

MyAhna Alston
Professor Thomas
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The Stand Up Syndrome

The infraction described in “No Attribution” is the mistake a reporter makes when they describe what’s happening at a scene or describe the subjective aspects of a story without citing sources. It causes the reporter to lack objectivity, and insert their own views into the story being reported. Sometimes the reporter does this naturally because it may be a “punchy” sentence, Personally, I think one way to avoid being subjective in your reporting is to question yourself as a journalist, and ask whether the way you present information leaves room for the viewer to respond and say, “no, that is not true” or wonder, “says who?”.

Likewise, “Getting it Backward” refers to a television reporter crafting the stand-up of a looklive or videotaped package first before securing the story elements. This leaves a large margin of error in what is meant to be objective reporting, and can cause the stand up to be irrelevant depending on how the story changes.

The infraction of the two mentioned that I believe is worse, is “Getting it Backward” or writing and filming the stand-up before solidifying the story elements. We must be concise and clear in our reporting, and write cohesive stories. If we end a story with unsupported claims, or irrelevant information, the reporting becomes sloppy and this may make it difficult for the viewer to understand the story’s key points.

Attribution precedes assertion means that we as journalists, give credit to our sources before we assert anything especially when it relates to possible criminal accusations. It is our job to remain objective and simply present the facts, so attributing information before asserting anything ensures that we present information to the public objectively, and not in a subjective manner.

We as journalists are not authorized to deem anyone as guilty of a crime or push our own views onto others, because that is the legal system's responsibility. For legal and ethical reasons, we should treat everyone accused of a crime as innocent until guilty, as outlined in the constitution. Otherwise, if we don't we risk being sued for libel or defamation.