



Journalism vs. Blogging: Building Credibility

Originally presented by Robert Stacy McCain, Dan Gainor and JP Freire at Right Online 2011
Notes and presentation by Ben Froland

Reference article: <http://theothermccain.com/about/joe-friday-reports-weinergate/>

- Headline is a question if we don't know.
- Walkoff - Key point - End
- Pull facts together from multiple sources and summarize.
- Writing is a skill, not a talent. This means you can learn it.
- Opinions don't matter. Facts matter. New facts matter more.
- Use the phone, make calls, and gather information.
- Continually call and be nice. Sources will feel guilty not returning calls. Use pleasant persistence.
- Coffee or drinks is your best friend. Ask for favors. Sources will feel self-important.
- Use an important sounding suffix for your blog. The (Blank) Report, Star, Blog, etc...
- Everyone knows something that others don't. Write about what you know.
- The 1st Amendment belongs to all of us, not just the media. Use it as well or better than they do.
- Record, if allowed, to get everything correct.
- Use a good filing system. Get photos if you can.
- Write about local zoning laws and changes for example.
- Rewrite your article. Print it out and revise the hard copy.
- Accuracy is important. Accuracy is power.
- There are no stupid questions. How do you spell your name for example. Think Columbo.
- To fight an outlet, you may go after their advertisers. Show their bias/inaccuracies. (not simply because you disagree)
- When hosting an event, make sure the press eats free. They will be more likely to attend and stay for the duration.
- A reporter should never burn a source. A source should never burn a reporter.
- Refer to the Journalist Code of Ethics.
 - Seek Truth and Report It
 - Minimize Harm
 - Act Independently
 - Be Accountable
- If you are going to be vocal, be prepared for pushback.
- We need less Bill Buckleys and more Robert Novaks.

Original Presentation Given By:



Robert Stacy McCain is a former writer and editor for the *Washington Times*, frequent contributor to *The American Spectator*, and co-author of the book *Donkey Cons: Sex, Crime, and Corruption in the Democratic Party*. His blog can be seen at www.theothermccain.com



Dan Gainor is a former editor for the *Washington Times* and the *Baltimore News-American* and appears regularly on Fox Business Network. He is currently Vice President of Business and Culture for the Media Research Center. www.mrc.org



JP Freire is a former editor for the *Washington Examiner* and *The American Spectator*. He is currently Senior Communications Strategist, Public Affairs at New Media Strategies. www.nms.com