

To Helsingin Sanomain säätiö  
20.8.2013

## **Final Report – Summer Investigative Reporting Course 2013**

I attended the Summer Investigative Reporting Course 2013 in Columbia University as a scholar funded by the foundation of Helsingin Sanomat (Helsingin Sanomain säätiö). The course was held in New York from 8<sup>th</sup> of July until 26<sup>th</sup> of July. I work as a crime reporter in Helsingin Sanomat so investigative journalism plays a big role in my work. I use investigative methods in my every day work but I also always have long term investigative projects. I had heard great things about the course from my colleagues so I had high expectations. After three weeks of intensive studying I can say that the expectations were even exceeded.

I can't write about the lectures in detail because the course was confidential. Some of the fellows told us about their ongoing projects so it was natural that the lectures were kept behind closed doors. Investigative journalists also like to protect their methods the same way that the police protect its technical and tactical strategies. Still I am able to report about the course in general and the thoughts it awakened.

The agenda of the course was versatile and offered very interesting fellows. Many of them had won a Pulitzer Prize or even several. In addition to the colleagues from the United States we had lecturers from all over the world. They told us about their own projects and methods. In addition we had general lectures for instance about data journalism and financial accounting. The lecturers and the fellow journalists attending from all over the world made the course also perfect for networking.

Networking with colleagues is extremely current since we have recently seen wonderful joint efforts of investigative journalist from all over the world. Considering the pressures coming from intelligence services and PR people of multinational corporations journalist have to come together. I feel that I made very important contacts during the course. The visits to Bloomberg and ProPublica were also good opportunities for networking.

It was very inspiring to learn how ambitious investigative projects are done all over the world even in countries where the conditions are very difficult. After the course I feel like Finland is full of opportunities for great investigative projects and I feel that now I'm able to do a better job with them. The course provided wide range of practical tips for different situations. Some of them I've used but some of them I've never come across before. During one of the lectures I got a great idea how I should proceed with one of my projects and I already have the first documents coming in. In addition the course gave me a lot of ideas on what else I still want to learn and what kind of trainings we should have in our newspaper. I also had ideas on how we should develop our investigative work in general in our newspaper.

We studied the first two weeks as one group. The last week we got to choose whether we wanted to learn more about multimedia or data journalism. I chose multimedia because I think it offers great opportunities for crime reporting. I got a lot of new ideas for my upcoming projects.

The course in general was excellent and I want to thank the foundation of Helsingin Sanomat and Columbia University for the opportunity to participate. I strongly recommend the course to investigative journalists.