excellent comprehension and performance.

### *B (3.0 or 80-89): Above Average*

**You can make four to seven advanced edits.** Your work does not have basic errors.

### *C (2.0 or 70-79): Meets Minimum Standards*

**You can make eight to 11 edits (basic, advanced or both).** If the work has a basic edit, it starts at a C.

### *Advanced Edit Examples*

Wordiness, weak verbs, passive voice, lack of strategic thinking, poor framing, organizational problems, comma placement, lack of parallel structure

*I will accept passive voice when the object is the emphasis of the sentence.*

### *D (1.0 or 60-69): Does Not Meet Standards*

**You would need to make 12-15 edits (basic, advanced or both).** If the work has at least two basic edits, it starts at a D.

### *F (0.0 or 59 or below): Unacceptable*

**You need to make at least 16 edits (basic, advanced or both).** The work demonstrates unsatisfactory writing mechanics.