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Cricket-mad Victoria was a great catch for BBC Essex

The BBC announced in April that Kent graduate Victoria Polley will be the new presenter of its seasonal programme Around The Wicket on BBC Radio Essex.

Victoria, a 25-year-old from Colchester, graduated from the Centre for Journalism in June 2015 with a first class honours degree in Journalism.

She also passed the NCTJ Diploma at Gold Standard including 100 words per minute shorthand and the highest mark in the country for Broadcast Journalism.

In recognition of this achievement, she won the 2015 ITV News Award for Broadcast Journalism.

Professor Tim Luckhurst, Head of the Centre for Journalism, said: “As a student, Victoria made good use of the Centre’s radio and television studios to learn all the skills she needed to get a job with the BBC. “She learned to record, edit and present during our live student news days and she also demonstrated her passion for sport. “Nobody in the Centre for Journalism is surprised that she has been chosen to present this prestigious show, but we are delighted that Victoria is doing so well in the career she most wanted to pursue. “Our degrees are made for students who really want the excitement and influence that comes with a top job in journalism. “Victoria grew up listening to the sports shows on her local radio station and now she’s presenting them.”

Major CfJ research project launched in Parliament

Four academics from the Centre for Journalism were invited to present their research to a group of MPs and peers in Westminster.

Head of the Centre Professor Tim Luckhurst, Deputy head Ian Reeves, Director of Research Ben Cocking and Director of Education Rob Bailey jointly examined the news output of BBC Radio 5 Live.

They concluded that the station was not meeting its Ofcom requirements for news content.

The findings were discussed by the All Party Parliamentary Media Group in January.

The academics calculated that 55.05% of the station’s output was not news.

Prof Luckhurst, a former assistant editor at 5 Live and a senior member of the team who designed and launched the station, said: “The role of news has never been more important to democratic societies. It is crucial that the public has excellent access to factual, accurate journalism. “BBC Radio 5 Live was created to provide such journalism. Our research demonstrates that it is no longer fulfilling all of its commitments as a news provider. We think our findings are important both for the BBC and for its new regulator, Ofcom.”

The CfJ report Assessing the Delivery of BBC Radio 5 Live’s Public Service Commitments is the result of a research grant by News UK and Ireland Ltd, carried out to coincide with Ofcom’s assumption of its duties as the BBC’s new regulator.

Launch: Four CfJ academics present their report at Westminster.
Karina Pavlova named as 2018/19 Sky News scholar

Final year student Karina Pavlova will spend a month with Sky News this summer after being named winner of the prestigious Bob Friend Memorial Scholarship.

Karina received a standing ovation when she was named as our latest scholar at an annual lecture held in memory of Sky News’ iconic anchor Bob Friend, who lived in Kent.

This year’s lecture was given by Sophie Ridge, presenter of Sophy Ridge on Sunday.

Sophy told students how she went from being an NCTJ student and a showbiz reporter at the News of the World to becoming the first female presenter of a flagship politics talk show in the competitive Sunday morning slot.

In 2017 Sophie also published her first book, The Women Who Shaped Politics, which explores the influence of women from royalty to Suffragettes, from Prime Ministers to campaigner.

Her talk - titled “Worse than estate agents - how to rebuild trust in journalism” – urged young reporters to value accuracy above all else and to avoid blending fact with opinion.

And she also told students to use social media cautiously.

“I will never write anything on social media that I’m not happy to have appear in the Daily Mail with my name alongside it,” she said.

Previous speakers include Alex Crawford, John Humphrys, Stephanie Flanders, Jon Snow, Adam Boulton and Amol Rajan.

Scholarship

Karina, from Lithuania, will spend a month working across several departments of Sky News on a fully-funded work placement. She will also receive a £3,000 contribution to her tuition fees. Previous Bob Friend Scholars have gone on to start their careers at Sky News, Daily Mail, CNN and the Kent Messenger Group.

The competitive scholarship is offered to all undergraduates at the Centre each year. To enter, students must pitch a detailed, multi-platform story proposal for a topical news item suitable for Sky News. Shortlisted candidates are then invited for interview at Sky’s Millbank studio in Westminster.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Coming to a timeline near you soon...

Two CjJ postgraduate students are among the first to benefit from Facebook’s Community News Project.

The social media giant is funding 82 reporter roles at regional newspapers across the UK, including two with the KM Group in Kent.

Those roles were filled by current MA students Amelia Clarke and Ollie Kemp - before they had graduated.

Amelia and Ollie have both been interns at KMTV, the television station co-owned by the University of Kent and the KM Group, which gave them paid newsroom experience while they were studying. We wish them the best of luck in their new jobs.

STUDENT VOICE

“I always use a Harry Potter reference to describe the Centre for Journalism. Just like Hogwarts, help is always available at the Centre for Journalism for those who seek it.

“If you need academic advice, journalism tips, emotional support or you are simply home sick, you should just reach out and people are always there for you. I am not exaggerating when I say CjJ is like a family.”

Mina Joshaghani
Journalist at BBC News

MA International Multimedia Journalism (2017-18)
How my crisp meme broke the internet

In March 2019 one of the longest running controversies in UK history was coming to a close. No, not Brexit. This was the debate over our best brand of crisps.

James Corden was among the celebrities who retweeted a meme which aimed to close down debate on the king of snacks. It was covered by ITV, the BBC, Metro and the Independent.

What you may not know is that the meme was created by CfJ graduate CHANDNI SEMBHI. Just don’t ask her about her favourite flavours...

by Chandni Sembhi
CfJ graduate
Channel 5

First of all, let’s get one thing straight - the tiers aren’t my personal opinion. Channel 5 surveyed people, and just like with Brexit, the public really messed up.

Anyway, this story begins earlier than you think. When I first started on Channel 5’s social/video team at the beginning of February, one of my first shows to clip was Britain’s Favourite Crisps and I saw the show, made the pyramid, and was SO EXCITED for it to be out there in the world. Then due to a scheduling change, it was pulled, and myself and my boss waited eagerly for its return.

Then, when we found out it would air on Sunday March 24, we were buzzing. We knew the meme would be a success.

Initially, the buzz was pretty slow. The tweet went up as the show ended at 10pm and nothing really happened. It was a normal day, or so we thought. At around midday, I noticed on Twitter that some people I follow had retweeted the meme, which I thought was fun.

Then about an hour later, we noticed Pringles was trending. And then we saw it.

The influx of tweets absolutely RAGING about the pyramid. We knew there would be *a* reaction, we just didn’t realise how big it would be - although that’s on us for underestimating how much people care about crisps.

“I’ve fully accepted that I’ve peaked at age 22 with this Tweet, and I am so proud. It’s created very valuable, meaningful, and intelligent conversation that this country has been lacking for a long while.”

Everyone from the crisp manufacturers to James Corden to Truck Festival had an opinion. Some people thought Pringles and Mini Cheddars didn’t deserve to be called crisps; some were angry about Space Invaders and Pom Bairs being left off the list; and others had issues with the flavours (to which I say: are you joking? Did you expect us to rate individual flavours as well as brands?)

Our engagement rocketed, so we took this as an opportunity to go on Crowd Tangle (a very useful analytics tool) and see how we were doing compared to other leading broadcasters on Twitter, and needless to say, we were the real McCoy.

I’ve fully accepted that I’ve peaked at age 22 with this Tweet, and I am so proud. It’s created very valuable, meaningful, and intelligent conversation that this country has been lacking for a long while. It’s brought together people of all ages, races, and genders. It may have torn apart families, but the engagement more than makes up for it.