



Journalism's Class Gap

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Size of Gap

- ▶ A lack of data on diversity in Irish media - Future of Media Commission.
- ▶ “But I made it! I came from a working class family.”
 - ❑ Did the Titanic lifeboat system work because some made it off?
- ▶ Diversity in journalists working in the UK – NCTJ report (2022)
 - ❑ 80% of journalists at age 14 had a parent in one of top three occupational groups, compared to 42% of all UK workers.
 - ❑ 2% had a parent in the lowest 2 occupational groups, compared to 20%.
 - ❑ Social class only diversity metric where journalism is worsening over time.

Employment Equality

- ▶ Employment Equality Acts cover discrimination at work, incl. recruitment.
- ▶ Acts outlaw victimisation and discrimination on nine grounds.

Gender	Civil status	Family status
Sexual orientation	Religious belief	Age
Disability	Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins	Membership of the Traveller community

- ▶ Social class is *not* a protected characteristic.
 - ❑ e.g. *not* unlawful for employer to turn down applicant on basis of accent

Case for Diversity

- ▶ **Moral Case** - Everyone should have an equal chance to progress.
- ▶ **Business Case** - Diverse workplaces outperform less diversity workplaces.
- ▶ **Media Case** – Less likely to miss issues affecting minorities./ Widen audience.
 - “diversity on screen is only created in an authentic and sustainable manner when there is diversity behind the scenes” – Auditing Gender and Diversity Change in Irish TV and Film Sectors (2021).

Barriers to Entry

- ▶ Notoriously difficult to break into industry without family connections.
- ▶ Expensive post-grad degrees increasingly the best way in for many.
 - ❑ Replaced informal 'copy boy' apprenticeship system in newsrooms.
- ▶ Declining economic fortunes of the industry means that -
 - ❑ Fewer job opportunities = closures, downsizing, editorial budgets slashed.
 - ❑ Increasing reliance on cheap labour and free content.
 - ❑ Need parents who can bankroll you while you establish yourself.

Job Quality

- ▶ Bogus self employment - work that comes with all of the responsibility of an employee but none of the benefits.
- ▶ Comptroller & Auditor General report (2022) shows DSP investigation unit -
 - ❑ Reviewed 500 employers and their contractors between 2019-2022.
 - ❑ Initiated 311 in-depth investigations.
 - ❑ 110 (a third) of investigations in the media industry.
 - ❑ Completed 82 of media investigations.
 - ❑ Found 50 (60%) misclassified employees as self-employed.
 - ❑ Charged €452m PRSI arrears to media employers.

Closing the Gap

- ▶ Future of Media Commission recommendations -
 - ❑ Stakeholders forum to identify 'how to create a diverse talent pipeline'.
 - ❑ Create 'pathways for those who do *not* have a degree'.
 - ❑ *Paid* media apprenticeships & traineeships. Promote in-work mentoring.
 - ❑ End *unpaid* internships 'given the unfair advantage they confer'.
- ▶ Link 0% VAT rate to investment in decent work and diversity -
 - ❑ e.g. Tax Relief on Film Production has a quality employment test.
 - ❑ Must employ 2 trainees for each €355,000 of tax credit.



THANK YOU!

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