

Media Literacy Mini-Lesson #6

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Sometimes, journalists have to go to great lengths to uncover the truth — especially when others might not want the truth revealed. This is called **investigative journalism**.

**INVESTIGATIVE
JOURNALISTS
MIGHT...**

- be persistent in their research over a long period of time
- persuade sources to share information
- obtain documents that uncover important evidence



Uncovering the truth isn't always easy:

It's normal for a journalist to work to collect evidence; they might record a speech or speak to eyewitnesses.

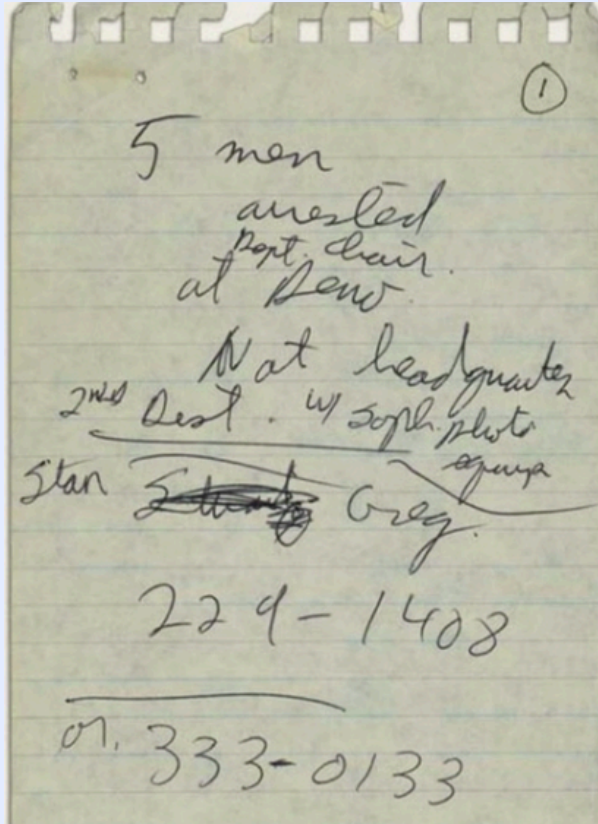
But sometimes, journalists have to dig deeper to find facts that aren't easily available. This type of journalism is essential to keep the public informed about things that have been covered up or overlooked.

The Watergate scandal

One of the most famous examples of investigative journalism began when two journalists investigated a break-in at the Watergate hotel in Washington, D.C. The hotel was the site of the Democratic National Headquarters, and campaign documents were stolen in the break-in.

Ultimately, their investigative reporting helped lead to President Nixon's resignation when it was determined that he knew about the break-in and used the power of the presidency to cover it up.

The following source is an image of Bob Woodward's notes from the Watergate burglars' first court hearing. There, he notes "leads" or information that he can follow up on to learn more.



①
5 men
arrested
Dept. Chair.
at New.
Nat headquarters
2nd Dist. w/ soph. photo
Stan ~~Stanley~~ Greg.
229-1408
or 333-0133

Notes, with abbreviations spelled out:

"5 men arrested at Dem[ocratic] Nat[ional] headquarters. Dep[uty] chair. 2nd dist[ri]ct w/ soph[isticated] photo equip[ment]. Stan Greg 229-1408 or 333-0133."

Note that "Dept. Chair" and "Stan Greg" refers to Stanley Greigg, the deputy chair of the Democratic National Committee. It was Greigg who first heard about the break-in from the police and filed the complaint against the burglars in court.

Source: Woodward's notes from the arraignment of the Watergate burglars. June 17, 1972. Permission has been granted for educational purposes only courtesy of the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas–Austin.

Describe what is happening in the notes. What did you notice or wonder about?

What actions do you think Woodward and Bernstein took next based on these notes?
