

Continuities and contradictions: Media representations of Australian teachers in (and beyond) pandemic times

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Conventional wisdom suggests that teachers were accorded greater appreciation and respect in the public space in 2020, as school shutdowns and ‘home schooling’ brought previously obscured parts of their work into public view. This presentation brings together two studies of representations of teachers and their work in the Australian print media, one focused broadly on representations from 1996 to 2020 and one focused more specifically on reporting on teachers in the context of the pandemic, to explore how far this claim rings true. Using methods of corpus-assisted discourse analysis, we explore the ‘aboutness’ (Scott, 2010) of a broad collection of print media texts about teachers both prior to and during the pandemic, and explore both continuities and contradictions in depictions. We use discursive news values analysis (Bednarek and Caple, 2017) to interrogate these depictions, highlighting both static and dynamic properties of newsworthiness in stories about teachers, and exploring consistent and changing images of teachers in the public imaginary in and beyond pandemic times.

References

Bednarek, M., & Caple, H. (2017). *The discourse of news values: How news organizations create newsworthiness*. Oxford University Press.

Scott, M. (2010). Problems in investigating keyness, or clearing the undergrowth and marking out trails. In M. Bondi & M. Scott (Eds.), *Keyness in Texts* (pp. 43-58). John Benjamins Publishing.