

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FOR JOURNALISTS AND ACADEMICS

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Dr John Jewell is the Director of Undergraduate Studies at Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies. He is a media columnist for the *Western Mail* and *The Conversation*.

Email: jewellj@cardiff.ac.uk (<mailto:jewellj@cardiff.ac.uk>)

Twitter: [@jjohnjewell](https://twitter.com/jjohnjewell) (https://twitter.com/jjohnjewell?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)

I believe that part of my role as a media educator involves the distillation of complex theories into notions and ideas which can be clearly understood and expressed in a language which is understandable and inclusive. Let's face it; part of the problem with some academic writing across the disciplines is its preoccupation with jargon and method. This is not to decry or undermine the research that is being undertaken, more to point out that the way in which it's presented can act as a deterrent to wider readership.

Which is why I'm a champion of blogging and of sites such as *The Conversation* and *Huffington Post*. For the last four years, I have been a regular contributor to, amongst other things, *The Conversation* (<https://theconversation.com/uk>) – a journalistic website featuring content provided by academics, in all disciplines, from national and international backgrounds. My experiences have been entirely positive. I have been able to write shortish, newspaper style articles on a variety of media-related subjects (<https://theconversation.com/profiles/john-jewell-100660>), some of which have been picked up by outlets such as *Newsweek*, *The Independent* and international agencies such as *ABC Australia*.

The editorial staff at *The Conversation* all have a background in journalism, which is invaluable, as they add fluidity and cohesion to ideas that are often loosely bound by my own confusing internal logic. It seems to me, in the other articles I have read on the site, that they are expert in redefining complex issues to a non-niche audience. This is the key to *The Conversation's* success. Academic work is freed from the confines of the journal or the report. Articles in *The Conversation* are written to be read by the general public as well as by academics. Crucially, that doesn't mean quality or rigour is sacrificed. The regular 'Hard Evidence' (<https://theconversation.com/hard-evidence-will-same-sex-marriage-drive-voters-to-ukip-23044>) section showcases the most recent empirical research and analysis. The readership is out there. For example, my Cardiff colleague Mike Berry's article on bias at the *BBC* has attracted, so far, nearly 300,000 reads and a reprint in *The New Statesman* (<https://www.newstatesman.com/broadcast/2013/08/hard-evidence-how-biased-bbc>).