

## **J463/563: Solutions Journalism – Rigorous or not?**

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Due: Feb. 8

### **To Do**

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

- Analyze each piece for the Four Qualities.
- Write a paragraph about each piece using your analysis and other course knowledge to explain why the story lacks SoJo rigor or is quality solutions journalism.

For stories that are solutions journalism (or verge on solutions journalism) but lack rigor show how the story either overclaims, provides weak evidence, is a one-source story/seems credulous, shares good news but scant evidence of impact or inspires without providing insight.

For stories that are SoJo impostors, name the type of impostor. You should also delineate why the story lacks rigor.

For rigorous SoJo stories, explain what makes them so. In addition to the Four Qualities, share other aspects of SoJo, such as reporting on a slice or the howdunit structure.

Refer to specifics within each story to buttress your claims.

Stories:

- 1) “Joy That Lasts, On the Poorest of Playgrounds,” by Ken Belson, The New York Times, Nov. 8, 2012
- 2) “The Surprising Effect of Yoga on Inmates with Children,” by Colby Itkowitz, The Washington Post, Oct. 27, 2015
- 3) “Young, Married, and Incarcerated: Prisoners Find Romance Behind Bars,” by Jesse Hardman, The Atlantic, Feb. 14, 2013
- 4) “Utah Reduced Chronic Homelessness By 91 Percent: Here’s How,” by Kelly McEvers, NPR, Dec. 14, 2015
- 5) “Budweiser is Turning 6 Cities Into Labs For Responsible Drinking,” by Alexander C. Kaufman, The Huffington Post, Dec. 11, 2015
- 6) “Amid Drought and Famine, Niger Leads West Africa in Addressing Crisis,” PBS NewsHour, July 12, 2012
- 7) “Special Friendship with Rescue Parrot Helps Homeless Jazz Singer Find Her Wings,” by Cameron Keady, The Huffington Post, July 21, 2015
- 8) “A Circle of Moms: MAHEC Find Success With Group Care Model,” by Beth Walton, The (Asheville) Citizen-Times, July 18, 2015
- 9) “The Business of Giving: TOMS Shoes,” by Mike Zimmerman, Success magazine, Sept. 29, 2009
- 10) “The Floating Gardens of Bangladesh,” by Amy Yee, The New York Times, Nov. 18, 2014