

Rubbish balances nothing

Ruth Pollard

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Media challenges

- their science is not credible
- they want to restart debates over scientific questions that have already been answered, and answered convincingly
- they are inarticulate in their arguments
- they are almost impossible to contact, meaning they are met with little journalistic scrutiny

- they are often severely compromised by their involvement in the natural therapies or self-help publishing industry, meaning they stand to profit from their unproven theories
- lastly, and often most importantly, they expect that we will devote the same space to their ideas as we do to credible research

Denialist debates

- Issues on which the science has been proven (HIV, climate change, nicotine as a carcinogen, vaccination for infectious disease prevention)
- Issues on which the historical proof is undeniable (Holocaust, stolen generations of Aborigines in Australia)
- Issues on which the legal debate has been won and laws adopted (abortion, IVF, stem cell research)

Media codes of ethics

- We shall seek balance through the presentation as far as possible of relevant viewpoints on matters of importance. Fairness does not require editorial staff to be unquestioning, or the Corporation to give all sides of an issue the same amount of time.
- South African Broadcasting Corporation

- "The voice of opponents no less than of friends has a right to be heard ... It is well be to be frank; it is even better to be fair," (CP Scott, 1921). The more serious the criticism or allegations we are reporting the greater the obligation to allow the subject the opportunity to respond.

- *Guardian*

- *Herald* staff will report and interpret honestly, striving for accuracy, fairness and disclosure of all essential facts. They will not suppress or distort relevant facts. They will do their utmost to offer the right of reply, and they will separate comment from news. Staff will not allow personal interest, or any belief or commitment, to undermine their accuracy, fairness or independence.

- *The Sydney Morning Herald*

- Report and interpret honestly, striving for accuracy, fairness, and disclosure of all essential facts. Do not suppress relevant available facts, or give distorting emphasis. Do your utmost to give a fair opportunity for reply.
- Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance

- [Journalists will] report and interpret news stories honestly, striving for accuracy, fairness and disclosure of all essential facts. Do not suppress significant available facts or give distorting emphasis. Do your utmost to provide balanced coverage. Distinguish clearly between fair comment, conjecture and fact.

- Media Council of Papua New Guinea

- *The Washington Post* is pledged to an aggressive, responsible and fair pursuit of the truth without fear of any special interest, and with favor to none. The search for opposing views must be routine. The motives of those who press their views upon us must routinely be examined, and it must be recognized that those motives can be noble or ignoble, obvious or ulterior.

- *The Washington Post*