

The Deep Dive Demystified: Investigative Reporting Tips

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

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About me

- UGA, Class of 09: Broadcast news and International affairs
 - WJTV, (Jackson, MS): News Producer
 - WCBI (Columbus, MS): MMJ
 - WJRT (Flint, MI): General Assignment Reporter
 - WWL-TV (New Orleans, LA): General Assignment Reporter
 - WSMV (Nashville, TN): Consumer Investigative Reporter
 - InvestigateTV/Gray Media: National Consumer Investigative Reporter
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How to pivot into investigative reporting



HOW TO PIVOT INTO INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

You don't need the title of "investigative reporter" to begin investigating.



Investigations can start with a press conference, a general story and just requires more digging.

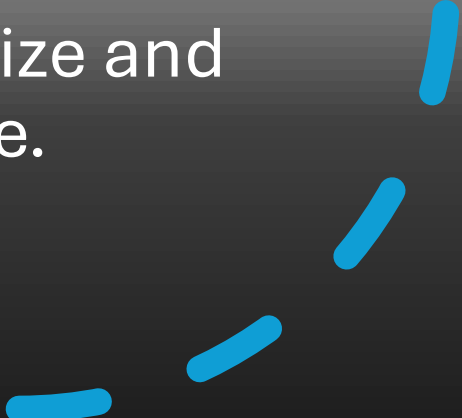


Change your mindset: Anything that can be questioned can be investigated.



How? Make a list of questions and claims. Sketch out how you prove or disprove those through people, documents (such as lawsuits or public records- such as body cam or videos), data.

HOW TO PIVOT INTO INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

- Not everything is nefarious, but that doesn't mean it's not worth covering.
 - Sourcing! Work hard to build your sources...no matter if you're a rookie or you are a seasoned journalist.
 - Look for opportunities to work on special projects/reports. Excel at general reporting to give you opportunities to do investigative work.
 - ORGANIZE! Learn how to organize and work on multiple stories at once.
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LEAD OUT

Problem: Lead Pipes.
Hazard to our health.

Data/Documents:
Bipartisan Infrastructure law
allows federal funding to remove
lead pipes across America.

Issue- it's a daunting task.
Federal government wants them
removed in 10 years. But is that
realistic?

What we found: Many states
were hesitant this can happen.
Many water systems not meet
the first major deadline.

Digging Deeper: Introduced to
the audience the history and
legacy of lead pipe propaganda
in America.

Commitment: I developed an
interest in this issue 10 years
ago- and stayed in the loop. Kept
in contacts with sources and
distributed my first national
story on the 10-year anniversary
of Flint's Water Crisis.

What's the future of lead pipe
removal now? Remains to be
seen. (Investigation continues!)



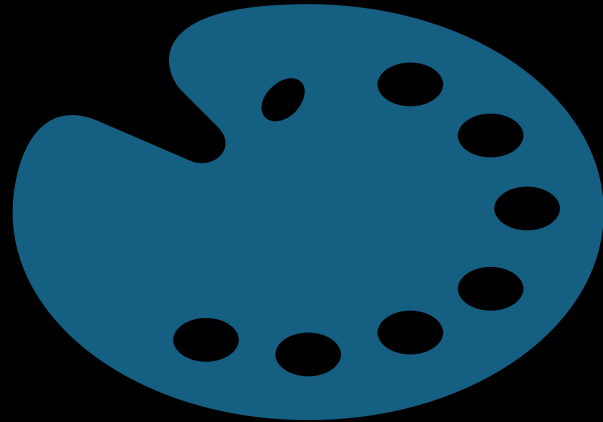
LEAD OUT

Sacred Ground: Black Cemeteries

- 3-part series.
- Investigated how African American burial sites and cemeteries are being erased.
- Received a tip that this was happening near my hometown.
- Needed to find patterns that this was happening nationwide before I pitched idea.
- Combed and looked at lawsuits and victims.
- Team built trust with the families affected.
- Also used property deeds, historical maps, oral/written testimonies to showcase the desecration of Black cemeteries either through lack of funding or construction and development.
- Gave the story historical context- which is very important when doing stories on communities of color.
- Created a video on our web article to showcase the stories of multiple families impacted by this issue.
- Sat down with lawmakers to find out what is being done about this problem.

SACRED GROUND: U.S. LAWMAKERS RESPOND





VISUAL PRESENTATION

GET CREATIVE WITH YOUR STORY!

INVESTIGATIVE MINDSET: THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX



INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Members of the Black community, maintaining the upkeep and maintenance of the final resting place of their ancestors (post-slavery) has remained a hurdle, mystery, and a fight for generations. One family says their ancestors' bodies were removed without their approval. InvestigateTV found multiple cases where the lack of record keeping and funding was a bind. We also uncovered states' failures to properly record Black cemeteries across the country and explore how we spoke with local experts leading the nation in efficient databases to track Black cemeteries, despite



AI uses US-made AI models in war, concerns about tech's role in who lives and who dies



BE CREATIVE: COSTLY CARE

- Series with KFF Health News.
 - We examine costly medical bills and healthcare inequities.
 - Victim suffered from Cervical Dystonia.
 - Issue: Same provider, same nurses.
 - Major change in billing structure. Clinic began charging as an outpatient office-like an ER!
 - Issue many patients face.
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COSTLY CARE SERIES

- Challenge: Patient kept holding her neck.
 - Had her describe her experience:
 - Avoided becoming a distraction.
 - Be creative:
 - When you prepare for an investigation—think it through.
 - How do you want it to look visually? (Print and Broadcast).
 - Can you use graphics? Visuals to showcase documents? Have fun with it and be creative!
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BE CREATIVE: COSTLY CARE SERIES



The image features a composite background. On the left, a man wearing a blue baseball cap and a white t-shirt sits on a brown couch, looking towards the right. On the right, a large, close-up portrait of a man with a grey beard and a black baseball cap is shown, looking directly at the camera. The text is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

WHY INVESTIGATIVE
JOURNALISM? YOUR
PERSPECTIVE MATTERS



QUESTIONS?