

# Chequebook Journalism

Selling Your Work · By Simon Townsend · 1 min read

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Chequebook journalism is a phrase that refers to news organisations paying for interviews. Network Nine and 60 Minutes are probably Australia's leaders in chequebook journalism. You see some sensational, ratings-grabbing and exclusive interviews on this Sunday night show. (Do you watch it?) Newspapers engage in chequebook journalism rarely. Sensationalist magazines like New Idea or Woman's Day will often pay interviewees for their exclusive stories, but then enter into a deal with say 60 Minutes to split the cost. The celebrity agents Harry M Miller and Max Markson are the dealmakers most often associated with setting up these kind of deals. The \$2.6m deal over Nine's special on the Beaconsfield miners was a prize example of chequebook journalism. Chequebook journalism is forbidden by the ABC, partly out of a moral stance but more out of not being able to compete with the fat chequebooks of commercial television. Chequebook journalism is frowned upon, even by those who do it. A person being paid may embellish the story, just to make it appear more valuable. What do YOU think of chequebook journalism?

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