

INTERACTING WITH NEWS MEDIA

Faculty of Land & Food Systems

ERIK ROLFSEN, UBC MEDIA RELATIONS
OCTOBER 22, 2020





Our mission
• Promote
health and
wellness
• Foster
community
diversity.

• Build
community
capacity
• Support
sustainability.

FOOD
SORT

Our vision
To create
a future that
empowers that
provides a positive
impact to the
community
and the world.

G

Opinion



Jennifer Black: The worst time for food banks to raise barriers to food

OPINION: Even without the economic calamity now being wreaked by COVID-19 over 4.4 million Canadians and one in six children had to worry or reduce the food they eat because they couldn't afford it.

Jennifer Black

Mar 31, 2020 • Last Updated 6 months ago • 4 minute read



This week, a growing group of concerned food bank clients, volunteers, food security advocates, community organizations and researchers are asking the Greater Vancouver Food Bank to overturn their new policy, re-evaluate their registration process and change how they make decisions to better include those affected.

PHOTO BY GREATER VANCOUVER FOOD BANK PHOT /PNG



[News](#) / [Local News](#)

Greater Vancouver food-bank users will soon need to prove low-income status

Anyone wanting to get food will be asked to register.

Susan Lazaruk

Mar 31, 2020 • Last Updated 6 months ago • 3 minute read



Cynthia Boulter, chief operating officer of the Greater Vancouver Food Bank. PHOTO BY GREATER VANCOUVER FOOD BANK /Contributed





FALSE CREEK
NOW SHOWING

ENQUIRE



Lansink said that after reports of someone “driving up in a new Jaguar” to pick up his food “people were incensed.” But she said he had lost his job and his wife and home, and was living in the car.

“We just don’t know,” Lansink said. “People don’t want to admit they’ve got no money. Are they supposed to give up the car or the cellphone? No.”

She said the “cases of abuse, of people taking advantage are very small.”

Lansink said other food bank members, particularly those in large cities, use means tests.

UBC Assoc. Prof. Jennifer Black, in land and food systems, said: “There is no evidence that shows (means-testing) is needed. The data does not support the abuse of food” at food banks.

Lansink said that since the pandemic there has been a surge in the number of clients visiting food banks, which in total see 80,000-100,000 unique visits each month, with one-third of them being children.

Client Re-Registration is paused during the COVID-19 health crisis.



Prior to COVID-19 we were going to launch a re-registration process for our existing clients and new clients to the Greater Vancouver Food Bank (GVFB). We are pausing this process, and it is entirely optional during the COVID-19 health crisis. For those clients wishing to re-register we can do this at our

WHY DO IT?

- Drive policy change
- Highlight research, innovation and excellence
- Demonstrate impact of research
- Earn community support or participation for research projects
- Attract new partners or funding
- Support student, faculty, staff recruitment
- Create demand for graduates
- Altruistic motivations
- Rewarding



ABOUT UBC MEDIA RELATIONS

- Five specialists covering the whole university
- Promote good news stories (research findings, etc.)
- Manage bad news stories
- Connect media with experts
- Provide media training

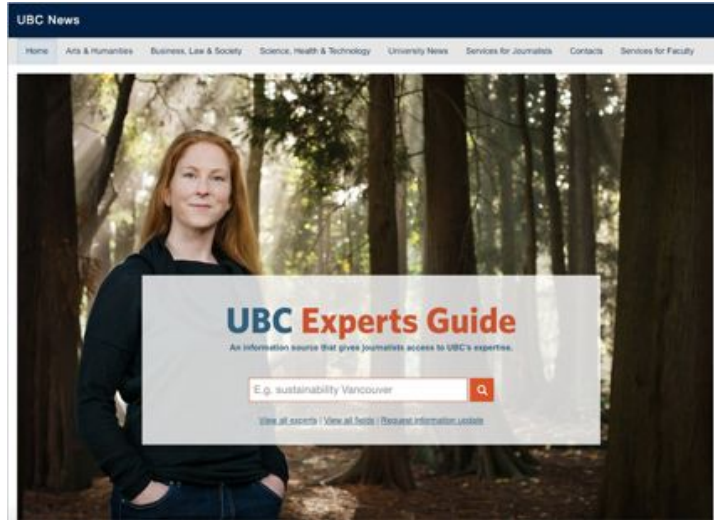


HOW WE SHARE YOUR STORY

- News releases
- Expert Q&A
- Expert advisories
- 'Newsjacking'
- Direct pitching to journalists
- Op-Eds
- The Conversation
- @UBCNews on Twitter



UBC EXPERTS GUIDE



experts.news.ubc.ca



UBC Experts Guide

An information source that gives journalists access to UBC's expertise.

E.g. sustainability Vancouver



[View all experts](#) | [View all fields](#)

Last updated: June 17, 2019 @1:27 pm



Laura Moss, PhD

Associate Professor
Faculty of Arts
Department of English
Vancouver Campus

Fields

Africa, Canada, Literature / Creative Writing

Expertise

Canadian literature, African literature, Canadian cultural history, editor of the journal Canadian Literature, publishing in Canada

Contact Information

✉ laura.moss@ubc.ca

☎ 604-822-4226

🌐 <http://blogs.ubc.ca/lauramoss/>

WHEN TO CONTACT US

- Research accepted for publication
- Interesting 'field trip' opportunity for a journalist
- Presenting at a major conference
- Major funding or milestone with a story attached
- Your area of research is in the news (or will be in the news)
- A journalist calls you for comment and you'd like help preparing for an interview
- Emerging issue





MEDIA TRAINING

VIDEO: THE WIGGLES (click image to view)



KEY MESSAGES



WHAT MAKES NEWS?

- New, timely
- Impact, broad appeal
- Disaster, threat
- Conflict
- Discovery, innovation
- Superlatives: first, biggest, best
- Human interest, universal needs (food, shelter, transportation, money, sex)
- Proximity, local angle
- Unusual
- Prominence, celebrity

SO WHAT? News consumers always want to know, “Why should I care?”



WHAT MAKES NEWS?



- **New, timely**
- Impact, broad appeal
- Disaster, threat
- Conflict
- **Discovery, innovation**
- Superlatives: first, biggest, best
- **Human interest, universal needs**
- Proximity, local angle
- Unusual
- Prominence, celebrity



WHAT MAKES NEWS?



- **New, timely**
- Impact, broad appeal
- **Disaster, threat**
- Conflict
- **Discovery, innovation**
- Superlatives: first, biggest, best
- Human interest, **universal needs**
- **Proximity, local angle**
- Unusual
- Prominence, celebrity



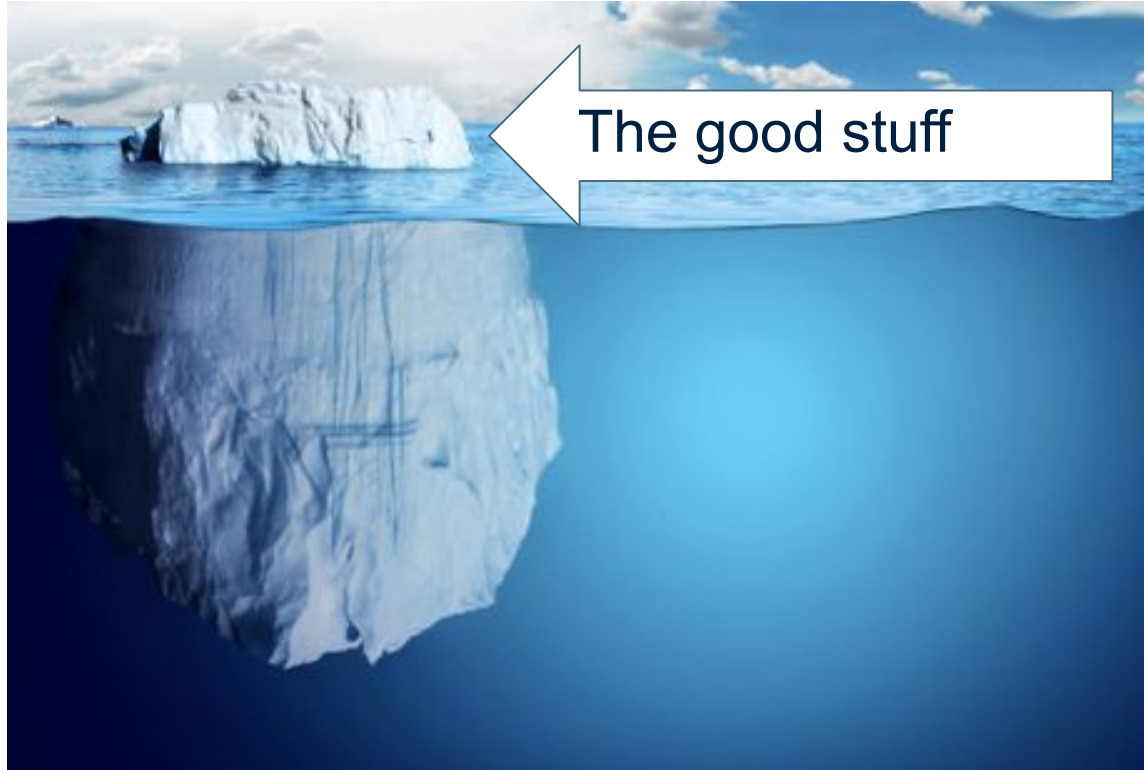
WHAT MAKES NEWS?



- **New, timely**
- **Impact, broad appeal**
- **Disaster, threat**
- **Conflict**
- **Discovery, innovation**
- **Superlatives: first, biggest, best**
- **Human interest, universal needs**
- **Proximity, local angle**
- **Unusual**
- **Prominence, celebrity**



ICEBERG RULE



ICEBERG RULE



- Journal article: 8,000 words
- Quotes from grad student in CBC article: 27 words



HOW NEWS STORIES ARE TOLD

Once upon a time...



HOW NEWS STORIES ARE TOLD

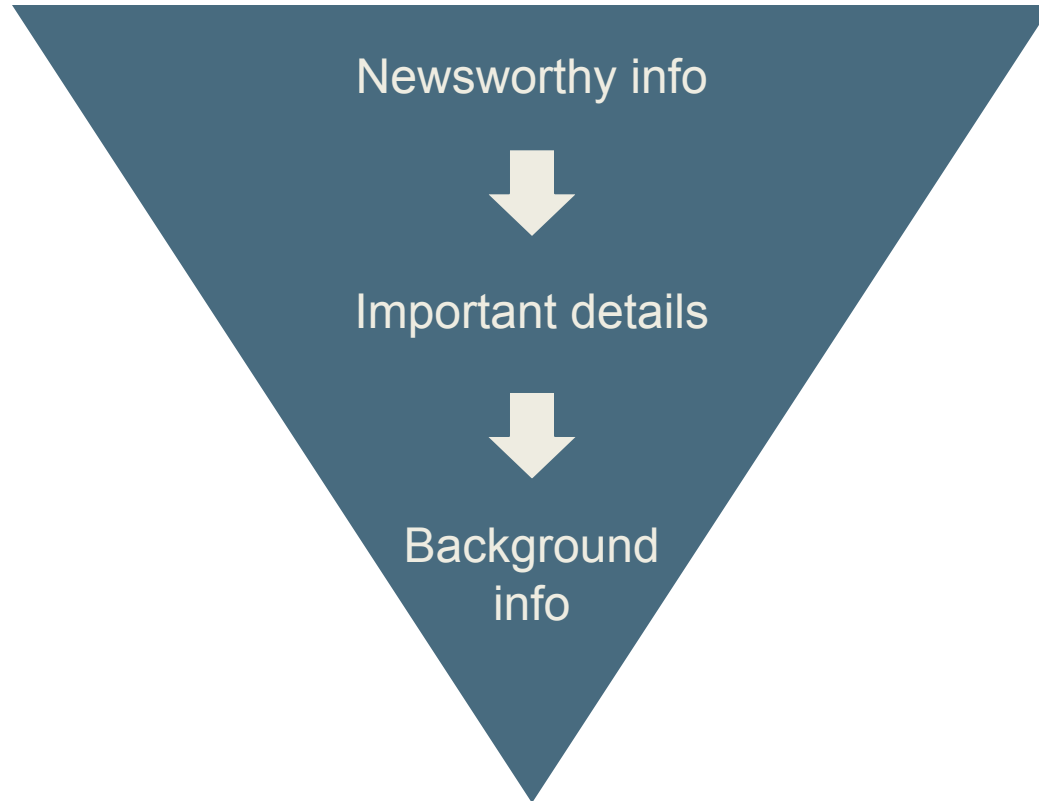
Once upon a time...

vs.

Axe-wielding woodsman saves young girl from wolf attack



THE INVERTED PYRAMID



KEY MESSAGES

The first thing you say should be the last thing they forget.



ANSWER THE QUESTION YOU WISH THEY'D ASK FIRST



KEY MESSAGES

The main thing you want the audience to remember.

Qualities of a good key message:

- Ordinary, conversational language (no jargon)
- Positively phrased
- Relevant to the audience
- Vivid and memorable

You can have more than one key message, but not too many.



3 WHATS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER

WHAT?

SO WHAT?

WHAT'S NEXT?

1. What is the main finding of your research? (keep it high-level for the average person to understand)
2. Why is it significant? (larger implications or potential practical applications)
3. What's next? (where to go from here)



REPETITION REINFORCES... BUT THERE ARE LIMITS

(click image to view video)



KEY MESSAGE TEMPLATE

Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
Supporting info:	Supporting info:	Supporting info:



KEY MESSAGE TEMPLATE

Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
Supporting info:	Supporting info:	Supporting info:
fact	analogy	stat
anecdote	fact	example
example	stat	anecdote



VIDEO: SITKA THE SEA LION (click image to view)



KEY MESSAGE TEMPLATE

Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
Sea lions are dying off and we want to find out why.	Sea lions are not getting enough nutrition from the fish they eat.	We need more funding to continue this research.
Supporting info:	Supporting info:	Supporting info:
Sea lions in B.C. are fine but the population in Alaska is in decline	We use captive sea lions to measure how much nutrition these animals need	Our funding comes from the U.S.
Population has decreased by 85% in the last decade	Diet is not rich enough in oil and nutrition to do the job	Economy is in decline and the money just isn't there
200,000 sea lions have disappeared	It's like you or I living off of celery	They have 12 months to find more funding





BRIDGING

BRIDGING

Acknowledge the question and firmly return to your key messages

- To put that in perspective...
- I think it would be more accurate to say...
- I'm glad you asked that. Here's the bigger picture...
- Rather than speculate, let's look at the facts...
- That's interesting, but let me make an important point...
- That's a common misconception, let me provide you with some context...
- I see that, but what's absolutely critical to remember is...



VIDEO: BRIDGING HERO (click image to view)



GENERAL INTERVIEW TIPS

- Importance of opening/positioning statement
- Stick to your key messages, facts
- Ask for clarification if you need it
- Pause before responding to clarify your thoughts
- Repeat question to buy time
- Be honest if you can't respond and follow-up if appropriate
- Dead air is not your problem



DIFFERENT KINDS OF MEDIA



RADIO

- News story: Short interviews, shorter clips (10 seconds)
- Talk radio: 6-7 minutes, conversational
- Pre-recorded or live. Do not be late for live radio.

PRINT/WEB

- Substantial interview to provide background
- Quotes and paraphrases; reporter is the gatekeeper

VIDEO/ZOOM

- Can be short clips, or two-way conversation
(double-ender)



WHEN THEY CALL...



WHEN THEY CALL

- Find out what the story is about
- Ask why they sought you out
- Buy yourself some time (“I just have to finish up...”)
- Get the reporter’s outlet and deadline
- Find out where and how they want to do the interview
 - phone?
 - on campus?
 - in studio?
 - live?
- Call us if you want!



INTERVIEW PREPARATION

- Develop key messages
- Anticipate questions
- Role play, Q&A
- Gather assets: bio, images, videos, URL, etc.



INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP

- Thank them for their coverage
- Ensure social media amplification
 - your channels
 - faculty/department channels
 - tag @ubcnews



QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND CONTACTS

Erik Rolfsen, Media Relations Specialist

UBC Media Relations

erik.rolfsen@ubc.ca | 604.209.3048 | 604.822.2644



BREAKOUT GROUPS

Part One: Journal article > news story

- How was the **main finding** was described in the journal, and then in the news story?
- How was its **significance** was described in the journal, and then in the news story?
- Discuss the difference. How well did the reporter (or researcher) deliver it?

Part Two: Your own research

- How would you explain your main finding in one sentence, using everyday language?
- How would you explain its significance in one sentence, using everyday language?

Interview each other:

- What have you uncovered in your research?
- What makes this such an important finding?

