

# the Journalist

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## Breaking News!

*Fixing the problems of instant journalism*





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**E**ver feel like you're in a whirlwind of news and opinion? With news now disseminated instantly in many ways and with journalists often having little chance to check the veracity of the information storm it's easy to feel bowled over and distrustful of instant news.

But more journalists are stopping this world and getting off to opt for slow news – reporting which deliberately eschews speed to take a different and more insightful perspective. Rachel Broady looks at the growth of slow news.

And for those journalists who want to slow down even more and write at even greater length Lynne Wallis looks at how to move from journalist to author.

In our campaigning work Jenny Sims looks at how a long battle at the publisher Springer Nature yielded results with the recognition of the NUJ.

Our Viewpoint opinion column is a powerful account by Turkish journalist Ayse Duzkan of how her campaigning led to a jail sentence which she is now serving.

Both Springer and Ayse show how strong journalists can be in the face of adversity. And so does Eugene Costello who having suffered a heart attack decided to embark on a massive road trip with someone he hadn't met to raise funds for charity. He completed the journey with a great deal of humour.

Something to inspire us all.

Christine

**Christine Buckley**  
Editor

[@mschrisbuckley](https://twitter.com/mschrisbuckley)

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Gary Neill

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# Newsquest journalists in national pay campaign

## NUJ members working for

**Newsquest**, Britain's second-largest regional and local newspaper company, have launched a national pay campaign.

Many journalists working for Newsquest, which is owned by the US company Gannett, have only had two cost of living pay rises in the last 11 years.

Trainee journalists can start on £16,500 and some of the highest-paid reporters, with up to 30 years' experience, earn £26,000. But the company has also started taking on editorial apprentices who currently earn the minimum wage when starting.

Journalists are asking Newsquest for a decent pay rise this year that reflects big productivity gains from cutting jobs and loading new technological requirements on to the remaining journalists. They also point out that the national living wage will be rising by 4.8 per cent in April so their pay should not get left behind.

NUJ chapels are submitting local pay demands which reflect local conditions but most are asking that the unpaid 3 per cent cost of living rise last year should be added to a further 5 per cent rise in 2019, making a total of 8 per cent or a minimum of £2,000,



whichever is the greater.

In the last 18 months Newsquest has spent £13.5 million buying Isle of Wight County Press Group, NWN Media Ltd and CN Group in Cumbria.

Chris Morley, Newsquest NUJ national coordinator, said: "While Newsquest's parent Gannett is fending off the unwanted attentions of a \$1.4 billion hostile takeover bid by vulture capitalists, the thousands of UK employees in Newsquest cannot be ignored and condemned to exist on rubbish pay forever.

"That is why NUJ chapels are working collectively to give the biggest possible reminder today to bosses that they deserve a little more love from the corporate hierarchy in the form of cold hard cash for their amazing productivity, skill and invention."



**Thousands of UK employees in Newsquest cannot be ignored and condemned to exist on rubbish pay forever.**

**Chris Morley**

ROBERT CHARLESWORTH

## inbrief...

### HUMPHREYS SAYS FAREWELL TO TODAY

John Humphreys is to leave Radio 4's Today programme by the end of the year. Humphreys has been with Today for more than 30 years. From 1981 to 1987 he was the main presenter for BBC Television's Nine O'Clock News

### BETH RIGBY IS SKY'S POLITICAL EDITOR

Beth Rigby has been appointed Sky News political editor, replacing Faisal Islam who is becoming the BBC's economics editor. She joined Sky News in 2016 as a senior political correspondent. Her previous roles include chief political correspondent at the FT.

### THIS WEEK TO END WHEN NEIL QUILTS

The BBC will end its late-night politics show This Week when Andrew Neil leaves the programme after hosting it for 16 years. The programme will end after its current run in July. The BBC said it couldn't imagine the programme without Andrew Neil.

### MANCHESTER GETS NEW SUNDAY EDITION

The Manchester Evening News has launched its first Sunday edition. The new edition is a digest of the week's news and features but with additional new content and a lifestyle and leisure supplement. It also includes long reads which have appeared online.

### WORLD MEDIA DEATH TOLL REACHES 84

The International Federation of Journalists' annual list of media workers killed doing their job shows that 84 journalists, camera operators, fixers and technicians died in targeted killings, bomb attacks and cross-fire incidents. Afghanistan, Mexico, Yemen and Syria topped the killing fields for media workers in 2018. The list includes Jamal Khashoggi, the Saudi journalist murdered in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

## Charitable status for papers?

**Jeremy Wright, the Secretary of State** for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, has asked the Charity Commission to determine if groups which promote public interest and investigative journalism could be given charitable status following a recommendation from the Cairncross review into the future of the media.

Dame Frances Cairncross had warned that the closure of local newspapers threatens democracy.

But she noted that many local newspapers which are vital to ensuring local democracy have cut investment and many journalists' jobs in an effort to maintain profit margins because of high levels of corporate debt.

Mr Wright has asked the Competition and Markets Authority to conduct a study of the digital advertising market. He has also written to former Obama advisor Professor Jason Furman who has been asked by the government to examine digital competition in UK.

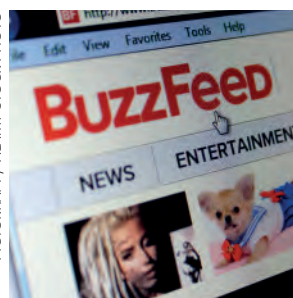
**Raymond Snoddy, page 23**

## Digital media hit by cuts and closure

**Digital media suffered big blows** early this year with plans by BuzzFeed to cut 200 jobs worldwide, 800 job losses at Verizon Media Group, the owner of the HuffPost, Yahoo and AOL, and the closure of the UK website The Pool. Jonah Peretti, BuzzFeed's founder, said 15 per cent of staff would be

leaving. Last year BuzzFeed UK laid off a third of its staff and in January Janine Gibson, the UK editor-in-chief, left the company.

The Pool went into administration owing money to staff and freelancers. A crowdfunding initiative to help those affected was set up by the literary agency boss Julia Kingsford.



## inbrief...

**FT APPOINTS GLOBAL DIVERSITY HEAD**

The Financial Times has appointed Priscilla Baffour, ITN's former head of diversity and inclusion, to a new role of global diversity chief. She has also worked as a Channel 4 industry talent specialist and as a youth outreach and projects manager for Media Trust.

**SITWELL JOINS THE TELEGRAPH**

William Sitwell has joined The Telegraph as a writer and commentator. This was shortly after the former Waitrose Food magazine editor stepped down over comments he made in an email to a freelance in which he proposed a series on 'killing vegans'.

**CONDÉ NAST INCURS £13.5M PRE-TAX LOSS**

Vogue and GQ publisher Condé Nast made a pre-tax loss of £13.5 million in 2017, down from a pre-tax profit of £6.7 million a year earlier. In its most recent financial report, the magazine publisher, which also owns Vanity Fair, Tatler and Wired, reported turnover of £113.5 million, down seven per cent year-on-year.

**JPI MEDIA INCREASES NEWSPAPER PRICES**

JPI Media has increased the price of the i newspaper and some regional titles in response to falling advertising revenues and rising newsprint costs. The i's weekday price rose from 60p to 65p from the start of the year. The prices of the Shields Gazette and Sunderland Echo, Lancashire Post, Blackpool Gazette, Hartlepool Mail have also gone up.

**BRITON TAKES TOP JOB AT AFP AGENCY**

Agence France-Presse has appointed a British journalist as its global news director - the first time a foreign national has been given the 184-year-old French news agency's top editorial job. Phil Chetwynd has been promoted from editor-in-chief of the agency where he oversaw daily output.

# MPs berate BBC over failure to acknowledge pay discrimination

**The BBC has come under fresh fire from MPs** on the digital, cultural, media and sport select committee over a lack of progress in establishing equal pay.

Their investigation into pay at the corporation was triggered last year when presenter Carrie Gracie (pictured right), backed by the NUJ, accused the BBC of pay discrimination. The NUJ has made a large number of equal pay claims on behalf of women at the BBC.

Last October, the select committee published a highly critical report of pay inequality at the corporation.

In January, the MPs published a fresh report accusing the BBC of still failing to acknowledge the 'structural problem that exists regarding equal pay'. They said it was "very disappointed that the BBC has failed to acknowledge that a pay discrimination problem exists".

The committee's first report called for targets to be set by December 2018, but MPs said "the BBC has failed to set specific targets for tackling discrimination".

Damian Collins, the Conservative chair of the committee, said: "Our evidence suggests that some women at the BBC who work in comparable jobs to men are earning far less."



Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary, said: "This hard-hitting report on the BBC's response to the select committee must be taken seriously by the corporation."

"It has been told that it must comply with the law on equal pay and the committee took the BBC to task for failing to admit a pay discrimination problem, instead confining its remarks to references to the 'gender pay gap' and 'fair pay' as opposed to unequal pay."

"There are still many outstanding equal pay claims that we are dealing with."

In response to the renewed criticisms, the BBC said: "You only need to look at the significant reforms we've made to our pay and grading structures to see how much has changed, and we've also dealt with many of the individual pay queries raised with us."

TOMMY LONDON / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

**Our evidence suggests that some women at the BBC who work in comparable jobs to men are earning far less**

**Damian Collins**  
Chair, select committee

## No Stone Unturned pair thwart silence move

**The NUJ has condemned an attempt by**

the Police Service of Northern Ireland and Durham Constabulary to stop investigative journalists Trevor Birney and Barry McCaffrey from commenting on their case while they are on police bail.

The two have been on bail since their arrest in August

last year in connection with their documentary No Stone Unturned about the Loughinisland massacre. In March their bail was extended until September.

The police tried to amend the existing bail conditions to prevent the journalists from talking publicly about the ongoing police investigation

and witnesses. Lawyers for the two NUJ members successfully opposed the attempt.

Séamus Dooley, NUJ assistant general secretary, said: "International awareness, cross community support and growing media interests in this violation of human rights is clearly proving embarrassing." He said that the extension of bail until September was a travesty.

## No penalty given in NUJ member dispute

**'No penalty' has been recorded against Neil Cameron**, although he was found to have contravened membership rules by the National Executive Council.

Cameron had tweeted that Donegal-based blogger Phil Mac Goilla Bháin 'made up stories'.

Mac Goilla Bháin cited the NUJ rule that members must

treat other members 'with consideration and respect and not to take actions which threaten their livelihood(s)'.

Cameron, a sports writer on The Herald in Glasgow,

provided no evidence for his allegation.

'No penalty' was applied because Cameron's comment was made in the context of a 'social media ferment'.



# Cumbrian strike action gains political support

**NUJ members striking at Newsquest-owned titles** in Cumbria just before Christmas have won cross-party political support for their one-day walkout over pay.

The newspapers affected by the strike were the Carlisle News & Star, the Cumberland News, the Workington Times and Star and the Whitehaven News.

Tim Farron (pictured right), former Liberal Democrat leader and MP for South Lakeland, said: "Our local reporters here in Cumbria aren't just writing about our communities, they are part of those communities – they are the glue that keeps our community together."

"That's the key to a good local newspaper. We are lucky to have so many excellent journalists writing for fantastic papers and they deserve to be fairly rewarded for the work that they do."

Stewart Young, Labour leader of Cumbria County Council, said: "Skilled and experienced local journalists are a key part of our democratic structures. Whilst I'll be the first to say they don't always make our lives easy, I'll

clarify that by saying nor should they.

"They disseminate information to the public, organise campaigns and, in the finest examples of work, they hold organisations like ours up to public scrutiny. To lose such a crucial link is a major loss for us all."

Rory Stewart, Tory MP for Penrith and the Border, said: "Strong, vigorous local newspapers are a vital part of local democracy. Journalism is extraordinarily important. We will only keep it alive if we reward journalists properly."

Helen Davison, Carlisle Green Party chair, also added her support to the strike.

Jane Kennedy, NUJ Northern and Midlands organiser, said: "Newsquest are making severe cuts again and again; they are

slashing frontline journalism jobs and paying out thousands in perks to those at the top of company. Newsquest are systematically asset stripping local journalism in this country and they must be stopped."

Newsquest said that the pay dispute dated back to before it acquired the newspapers in March last year.



**We are lucky to have so many excellent journalists writing for fantastic papers and they deserve to be fairly rewarded for the work that they do**

**Tim Farron**  
MP for South Lakeland

AMER GHAZAL / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

## inbrief...

### DOOLEY DANCES INTO ROLE AT GRAZIA UK

Stacey Dooley has been appointed contributing editor for investigations at Grazia UK. Dooley, a journalist, documentary maker and 2018 Strictly Come Dancing champion, will publish a series of investigations in the magazine throughout this year.

### ASAD HASHIM WINS KATE WEBB PRIZE

Asad Hashim won the 2018 AFP Kate Webb Prize for coverage of the plight of ethnic Pashtuns and blasphemy issues in Pakistan. The prize honours journalists working in perilous or difficult conditions in Asia, and is named after an AFP reporter who covered some of the world's trouble spots.

### ANDERSON WINS BARRON TROPHY

Craig Anderson, who until he recently retired was the long-serving reporter in the Highlands and Islands for the BBC, has been awarded this year's Barron Trophy. The award recognises lifetime achievement in journalism in the Scottish region.

### DRUGSTORE CULTURE STAFF QUIT EN MASSE

The full five-strong editorial team behind arts and culture magazine Drugstore Culture – including editor and Guardian columnist Matthew D'Ancona – resigned in January. In an email to contributors, D'Ancona and deputy editor Peter Hoskin said the resignations followed 'instructions from management' to sack two journalists at the title.

### MAIL ONLINE CHIEF'S EARLY DEPARTURE

Mail Online editor-in-chief Noah Kotch, a US journalist who previously worked for Fox News, has left the news website after just six months in the job. Kotch started the role in July, saying at the time that he was 'thrilled to join as brilliant an operation as the dailyemail.com'.

## Strike sparks NUJ's first IPSO complaint

**The NUJ has submitted its first ever** complaint to the regulator IPSO over the coverage by The Cumberland News of the strike action at Newsquest's Cumbrian News titles.

The newspaper's report of the strike action, which was published before the strike on December 20, reported comments from the company but not from the union or those about to take action.

The IPSO code of conduct calls for a commitment to fairness, stating that the press must take care not to publish inaccurate, distorted or misleading information.

The union said that the

company's reporting of legal industrial action in this way showed the organisation's lack of commitment to quality journalism, including fair and balanced reporting.

## Press Freedom campaign carries on up north



**The Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom** (CPBF) closed down in November 2018 but CPBF (North) is to continue.

It will campaign for strong regional voices in broadcasting, highlight threats to local and regional newspapers, and support alternative media.

CPBF (North) coordinator Granville Williams said: "We will continue to hold public meetings, publish books and pamphlets and maintain close links with the media unions and the wider trade union movement."

The first issue of newsletter MediaNorth was published in December. For more information, contact cpbfnorth@outlook.com

# We're here when bad news hits...



**STANDING UP FOR YOU**



**NUJ members get free, specialist legal advice and representation for:**

- Personal injury – at or away from work, on the roads or abroad including assaults
- Serious injury – including brain and spinal cord injuries
- Special terms for clinical negligence
- Employment law advice (accessed via your Chapel representative or the NUJ head office)
- Work-related emergency criminal law advice on 0800 587 7530
- Wills service, which allows you to generate a will online without submitting a paper application
- Competitive rates for conveyancing

**Your family is also covered for:**

- Personal injury away from work, on holiday or on the roads
- Special terms for clinical negligence

Contact the NUJ legal service first and keep **100% of your compensation** – whatever the injury, however complex the claim.

**Call the NUJ legal service on 0800 587 7528**

[www.thompsonstradeunion.law/nuj](http://www.thompsonstradeunion.law/nuj)

*Standing up for you*



# Dutch photographers pull down the shutters

**About 500 freelance photojournalists** in the Netherlands staged a one-day strike in January, with more than 250 travelling from across the country to demonstrate in front of the ANP Dutch press agency's headquarters in The Hague. The action, by Dutch journalists' union NVJ, was staged to press for better pay rates for photographers.

In addition, a full page advert carrying the photographers' signatures appeared in two national daily newspapers.

NVJ freelance photojournalist organiser Rosa García López told the demonstration that the action showed that Dutch photojournalists could organise on a national level.

She said: "You came from north and south, from small villages and from large cities, alone and in groups. More would have liked to join us but they don't dare to – they have told me themselves. Still, today 500 photojournalists will not be offering photographs to the media and picture libraries."

"With current rates of pay, photojournalism will not survive – the rates must not be allowed to fall. We call upon the ANP and others to invest now in the future of photojournalism."

A series of actions targeting Dutch media organisations Persgroep, Sanoma and TMG is under way. After the action, talks are due to take place with the management of both ANP and Persgroep.

Freelance rates in the Netherlands have fallen from €80 a photo in 2014 to an average of €42 today, with some as low as €15 or €20.

The NVJ's campaign has three demands: a 14 per cent increase in rates; respect for creators' rights and the equalisation of online and print tariffs. The NVJ has said that some media companies offer €15-€20 for an online photo as opposed to €42-€50 for print.

Dutch photojournalists fear that, unless fees are increased, their profession will become just a 'glorified hobby' within ten years.



News in focus, page 8

## inbrief...

### LEWIS AND FACEBOOK SETTLE OVER SCAMS

NUJ member Martin Lewis, founder of Money Saving Expert, has dropped a defamation lawsuit against Facebook over scam adverts, which he said used his name to con people out of money. Facebook said it would donate £3 million to charity, create a reporting button for scam ads in the UK and set up a team to handle issues reported.

### MYRIE HONOURED BY HIS OLD UNIVERSITY

BBC News presenter Clive Myrie is to receive an honorary doctorate from his alma mater. Myrie studied law at the University of Sussex in the 1980s and went on to work at the BBC shortly after graduating.

### HAYMARKET PROFITS FALL BY NEARLY HALF

Haymarket Group, a specialist publisher, has posted a fall in pre-tax profits to £8 million for the year to the end of June 2018, down from £15.9 million in 2017. Turnover at the group fell to £163.5 million, down nearly £10 million year-on-year.

### ECONOMIST STARTS DEEP DAILY PODCAST

The Economist has launched a daily podcast to deliver current affairs to both morning commuters in the US and late-morning listeners in the UK. The Intelligence promises an in-depth look at big news stories that steers away from the 'hamster wheel' of daily news, according to head of Economist Radio Anne McElvoy.

### BUCKS FREE PRESS REACHES OUT

Newsquest has started a new edition of the Bucks Free Press for Buckinghamshire towns and villages abandoned by Reach after it closed a title covering the area. The new edition will cover Amersham, Chesham and Little Chalfont. Reach closed the Buckinghamshire Examiner & Advertiser in January.

## Eurovision conscientious objectors backed

**The NUJ's Dublin Broadcasting Branch** has pledged to support any member who chooses to exercise a conscientious objection to being involved in covering this year's Eurovision Song Contest. The event is due to take place in May in Israel.

At a meeting in January, branch members condemned Israel's continued attacks on journalists and on freedom of expression.

It noted that, since April, its forces have shot and killed two journalists reporting from Gaza's border

and injured at least 20 more with live rounds.

The union branch expressed its support for the stance taken by Irish broadcaster RTE, which has said it would not bring any 'sanction' against any employee who declined to travel to Israel to cover the

contest on conscientious grounds.

The branch's resolution follows a pledge last April by the NUJ as a whole to support any journalist who refused on ethical grounds to cover the Giro d'Italia cycling competition, which started in Israel.

## Pay rise agreed at ITV but talks continue

**NUJ members at ITV have accepted** a pay offer of 2.5 per cent and an increase in the redundancy payment cap from £45,000 to £50,000. The offer was accepted by a large majority of members in a consultative ballot. Members of Bectu and Unite also agreed to accept it.

However, negotiations are still to conclude on unpopular changes to working arrangements for bank holidays. The broadcaster wants to move to full news programmes on bank holidays rather than shortened bulletins.

At ITN, changes planned to the annual leave system, which involved moving from a calculation of days to one of hours, were withdrawn by the company after objections from the unions.





# Photoshock

Dutch freelances have united to fight plummeting pay rates. **Natasha Hirst** and **Tony Sheldon** report

**I**n the bitter cold in The Hague amid snow flurries, 250 freelance photographers gathered to protest about plummeting pay rates. It was a good turnout and, for each person present, another freelance photographer elsewhere was forgoing work to go on strike.

Although numbers were strong – half the Dutch photojournalist profession – the age range was limited. Rotterdam photographer Peter gesticulated in front of Dutch press agency ANP where the demonstration was held: “Look around here – do you see anybody aged under 30? This profession is dying.”

The NVJ Dutch journalists’ union is seeking to protect photojournalism by achieving, through collective bargaining, pay rates that can sustain the profession. Anecdotal evidence suggests that average rates per photo have virtually halved from €80 in 2014 to €42 today.

With anger growing, the NVJ decided last autumn to launch a campaign – Photojournalism Has a Price. It included independent data showing rates for photographs in 2017 were 67 per cent of those in 2014. Members of the NVJ, the NVJ’s photography division, were then shocked further by plans, announced following the merger of ANP with photo agency Hollandse Hoogte, for day rates to be halved in return for retaining rights to photos.

The NVJ called four regional meetings to assess the mood and received a strong response. Soon, 200 members were backing action. Next, officials phoned members to urge them to register for the national demonstration in The Hague, offering them €95 in strike pay.

NVJ chair, photographer Eric Brinkhorst, told *The Journalist*: “It was a hell of a job. We called all 708 members. Some just needed a minute – others you really had to convince. But I only had one person who refused.”

Since the demonstration, actions

have targeted the Persgroep, the largest Dutch media group, and the Amsterdam offices of the Telegraaf Media Group. Nominees at the Silver Camera awards for photography wore a small button with a symbol of a camera to show their support.

The NVJ believes action is already paying dividends. Freelances no longer feel powerless against large media companies. Talks have reopened with ANP and Persgroep. The union hopes other companies will join the discussions. Brinkhorst says: “They cannot ignore us any more and pick off individuals – we are united. We have opened conversations that were closed.”

Like their Dutch counterparts, UK photojournalists are dealing with falling rates, relentless copyright breaches and increasing expectations to do more for less. Those struggling to make a living as professional photographers (who are overwhelmingly freelance) can feel addressing these issues is impossible.

Staff photographer cuts in the past 10 years have been compounded by large publishers seeking out user-generated content, using images without payment and undermining the ability of professional photographers to secure work. The NUJ Photographers’ Council led the #UseItPayForIt campaign to promote the value of professional photography and encourage amateurs to seek payment for their work instead of giving it away.

British Photographic Council research in 2009 showed that fewer than two out of three professional photographers were able to earn a living from the industry full time and this was expected to get worse. The State of News Photography 2018 report, by the World Press Photo Foundation and the University of Stirling, bears that prediction out, highlighting a huge drop in full-time photographers.

For the future, it is crucial to protect the integrity of our industry and the ability of members to earn a living. Will the Dutch campaign galvanise UK photographers into action here?

Brinkhorst is proud of attracting attention from the UK as well as from Norway, Denmark, Belgium and Germany. “We still need all the attention we can get. We haven’t achieved anything yet, but we can.”

**Natasha Hirst is chair of the NUJ’s Photographers’ Council and Tony Sheldon is chair of the union’s Netherlands’ branch**

“**They cannot ignore us and pick off individuals – we are united. We have opened conversations that were closed**”



# WHY I'M GOING TO PRISON

**Ayşe Düzkan** says she was given a jail sentence for defending honest journalism

**I** am writing this in the last few hours before I submit myself to Turkey's penal authorities. They will admit me to prison and start the process of sending me to wherever it is that I am to be incarcerated for a year and a half. My crime? Defending honest journalism.

The series of court hearings that have delivered me to this point started in 2016, but my story really begins in the 1980s. I was in my early 20s and a friend went off to do his military service – then and now, a legal requirement of all men in Turkey.

He was a musician. When he came back, he seemed like a different person – troubled, angry, frightened and haunted by terrible dreams whose details he refused to share.

What I did not realise was that, instead of simply undertaking military training, as our circle of pals had imagined, my friend had been away to war. Few knew it at the time, but my country was engaged in a military conflict with Kurdish groups in southeast Turkey.

I had a vague idea about what was going on but this was the first time I had come face to face with the reality of war. At the time of my friend's service, post traumatic stress disorder and Vietnam syndrome were little known, but something like this had clearly affected him. That experience was one of the many things that sparked a life time of activism.

I have worked for more than 20 years as a journalist, writing about culture, music and fashion for a series of newspapers and magazines. I have been a feminist since 1984 and have a lifetime's involvement in both the women's peace movement and the Kurdish issue.

But, if most people don't know we are at war, how can they call for peace? That is why a free press is essential.

I was a member of the executive of the journalists' union Disk Basin-Is. In 2016, some of my union colleagues and I took a modest stand. At the time, press freedom was under threat. Newspapers had been banned, reporters sent to prison and television stations forced out of business.

The Özgür Gündem newspaper (it translates as Free Agenda), although published in Turkish, has always been pro Kurdish rights. It offers a glimpse of Kurdish reality, not only the conflict but also the culture, music, literature, and everyday life. Most importantly, it worked to report news of the conflict in southeast Turkey accurately and quickly.

It and many of its successors have now been banned. The paper has long been a target. Its journalists have been assassinated, its editor arrested and its presses bombed.

So savage had the government assault on press freedom been by 2016 that we knew Özgür Gündem would soon be in the line of fire. Its staff asked for our support and we agreed that journalists would stand together to resist attacks on free speech.

Fifty-six of us were, each for a single day, named on the newspaper's masthead as 'honorary executive editors'. I actually went in and did a shift. It was the Saturday before Mothering Sunday, so I pulled together a page about that.

Within a fortnight, there were cases against 50 of us. It was the start of a grinding process to prosecute us for 'propagandising for a terrorist organisation'.

At first, the prosecutors asked that I be sentenced to 14 years. There have been many court appearances since,



and my sentence has now been whittled down to a year and a half.

I will be one of the first few from our group to start their sentence; Hüseyin Bektaş and Mehmet Ali Çelebi are already in prison. As well as showing that journalists in Turkey stick together, we also wanted to bring the treatment of the media in my country to wider attention – for which reason I am grateful to the NUJ for 'adopting' me.

Free journalism provides the best chance we have that people can access truth and reality about the societies we inhabit. Everyone deserves that.

Strange as it may seem, my spirits are high and my mood is good. We have a saying in Turkish that might be translated as, "This will come and pass, too". I am not brave, I am not a heroine, I try to do what seems right and doing that feels like happiness.

**Ayşe Düzkan has started serving her sentence in Bakırköy prison in Istanbul. The NUJ has 'adopted' her as a mark of solidarity.**

**// Free journalism provides the best chance that people can access truth and reality about the societies we inhabit. Everyone deserves that //**

Activists fought a David and Goliath battle for union recognition at Springer Nature publishers. **Jenny Sims** speaks to them

# Springing into action

**I**t took six years but NUJ members can justifiably celebrate a hard-won victory. At last the union is recognised at publishers Springer Nature, but recruitment and retention will continue to be a top priority for the chapel.

Michelle Grayson, a senior editor at Nature, mother of chapel and a key figure in the fight, says: “It’s been tough, but we’re really pleased we made it, and I’m looking forward to the next stage.”

Compared to the amount of grafting, persuasion and negotiation needed to approach the central arbitration committee and go through the process of getting recognition, retention and further recruitment has got to be easier.

The story is a long and complicated one and, frankly, Grayson probably had no idea of the task she was taking on when she agreed to help managing editor Colin Sullivan, a long-time NUJ member and father of the chapel from the days when Nature was owned solely by Macmillan Publishers – and before it merged with Springer.

The merger helped turn Springer Nature into one of the world’s biggest global research, academic, educational and professional publishers.

What used to be a tight, small, self-contained set of employees at Nature Publishing Group became part of a big, sprawling organisation with around 1,200 employees based in King’s Cross in London now employed within an extremely complicated business structure.

Grayson recalls: “I came from the Nature side of the company. We used to have a chapel when I joined nine years ago, then we got stealthily derecognised.”

This stealthy derecognition crept in without any warning, just before several internal company-wide reorganisations.

“It took a while to get the wheels back on the bus and focus ourselves on getting recognition,” Grayson admits. No longer were editorial and production teams working together in one office – staff were spread through different business divisions of the company.

Sullivan adds: “The NUJ has always been strong within the Nature family of titles and the company has consistently underestimated how widely supported the union is.

“Our task in the new, bigger world of Springer Nature was to be able to rationalise our support in terms of the new corporate structure to give us a clear and consistent bargaining unit for recognition.

“That meant a lot of work poring over organisation charts and clarifying disparate job titles in order to show how the proposed bargaining unit would work.”

Grayson did a lot of the legwork, and Sullivan pays tribute to her. “It was a truly Herculean effort by Shell. I think she now knows more about the corporate structure in the UK than the HR department.”

She adds: “It helped that we had a historical core of chapel members, and that we had a big, stable workforce.”

There was a bureaucratic barrier: because they did not have union recognition, staff could not use company email or hold meetings on the premises to recruit more colleagues to the

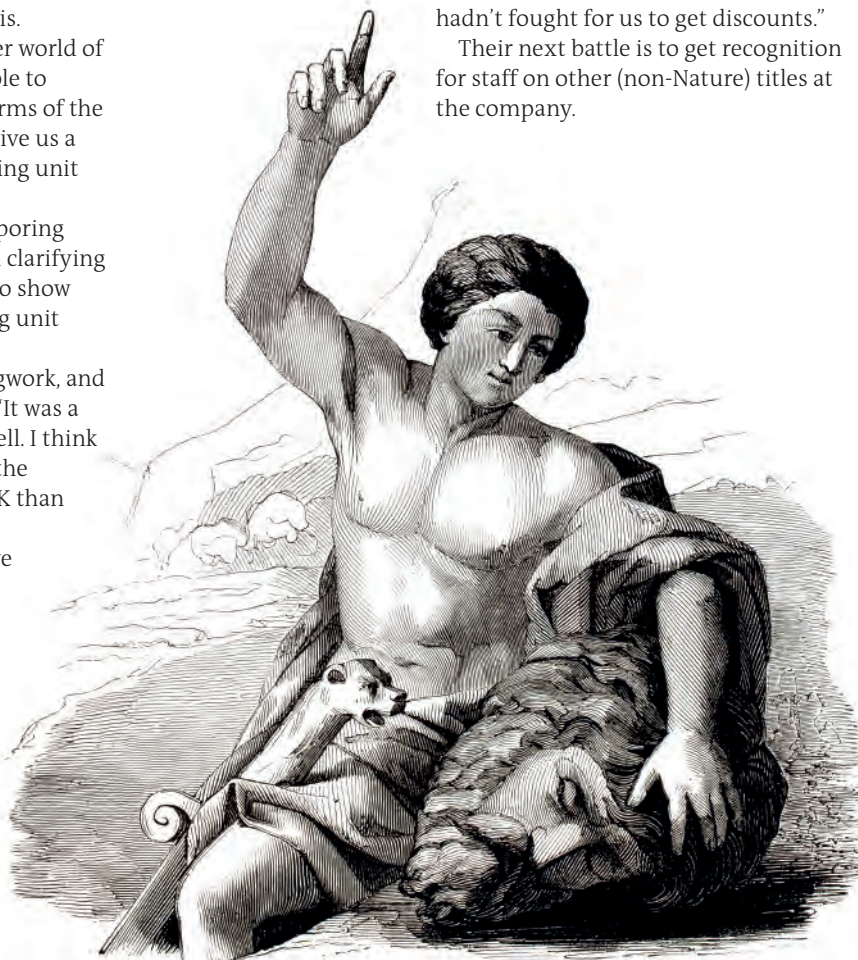
NUJ to get the numbers up so they could fight for union recognition.

The job was tough, as Grayson points out: “NUJ subs are fairly high if you earn above a certain amount. Nature is a prestigious journal and pays fairly well. Many of our editors are in the highest pay band, and found the subs off-putting.”

But in came the cavalry – NUJ HQ. The magazines division helped fund off-site lunchtime recruitment meetings in pubs (free food was a definite attraction) and national organiser Fiona Swarbrick negotiated agreements to offer attractive one-off deals for new members to help overcome the recruitment barriers. One of the most successful inducements was a 24-hour flash sale offering 50 per cent off fees for a year.

Their bargaining unit now has an NUJ membership level of just over 51 per cent of the 375 editorial staff working on Nature titles. They are ‘safe’. However, Grayson admits: “I don’t think we could have done it if Fiona hadn’t fought for us to get discounts.”

Their next battle is to get recognition for staff on other (non-Nature) titles at the company.





# The Timbuk Two

It was a heart attack that inspired **Eugene Costello** to undertake a long road trip for charity, travelling with a less than compatible companion



**W**ith the cooling waters of the Bafing River enveloping me, a fiery African sun overhead and a glorious view of the Manantali Dam a few hundred yards upriver, I was transported by a swoon of relief, pleasure and contentment. I had survived a massive heart attack, driven more than 5,000 miles and passed through five dusty desert border crossings to reach this nirvana – a bougainvillea-clad paradise called Cool Camp Mali.

There was only one cloud on the horizon. On the river's bank I spotted Nick, my driving companion for the past month. We had taken turns at the wheel, slept most nights within inches of each other and fretted collectively over fuel shortages, broken axles and navigational cock-ups. The ambivalence I felt for him when first we met had now matured into unbearable intolerance.

In August, following a week of chest pains on holiday in the Pyrenees, I went straight from Stansted Airport to Bart's Hospital in central London. It turned out I was having a heart attack. Some time the next morning I had a massive coronary. The surgeons carried out an emergency triple bypass but my body shut down and I ended up on life support. After 10 days, thankfully, I recovered, but then had a week or more

of frightening delusions caused by postoperative delirium.

On my release a month later, I resolved to undertake a trip from London to Bamako, Mali, by 4x4 to donate to a local medical charity there – a journey of around four weeks. My partner would be travel writer Nick Redmayne, who I'd never met before...

Nick stayed at my house the night before departure and we set off early on the morning of December 28. We went via my GP's for an 8am appointment with the practice nurse to get my vaccinations. I'm a byword for preparedness.

By the time we reached Newhaven and boarded the ferry to Dieppe, I thought to myself, 'Houston – we have a problem.' I'd realised Nick and I were utterly incompatible, yet had 30 – count 'em – days and nights ahead of us where we would be inseparable for 24 hours a day – including sharing small, cramped rooms at l'Hotel la Fosse des Pouces.

So I found a tucked-away lounge hidden on the upper deck and snuck in there for a snooze, and to ponder how I would survive. Nick won't mind me being honest; he brilliantly and wittily told stories about me several times a day, on everything from running low on diesel to smashing a track rod on a tree stump in the bush in Mali.

From Dieppe, we drove into the

night to Le Mans and were virtually at our 'hotel' when Nick said 'next right' and I turned immediately right. It turned out he meant after this right. It took me onto another motorway and Nick said: "You'll have to continue down here for 27km, then turn back the same way." The last 54km, plus 2km, were done in utter silence. It was going to be a long 30 nights ...

That first night, we were in a Formule One. For those unfamiliar with the concept, it's like a cross between a Swedish prison and the set of Blake's 7, with all fixtures and furnishings being plastic as though there is a button to press to hose the place down rather than waste money on cleaners. Little did we know that our accommodation options would deteriorate significantly from then on.

But, doughty spirits with a mutual dislike of each other, we hardly survived days of driving wordlessly through the Atlas Mountains, the Sahara and Sahel deserts, through Morocco, Western Sahara and Mauritania until we finally made it to the fecundity of Mali, where we once again heard birdsong, and marvelled at mountains, rivers and lakes. It was like being reborn ...

We arrived back to a cold Gatwick on January 25. Nick rushed off to board a National Express coach to Leicester, where his mate was giving him a car. I haven't heard from him since ...

## Funding drive

All funds raised are being split between British Heart Foundation and NUJ Extra. To donate, go to **gofundme.com** and search for 'UK to Bamako'.

Eugene is speaking about his trip at the NUJ's London office on March 26.

Tickets are £7 and can be reserved at **<http://tinyurl.com/y246v9zr>**

# Time to get paid

## Ruth Addicott on the dramatic changes that have hit one of journalism's dream jobs

**T**ravel journalism has always been seen by many to be a dream job, and to do it well requires research, good storytelling skills and the ability to see beyond the hype. But travel journalism is changing. Over 80 per cent of travel planning is now done online and the internet has given rise to professional travel bloggers, influencers and millennials carving out careers as 'digital nomads'. Press trips have turned into photo shoots with poolside selfies and journalists are finding they are the only ones taking notes.

All you need is an internet connection and a passion for travel – anyone can live the dream.

So how is this affecting travel journalists?

The main concern is pay. Rates have fallen, fees are low and the issue of payment on publication means freelances can wait months to get paid. Freelances having to fund or blag flights, hotels and other expenses is also having an impact on the stories they can cover.

As freelance journalist Will Hide says: "Why would you go away for £350 and end up spending £250 on expenses? If I go off for five days to Miami, I get paid the same as a day trip to Cardiff."

Hide, who has been a travel journalist for 20 years, including 12 at The Times, says fees have not increased since he started and rates on most titles, including The Times and the Mail on Sunday, have fallen.

The Daily Express said last April it would no longer pay for travel features as it can get content for free.

Annie Bennett, an experienced travel journalist, says it is no longer feasible to spend a week away on a trip. "I am writing a piece for The Independent today at a lower rate than when I first wrote for them in 1995," she says.

"I look for things I can research in a day or two, which is usually enough as most articles are shorter now."

Like other freelances, Hide has been affected by payment on publication and, at one point, was waiting two years for two pieces commissioned by The Times. "One of them has just run, but I've heard the same from freelances on other papers," he says.

With so much competition, journalists are reluctant to speak out for fear of losing commissions.

Travel journalist Tina Walsh recalls: "One editor put a call out on Twitter for paid commissions and said she had a load of people offering to do it for nothing. There are quite a few publications – and a lot of websites – that don't pay for travel articles, but still have 'travel writers' offering their services for free. What happens is the quality starts to suffer."

So what impact are travel bloggers and influencers having?

Like many journalists, Hide believes this is a completely different market and sees no overlap, but feelings are mixed.

Walsh believes many influencers are not only taking work from journalists but also having an impact on press trips. She recalls one trip to a Michelin-starred restaurant in the Italian lakes: "The bloggers and influencers didn't speak a word. They just sat there taking photos on their smartphones, then stuck them on Instagram saying 'Wow! Amazing steak!' They didn't ask any questions about the food or where it was from. Walsh also knows of national newspaper journalists applying for press trips and losing out to influencers, but notes that travel PRs still want print coverage.

While journalists are struggling, many bloggers and influencers are earning a comfortable income off the back of their social media following.

A survey by the Professional Travel Bloggers Association last year found that bloggers earned \$5,000–\$10,000 (£3,800–£7,600) a year as brand ambassadors and 26 per cent charged to go on press trips. They charged \$200 (£152) for Instagram

# 80%

Over 80 per cent of travel planning is done online

## How to survive as a travel journalist

### Boost your skills

Travel journalist Will Hide advises writers to hone their videography skills, even if this is making short movies on an iPhone and editing them with Adobe Premiere. "I think video is going to be as important as the written word," he says.



Spanish and being able to talk to people in a natural way." She stresses the importance of good writing and copy that is grammatically correct and engages and inspires readers.

### Be flexible

David Whitley ([www.grumpytraveller.com](http://www.grumpytraveller.com)) says journalists need to adapt to editors' changing requirements. "Big 2,500-word features on Peru have been dying for a long time; they're enjoyable, but I think too many travel journalists think that's the only form of journalism that's justifiable and it's not."

### Find a niche

Annie Bennett specialises in Spain and has a strong social media presence. "I'll always walk another block in the hope of coming across something surprising," she says. "The most important thing for me is speaking

### Broaden your expertise

Like other freelances, Tina Walsh tops up her income writing about other subjects such as health and business, alongside copywriting and running travel writing workshops ([www.tina-walsh.com](http://www.tina-walsh.com)). Susan Grossman, who also teaches travel writing, adds: "There is money to be made by writing content for travel industry members without compromising integrity. In fact, the industry welcomes independent reporting as it enhances their sites." ([www.susangrossman.co.uk](http://www.susangrossman.co.uk))

### Give a sense of place

Grossman says: "A good travel writer will look at the bigger picture, put the place into context, compare and contrast, add a topical hook and evoke a sense of place."





# cking?

posts if they had up to 20,000 followers, and \$500 (£380) if they had 70,000 followers. One blogger was paid \$250 (£190) to post five tweets a month and had only 1,000 followers. They also charged for photography, Twitter parties, modelling, freelance articles and sponsored videos. Overall, nearly 50 per cent those surveyed made less than \$15,000 (£11,400) and 7 per cent made more than \$100,000 (£76,000).

Travel blogger Erin Holmes, ([www.explorewitherin.com](http://www.explorewitherin.com)) says she earned a six-figure income from her previous blog and earned \$2,000 (£1,520) from a two-week press trip on top of expenses. She has also written for magazines both for free and paid.

**A**nother successful blogger with no journalism background is Paul Johnson, who set up [www.aluxurytravelblog.com](http://www.aluxurytravelblog.com) in 2005 after a career in web design and marketing. Johnson's prime income comes from hotels, tourist boards and tour operators looking for exposure.

"If we're talking dollars, it's possible to earn five figures from just one trip if you have a strong following," he says.

"I think the top-level influencers are considered to be more important now than print journalists because of their reach. However, there's a huge number of people who proclaim themselves 'influencers' when the reality is they probably hold a limited level of influence."

Johnson thinks the quality of travel journalism has been 'greatly eroded', adding: "I think bloggers and influencers have merged with journalists. Some journalists now run blogs – some bloggers call themselves journalists. There's no clear distinction between the two nowadays."

Susan Grossman, lecturer in travel writing on the MA in journalism at the University of Westminster, also believes boundaries are becoming blurred.

"I am deeply concerned that advertorial is often disguised as travel writing and some publications fail to highlight it as such," she says.

Grossman refers to the British Guild of Travel Writers' code of conduct, which states members will accept press trips only on the understanding they are 'in no way obliged to publicise any or all of the operation concerned and that the provision of such facilities will not influence their judgment'.

There are indications the tide is turning

and not all 'likes' result in transactions. A report from the 2018 Edelman Trust Barometer favoured credibility and journalism over popularity. So will that prompt professional travel bloggers and influencers to turn to print media to gain more standing?

Hide feels travel sections will become increasingly tied into sponsorship, with articles such as Ten Places to Stay in The Highlands and a picture of a Volvo.

"I feel travel journalists like me are living on borrowed time," he says. "I wouldn't quite say travel journalism is in crisis, but it's one step below. I talk to a lot of my travel freelance colleagues and we are all on the verge of giving up."

On the plus side, the internet has brought more paid-for commissions from abroad. He's written for the New Zealand Herald and magazines in Indonesia and China. "There are opportunities out there – you just need to keep on pushing," he says.

David Whitley, who writes for National Geographic Traveller and The Sunday Times Travel Magazine, has concerns when print sections cease, adding: "I don't think anyone has properly made travel online work yet, especially as paid-for, good-quality content."

Grossman believes there will always be a need for travel writers with journalism skills to see behind the hype.

"There will always be a thirst for well-researched information and good storytelling that evokes a sense of place," she says. "Bloggers offer bite-sized chunks of information, here today, gone tomorrow. A good writer creates a narrative that keeps the reader searching."

## \$500

Amount charged  
for an Instagram  
post with 70,000  
followers



MAKSYM YEMELIANOV / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

# From fact to fiction

## Lynne Wallis on the ways to make dreams of writing a bestseller a reality

**A**ny journalist who harbours a desire to write fiction knows how the old gag goes. Two journalists in a bar. One says to the other: 'Have you started your novel yet?' 'Yes, is the reply. "Neither have I," comes the response.

Getting a novel published is the stuff of dreams, and the path is well trodden. Journalists from Charles Dickens and Ernest Hemingway to Val McDermid and former Guardian/Observer columnist Michael Frayn have turned to fiction. Those working in journalism can create their own worlds instead of (or perhaps as well as) covering real life events.

Novelist Sandra Ireland, a former reporter on local papers in Scotland, whose third novel *Bone Deep* has just been published, believes journalists are well placed to write fiction. "For a start, they have unrivalled access to news stories, contacts and real life material that the novelist can only dream of," she says. "All fiction starts with the truth, so journalists really do have a head start. And they already know how to write for dramatic effect." Ireland regularly uses news stories from papers as a source of inspiration for her novels.

Journalists must be succinct and engaging, know how to

check facts, work to deadline and deliver a good-quality product to specification. Ireland adds: "They have to understand prevailing trends and the needs of the marketplace, which are also vital qualities for the fiction writer."

Ireland, who runs the Chasing Time creative writing workshops with two other writers in Angus in Scotland, points out that delivering a gigantic beast of 100,000 words over months or even years requires a huge change of attitude for journalists who are more used to hitting 'send' after 1,500 words. Word count alone can be a major barrier to journalists, believes Ireland. "To sustain a narrative for a novel requires a certain type of mindset. It's necessary to slow the pace, to drip feed information to the reader. The journalist has to learn to pull back, to omit and conceal in order to ramp up the suspense, which is the very antithesis of journalism".

The watchword of good fiction writing – 'show, don't tell' – can be a challenge for those who have been trained to place hard-hitting facts in front of the reader. "The narrative in a novel must play out over a sustained period of time. Emotions must be explored and characters fully fleshed out," explains Ireland. "I enjoyed reporting, but I had to fight the urge to elaborate unnecessarily on my stories. I was fascinated by the people I interviewed and would often add quirky background to my copy – I was building a story, writing 'creative non fiction', which is a way of delivering the

### George Orwell

was a polemic journalist, famous for saying 'Journalism is printing what someone else does not want printed: everything else is public relations.' His most celebrated works are *Nineteen Eighty Four* and *Animal Farm*, written in the 1940s.

EVERETT COLLECTION HISTORICAL



### Graham Greene

is best known for his novels *The Third Man*, *Brighton Rock* and *The End of The Affair*. He wrote from the 1930s through to the 1980s. He was previously a reporter on *The Nottingham Journal* and a subeditor at *The Times*.

PAKO MERA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



### AN Wilson

is a newspaper columnist and writer of both novels and non fiction. He has published 20 novels, most famously *Scandal* in 1987, which was inspired by the Profumo affair.

WENN RIGHTS LTD / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



### Joan Didion

is a memoirist, journalist and novelist, best known for literary journalism. Her novels, written from the 1960s to the present day, explore moral and cultural chaos, the eradication of the individual and the fragmentation of society in the US.



# fiction

facts using all the techniques of novel writing. I realised after a while that the path I firmly wished to take was fiction. I enjoy the freedom of expression that comes with novel writing – I would now find it hard to return to reporting.”

Journalists such as Andrew Marr, Stieg Larsson and Robert Harris have, according to bookseller and author James Whitworth, produced “some of the most engaging, deliciously dark and just downright readable thrillers of the past years”, not least because they seem to “excel at strongly plotted thrillers with the immediacy of a page one headline”.

Journalists who have switched to fiction commonly talk of the huge emotional commitment that writing a novel commands, especially a first novel. Some acknowledge the ‘creative hump’ they have to get over to get a first attempt at fiction into shape – journalists can find the idea that they have a licence to ‘literally make stuff up’ alien to them. Others, says Whitworth, find they are short of the huge reserves of intellectual stamina needed to avoid ‘plot holes’ and make characters convincing. Some find harnessing the imagination to summon up ideas on demand can be difficult.

There are practical considerations too. For those reliant on journalism to pay the bills, a big barrier is finding the time. Journalist and soon to be published novelist Dawn Geddes, who writes fiction aimed at young adults, says it is difficult to convince partners and relatives that novel-writing as an

“  
Journalists can  
find the idea  
that they have  
a licence to  
‘literally make  
stuff up’  
alien to them  
”

add-on to a day job is serious. She advises: “Don’t expect others to understand how important your creative writing is to you. When you’re writing, whatever it is, you’re working so, if a neighbour comes round demanding coffee, you have to lay it on the line. If you let people interrupt you, they will always do it. You don’t owe it to anyone to justify this time – it’s yours – but you have to protect it.”

Geddes says time management is everything for those trying to write creatively in their spare time: “You have to ask yourself painful questions, such as: are you watching *Mad Men* for too long? If you are writing news or features all day, make the distinction between that and your creative writing by using a laptop for the novel and a PC for the day job. This kind of things really helps.” She also recommends using apps such as Forest to minimise time spent on mobile phones; the Cold Turkey app blocks all social media sightings and noises.

Kimberley Young, publisher of commercial women’s fiction at HarperCollins, has former documentary maker Dawn O’Porter on her books, as well as Lauren Weisberger who wrote *The Devil Wears Prada*. “Journalists and novelists are always looking for a story, but they are also reflecting on what is going on in the world – novels are just a longer form of story telling. Journalists, however, bring something unique because they already write to deadline and with discipline. The struggle for many is with plot – they just write and write about their characters, but find they can’t link it all together. Then they bring it off, but they have to realise that they can’t just do it once as if it were a feature – they have to do it all 10 times over for each chapter. They also have to learn that they need to divulge information through dialogue, not narrative.

“The most important skill they can bring is that they are better placed than anyone how to tell an awful lot in very few words. Then it’s the old-fashioned stuff they know about – how to write a good opening, maintain through the middle and deliver a good pay-off at the end.”

## Charles Dickens

was an established reporter covering law and politics and other topics before setting up his own weekly magazine. The most celebrated writer of the Victorian era, he was most prolific between about 1830 and 1850.

ANNEMARIE SMITH



## Sandra Ireland

is a former newspaper journalist and one of Scotland’s emerging thriller writers. Her second novel, *Bone Deep*, published last year, is about the unearthing of secrets. Her third novel is coming out later this year.

## Val McDermid

is a former Manchester Evening News crime reviewer and an award-winning crime writer. She wrote *The Mermaids Singing* and a host of other hits. Her work was made into TV series *Wire In The Blood*. She has been writing novels for about 30 years.



## Martin Amis

is a novelist, essayist, memoirist and screenwriter. His best-known novels are *Money* (1984) and *London Fields* (1989). He is also a prolific newspaper and magazine literary critic.

MEDIA PUNCH INC / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

HI-STORY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

PAKO MERA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

# SLOW NEWS GROWS FAST

Detail and research are the hallmarks of 'slow journalism', says **Rachel Broady**

**O**nline news can be overwhelming. You calmly log on to look for a story about the US shutdown and find yourself reading accusations of fake news, then you encounter listicles (articles in the form of lists) of celebrities who spoke out against Trump or slideshows of Trump's rallies. Then you realise you're reading about the top 10 most popular presidents or an advertorial for trips to Washington, and you keep stumbling across the same stories in different publications ... Trying to find news can feel like a high-speed chase.

'Slow journalism' is a global trend and involves more than writing longer pieces – it is about challenging problems created by free online news. The internet is accelerating journalism, putting increasing demands on journalists to find content that is fast to produce and attention-grabbing, amid concerns about clickbait, churnalism and uncorroborated, repeated stories. Slow journalism emerged as a response to this. It does not mean getting to stories late but instead taking time to research and resisting the urge to be the first to break the news.

Publishers define and defend it in various ways. Tortoise, cofounded by former head of BBC News James Harding and due to be launched fully soon. It is intended to provide "news

that reflects the way we really are and shapes the world we want to live in". Delayed Gratification, the world's first slow journalism publication, which was launched in the UK in January 2011, says it "revisits the news after the dust has settled to give the final analysis on the stories that matter". Aeon, a not-for-profit publication, promises "no ads, no paywall, no clickbait – just thought-provoking ideas from the world's leading thinkers, free to all". In Europe, the Dutch Correspondent boasts "ad-free journalism that helps you understand the world better" and the Finnish Long Play says it wants to "publish the best possible journalism" to "increase the readers' understanding of the world".

Inspiration for the approach comes in part from the Slow Food Movement, which educated consumers about where their food came from and how it was produced. Ultimately, by investing in journalism, demanding quality and accuracy above speed, and focusing on stories rather than chasing advertising or a desire to shape the news agenda, advocates of slow journalism believe it can create business models and tackle some problems faced by journalism, journalists and news consumers.

In a book on slow journalism, Dr Megan Le Masurier. A former journalist and now a senior lecturer at the University of Sydney, argues that news consumers need to know how the work is produced, if staff are paid fairly and whether the media organisation is environmentally responsible.

She says: "The pressures on journalists to produce more and more quickly has accelerated in the digital 21st century. We have always had inaccuracy and a lack of fact checking but this is getting worse, especially with social media driving and competing with stories. Churnalism – stories driven by PR and spin and wire services – is rife. As is plagiarism. And now we have fake news; more than wrong information, fake news is deliberately inaccurate, designed to a particular ideological end.

"I don't believe journalism will slow down or stop being driven by profit and thus competition. There is a possibility that, with education that people need to pay for their journalism – which they did until some dumb organisations started providing news for free online – forms of slow journalism could be supported financially and become more pervasive and popular."

Rob Orchard and Marcus Webb are the cofounders and joint editors of Delayed Gratification, which is proving to be successful in terms of popularity and income. The company, based in London, was dreamt up after the pair had worked as travel writers for Time Out in Dubai. On returning to the UK in 2017, having had limited access to social media, they were amazed at its impact on the UK news cycle.

Orchard says: "When we left for Dubai, you could read a paper in the morning, watch the news in the evening and consider yourself all caught up but, when we returned, it felt like news was breaking every hour or so and nobody was following in the wake, piecing together what it all meant."

Meanwhile, Tortoise shares the same concerns. Built on the ideas of 'open journalism' first discussed by Alan Rusbridger during his time as editor of The Guardian, its website argues: "We are overwhelmed by information. The problem isn't just fake news or junk news, because there's a lot that's good – it's just that there's so much of it, and so much of it is the same."

Slow journalism, in wanting consumers to know where news comes from and how it is produced, also aims to consider the working approaches and conditions of



journalists. A new venture in the US called The Correspondent intends to push this further. Le Masurier says: "They are trying to put into practice one of the slow principles – of the journalist laying bare their processes for readers to see. They don't believe in objectivity, so the journalist is open to any biases. They also want readers to be part of the research process and the initiation of story ideas, saying that 100 people know more than one journalist."

Open journalism is nothing new – journalists have long sought varied voices and challenged inaccuracies with varying rates of success. As Orchard explains: "Slow journalism is simply quality journalism produced at a slower pace. There's absolutely nothing wrong with fast journalism, with reporters on the ground getting news stories. We couldn't do slow journalism without journalists breaking news. On the whole, journalists do an exceptional job in tough circumstances for little money and it's rare that we follow up a story and find wild inaccuracies. It tends to be more a case of telling what happens next."

Many slow journalism publishers proudly point out that advertising takes a back seat to high-quality journalism, so funding has to be found elsewhere. Delayed Gratification, a quarterly print magazine, is reader-funded with no advertising or advertorials; it costs £12 per issue or £32 for an annual subscription and boasts a readership of 36,000. Tortoise, meanwhile, with cofounders former Dow Jones president Katie Vanneck-Smith and former US ambassador to the UK Matthew Barzun, is part financed by Bernie Mensah, the president of Bank of America's Europe, Middle East and Africa business, alongside Local Globe tech investor Saul Klein and a further two anonymous supporters. Tortoise also raised over £500,000 in a Kickstarter campaign and pledges from 2,530 backers. La Masurier explains that the producers of Long Play in Finland were unpaid until winning awards attracted more financial support. Correspondent in the Netherlands started out with crowdfunding and Delayed Gratification has always paid its contributors and also generates income from training.

Orchard says: "Slow journalism – and all good journalism –

## Fast forward

**In less than a decade,** slow journalism has grown from a single publication in London to others across Europe, the US, Australia and Canada.

Delayed Gratification kicked off the genre, which is now finding new journalistic approaches, developing different business models, challenging news delivery and seeking to tell stories that go untold in the blur of modern media.

Europe is home to a number of publications, including L'Ora del Pellice and Il Salto in Italy. The latter, established with crowdfunding, was set up to challenge modern journalism,

which it asserts is "framed by strong economic and financial interests on the one hand, and the 'do-it-yourself' approach that leads to the proliferation of so called fake news on the other".

The Sprawl in Calgary, Canada, is crowdfunded in part, ad free and pop-up - it is working with the Calgary Public Library on a pop-up newsroom. It carries out in-depth research into local stories rather than break news.

Another online effort, which engages social media, is seeing Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Paul Salopek on a 21,000-mile journey to trace the

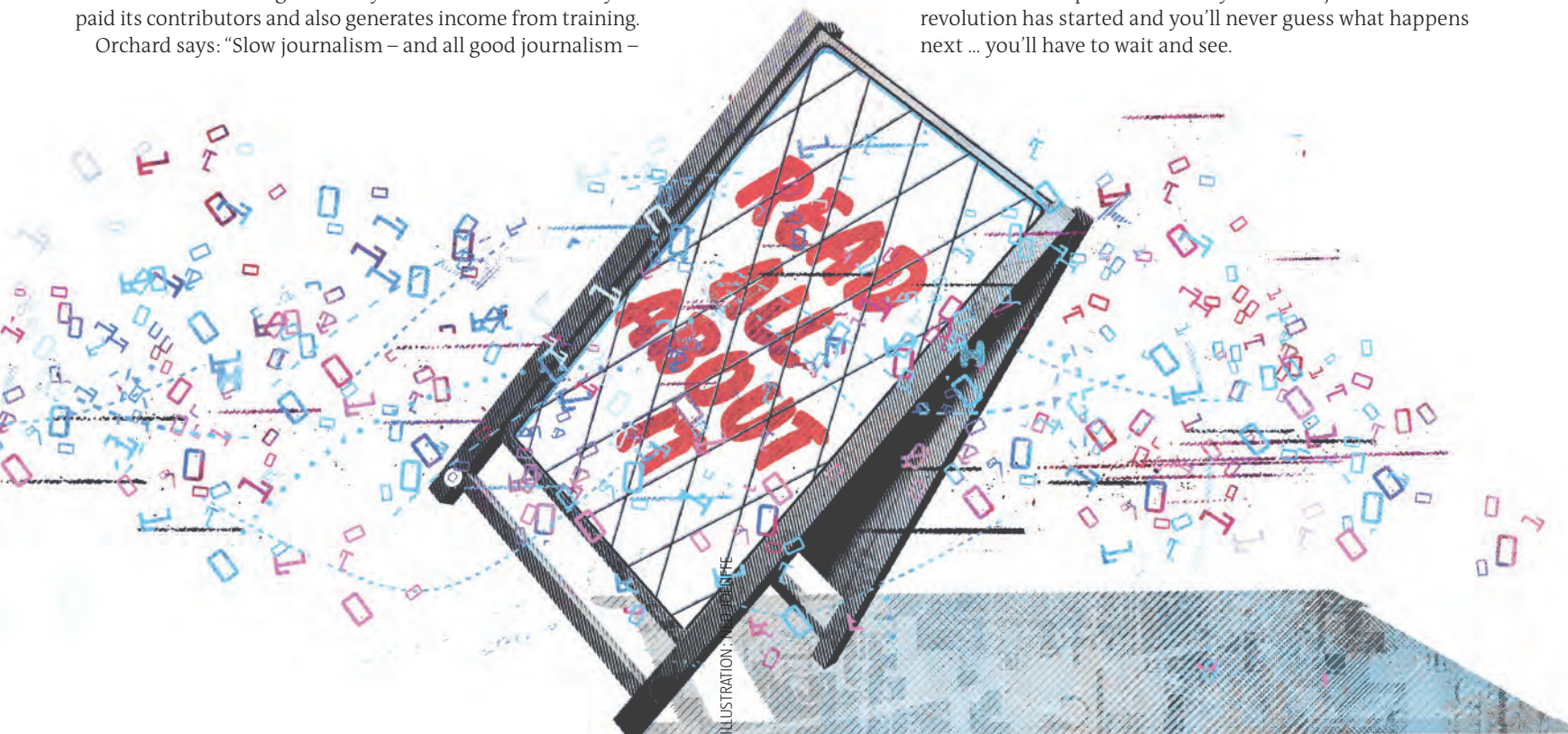
migration of our global ancestors for National Geographic. The endeavour, described as a decade-long experiment in slow journalism, requests donations to fund the storytelling.

In Australia, ABC is reaching remote communities by spending time building contacts to gain trust, rather than sweeping in on the back of breaking news. The channel says its stories "would not have been told without this slow journalism approach, because reporters are usually time constrained and tied to the news cycle".

Without doubt, the popularity of slow journalism is picking up speed across the globe.

challenges churnalism simply by being original, well-researched and fact-checked work. It's not necessarily the case that people who are lured by clickbait wouldn't buy a slow journalism magazine, but certainly our readers appreciate an alternative to the online news landscape, where the battle for readers' eyeballs can leave readers feeling overwhelmed and exhausted."

Slow journalism perhaps sets itself a large challenge in wanting to test new business models, reporting approaches and ways to share news with consumers, in an increasingly volatile and competitive industry. The slow journalism revolution has started and you'll never guess what happens next ... you'll have to wait and see.



# Not once in a blue moon

**Jonathan Sale** spots man-bats on the moon in one of the biggest hoaxes in newspaper history

**T**he biggest story of the day – not to mention week, month, year, decade, century or indeed ever – was the discovery of unicorns. On the moon.

Also revealed by the seven-ton telescope of the world's leading astronomer, Sir John Herschel, were lunar beavers that strolled about on two legs and, unlike their earthly cousins, had mastered the art of using fire. Best of all were the winged humans, males and voluptuously unclad females, flapping about over the forests, rivers and ravines of the earth's nearest neighbour. These 'man-bats' were so scientifically authentic that they even had a Latin name – *Vespertilio-homo*. All this must have been true because there were pictures – at least woodcuts – to prove it. Furthermore, it was in the Sun.

The New York Sun, that is. Unbeknownst to the more credulous citizens of North America, April Fool's Day came late in 1835; that is, the sensational issue did not hit the newsstands until August 25. Probably the creation of editor Richard Adams Locke, the lunar, not to say lunatic, hoax was widely believed; after all, the source it quoted for these highly detailed reports was the learned Edinburgh Journal of Science.

Even the doubters were among the fascinated readers who besieged the Sun's office for copies containing this most bogus of stories and continued to do so on subsequent days when the paper wrote follow-ups. Missionaries pondered over the logistics of distributing bibles to the (presumably literate) flying humanoid. The circulation of the recently launched, downmarket paper soared to well above 19,000 copies, at the time the highest not only in New York but also the world.

The earth's lunar neighbour does seem to attract the lunatic fringe. Conspiracy theorists denounced the moon landing of 1969 as a fake perpetrated by Stanley Kubrick, who was given the credit of forging the entire event; apparently,



the director was being blackmailed by the CIA over his Communist brother Raul. (This story first surfaced in a 'humor.alt' newsgroup, which the flat-earthers should have spotted as a clue. Plus Kubrick didn't have a brother named Raul.)

A serious (and seriously derided) Fox TV programme, 'Did we land on the moon?', answered its question with a short 'no' on the grounds that

Neil Armstrong's moonwalk was faked so the US could claim to have won the space race.

In other words, a hoax in 1835 about man-bats on the moon was accepted as the truth, while an actual event about real men on the moon was dismissed as a hoax.

Given the outpouring of fake news today, it is hard for an April 1 jest to stand out in the same way now as in 1835. Nearly every year, I confidently identify as a made-up yarn what turns out to be a genuine news item, while accepting as fact some fantasy made up by a joker on a newsdesk.

It was therefore intriguing to come across The New York Sun's glorious sci-fi fib. Being an anniversary obsessive, I contacted the paper to ask how it was going to commemorate the 175th birthday of its hilarious hoax. The Sunny staffers admitted that the anniversary had slipped their minds but instantly made up for this by banging out an editorial (the only one I have ever inspired).

This was no apology. It was, as the paper put it in the heading, 'Correction?': "It is suggested by a reader" – this meant me, presumably – "that the 175th anniversary of what is called by competing newspapers The Sun's great moon 'hoax' would be an apt moment to issue a long overdue correction. Our correspondent" – that's me again

## A hoaxter's guide to the moon

**In its two years of existence, The New York Sun** had never published anything like it. Nor had any other newspaper paper in the world – or indeed elsewhere in this solar system or in fact any other where alien life-forms gather to pour over the first editions of the daily papers. On newsdesks all over the Crab Nebula, they still talk reverently of what became known in this and other galaxies as the Great Moon Hoax on Mother Earth.

August 1835 editions of the New York Sun were full of what were claimed to be exclusive extracts from a scientific magazine with convincing state-of-the-art woodcuts of lunar life.

Some 19th-century thinkers, such as Rev Thomas Dick, held that the universe contained trillions of inhabitants, 14 billion (give or take) of them on the moon, all owing their existence, of course, to the Christian God. The trouble was that no one

had seen these god-fearing moonies.

Then the British astronomer Sir John Herschel invested in a new telescope with, according to The New York Sun, a 42,000x magnification. What he saw in the eyepiece was literally out of this world: talking 'man-bats' and beavers that had discovered fire. Or was the newspaper just taking the mick out of Thomas Dick? And where was Sir John when he was needed to verify his quotes?



# Looking back to: 1835

– “writes in respect of a series of stories ... often attributed to a plot hatched in our circulation department.”

Being as fallible as the next

journalist, I am in no position to demand a reverse ferret from any other hacks. And no ferret was reversed. As the quotation marks round ‘hoax’ confirmed, the editorial clearly meant, again, it was no such thing.

The Sun was playing hardball: “Well, we say, let them laugh ... One of the things a long newspaper life has taught us about corrections is that, obligatory as they may be when the truth is out, one doesn’t want to rush into them. For the moment, let us just say that we’re aware of the claim that there are no lunar man-bats, neither on the moon nor here. Rest assured that we’re looking into it.” The editorial concluded that a further quarter-century of research should sort things out.

The moon mania provided much entertainment. It was much sunnier than Orson Welles’s convincing radio broadcast about a Martian invasion in 1938. Based on *The War of the Worlds* by HG Wells, this work of fiction caused so much terror among American listeners they had to be reassured it was not real. Or did it? To add to the confusion, the alleged mass panic has itself been declared a myth.

However, the Sun’s hoax was a matter of fascination not fear. The stunt contained its own autodestructive clues clearly intended to blow it up sooner or later. The *Edinburgh Journal of Science*, quoted as the source of Herschel’s lunar bombshells, no longer came out. Sir John’s absence on his researches in South Africa prevented him from instantly denying the whole farrago; he was amused by the affair but became rather tired of being quizzed.

Suspicious were raised by the fact that The New York Sun’s series was uncannily similar to a short story by Edgar Allan Poe about a balloonist who soars to the moon and back. A subtler objection was that the whole work could be read not as literal truth but as merely a satire on the work of one Rev Thomas Dick, a writer and scientist who had somehow worked out that the moon was home to four billion inhabitants, all created by the Christian God.

The penny – or cent – finally dropped: the readers’ legs had been pulled and they had been blinded by pseudoscience. The *Morning Herald* denounced The Sun’s discovery as an astronomical fraud and it was followed by other papers, which, after initially recycling the tale, declared that they did not believe a word of it either.

But what of the great telescope that would provide the evidence one way or the other? The Sun admitted that this 42,000x-magnification marvel was no more. So powerful were its lenses that the sun’s rays pouring through them had set fire to Herschel’s observatory. These things happen – or, as in this case, didn’t happen.





# Your Say...

inviting letters, comments, tweets



Please keep comments to 200 words maximum

Email to: [journalist@nuj.org.uk](mailto:journalist@nuj.org.uk)  
Post to: The Journalist, 72 Acton Street, London WC1X 9NB  
Tweet to: @mschrisbuckley

TIM ELLIS



## Do we need to change reporters' names?

In January, The Times carried a story headlined: 'Brutality of Mugabe era returns to Zimbabwe after fuel protests.'

It said "the crackdown has echoes of the darkest days of Robert Mugabe" and that President Mnangagwa was "forced to abandon an appearance at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland". It told a story about people being beaten with sjamboks.

At the end of the story was a note: "The correspondent's name has been changed to ensure his safety."

I bow to the opinion of journalists better qualified in law and the way of the African world in 2019 than myself but I wonder if this isn't a sad and worrying development.

If correspondents for The Times do not use their correct names because of concern about what might happen to them, how on earth are we to expect ordinary men and women or political leaders or NGO heads in Zimbabwe to speak out using their names?

And, if real names are not used, the Zimbabwean government has every right to question the validity of what is said and claimed. They can and will say: "Made-up names for made-up stories."

Almost all correspondents for British newspapers have some form of protection because they have close ties with the British embassy or high commission in the countries where they operate.

Local reporters have no such protection.

Name changing might be common practice (is it?) but it is the first time I have seen a newspaper with the prestige of The Times do this.

**Trevor Grundy**  
Whitstable

£30  
prize  
letter

## NUJ should check the statistics on closures

Raymond Snoddy repeats the claim that 300 local papers have closed in the past decade (Only tough action will keep local press afloat, December/January).

This stat has been doing the rounds since the BBC started reporting the issue a few years back on one of its excursions into the real world. But is it accurate? How many paid-for weekly or daily papers have closed? The only one that

springs to mind was the independently owned Oldham Chronicle in 2017.

I assume the 300 figure includes frees. Most frees lost their editorial staff 10-20 years ago and have since been filled mainly with editorial from the paid-fors. I know this because for 30 years I have been a reporter for the Southern Daily Echo and Hampshire Chronicle and the company's frees.

The repeating of 300 closures distorts the true picture of the still largely

profitable local press. The end is approaching but the pace of change is slower than most people would realise.

Perhaps the NUI should do some analysis. My guess is that at most only five per cent of the closures have been paid-fors.

**Andrew Napier**  
Southampton

Ray Snoddy says the total came from the Cairncross inquiry. It includes frees.

## Singing for your supper in the modern music press

I read the Dave Simpson feature about the music press that Dr Stephen Dorril recommended on last issue's letters' pages, and very entertaining it was. But – and this is a giant but – how many of the publications actually pay contributors, pay them fairly, on time, and without a worldwide rights grab as part of the deal? Not many, I'll wager.

I paid my way through university in the late 1970s/early 1980s by reviewing gigs and albums for NME, with the odd interview in between, for which I'm still hugely grateful to editor Neil Spencer and commissioning editor Graham Lock. By the time NME closed, I believe its rates were about the same as I was earning in 1981, when £50 for a review plus two free tickets to a gig or a free album seemed like a small fortune. Rates at many of the titles Simpson lauds are pretty much the same now, while others do not pay at all.

I love the rise in independent, niche magazines, and applaud the steps many of them are taking to be more inclusive. But let's not celebrate too hard. Many journalists of my generation learned their craft in the music press. It enabled me to stay in London after university, pay my rent and move into the nationals. I very much doubt that would be true now.

**Sheryl Garratt**  
London Freelance branch

## The TUC helped to shape the German trade unions

Denis McShane in his letter 'German model would have been better for our unions' links Paul Routledge to "a self-serving myth that Britain and the TUC somehow shaped the postwar German trade unions" (December/January). No he didn't because there is no myth.

The British TUC not only helped to shape the German trade union movement after the war but did so through recognising the problems with its own structure and the circumstances.

In 'The history of the TUC. 1868 to



1968', it says: "In 1945, even before the Nazis fell, the [UK] TUC was helping to re-establish effective union organisation in war-devastated Europe. The German union movement had been suppressed by Hitler and most leaders were annihilated. The general council was quick to respond to the call for advice in establishing the new German movement."

Not only that but "the Germans, freed from the hindrance of history and the problems of compromising between long-established unions, were able to build a model trade union movement reflecting the idea of one union for each major industry".

**Roy Jones**  
North Wales Coast branch

### Play ball on referring to rugby union or league

In Jonathan Sale's excellent article about the BBC's inaugural sports commentary you refer throughout to 'rugby'. There is no such sport as rugby, but two sports that use the name rugby in their titles: rugby union and rugby league (in this case, you meant rugby union).

Rugby union was the game of the establishment played in public schools and universities from which the mainly working class game of rugby league broke away in 1895. They have different rules and different numbers of players. Tennis would not be mistaken for badminton and, although newspapers such as the Daily

Telegraph and the Daily Mail routinely use 'rugby' as shorthand for rugby union, The Journalist should insist on accuracy. The BBC always distinguishes between the two these days.

It's important politically too. Rugby league people do not like being linked to rugby union, the major sport of both the apartheid regime in South Africa and the collaborationist Vichy regime in wartime France (rugby league was banned under both these governments). Rugby league, on the other hand, gave Britain its first black captain of any national sports team (Clive Sullivan) and its first black coach (Ellery Hanley).

**Michael O'Hare**  
Middlesex

### Where are the quality images in The Journalist?

I can't be the only one disappointed with the content of The Journalist magazine?

As a former full-time press photographer for over 20 years and former newspaper picture editor, I find myself constantly shaking my head whilst flicking through the magazine as the pictures are so poor. Last month's edition only had one page with two 'news' style images, one badly pixelated photo of Michelle Stanistreet and the other was badly exposed with half a head chopped off.

It seems the content budget has gone the way of local papers, all the money going on the copy and nothing on

## twitter feed

Tweet us your feedback: [@mschrisbuckley](https://twitter.com/mschrisbuckley)



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 **kieran dodds** @kierandodds  
Most insightful column I have read about journalism in ages. Outside the cosmopolitan media bubble "small-town journalists have a contact with people that bigger-time journalists rarely do" from The Journalist magazine. [@NUJofficial](https://twitter.com/NUJofficial) [@EvantheAirwave](https://twitter.com/EvantheAirwave) [@mschrisbuckley](https://twitter.com/mschrisbuckley)

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 **Charlie Lait** (@charlielait) 1/12/2018, 10:13  
Glad I actually sat down and read [@louisetickle](https://twitter.com/louisetickle)'s story in [@NUJofficial](https://twitter.com/NUJofficial) on #MeToo in media industry+what [@the2ndsource](https://twitter.com/the2ndsource) is doing to support victims.  
Grateful to those who spoke for the piece [@jennymco](https://twitter.com/jennymco) [@EleanorMills](https://twitter.com/EleanorMills) +especially Noelle Jarvis for bravely talking about her assault [pic.twitter.com/8xrvkPUFGd](https://pic.twitter.com/8xrvkPUFGd)

quality images. Using Alamy photos is a way of filling the pages, but big headshots make for a dull design.

Alamy had announced a few weeks before I received the magazine that they were cutting commissions and the NUJ had called for them to reconsider. There was no mention of that in the magazine although it would have seen photographers' Alamy income reduced by 20 per cent.

Nor was there much about Johnston Press which went into administration. That was the perfect opportunity to get someone to write a comment piece on the state of the industry.

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Nor was there much about Johnston Press which went into administration. That was the perfect opportunity to get someone to write a comment piece on the state of the industry.

The NUJ should be producing something better.

**Paul Jacobs**  
Gosport

*The content budget of The Journalist was last year cut by 15.6 per cent – equivalent to the total cost of one edition – because of renewed financial difficulties at the NUJ. Therefore, we cannot afford very much photography. The news photos you refer to are ©NUJ photos which were used on the website. You may not like big headshots but when a story is about an individual I'd argue they are entirely apposite.*

## STEVE BELL



A word on timings for two of your comments: the NUJ's response to the Alamy reduction in fees came after the magazine went to press; Johnston Press went into administration and was then bought by investors in mid November. With the immediate threat of closures and job losses having receded, attention turned to pension provision which was reported in the magazine which reached people mid December.

You suggest a comment piece on the 'state of the industry'. This is somewhat vague – comment pieces generally need more focus. We have many comment pieces about aspects of our industry. The last edition had one on the importance of regional papers, which was well received. Please see tweets on the opposite page.

**Christine Buckley**  
Editor

### A ray of winter sunshine

I really enjoyed the December/January issue of the NUJ magazine and can honestly say it's the first time in a long time that I've read every article. You

brought a little ray of sunshine to one poor old soul sitting patiently waiting to find out what the gods are going to do with his Johnston Press pension.

**Lawrence F Collins**  
**Alnwick**

### Huge fan of The Journalist

Thank you so much for The Journalist. I am a huge fan of the magazine, which is brilliant, and of you. The Journalist is beautifully written and reminds people how crucially important journalism is, particularly local newspapers which are the guardians of democracy. We must fight to save them.

**Jilly Cooper (author)**  
**Stroud**

### We should have a monthly magazine - I'd pay for that

When I relocated for work from Kent/London suburbia to Cumbria, one thing that slipped through the net was my edition of The Journalist.

As mid-December approached, I realised that it wouldn't be coming and hurriedly got in contact with the editor and the NUJ

for a copy. After all, it is the most regular privilege from paying my subs and I don't particularly want a four-month wait to read the insight it provides.

Since doing my NCTJ qualifications five and a half years ago, I've worked in four newsrooms and The Journalist has always popped up in a conversation.

Some say that as a bi-monthly its news is out of date and it should only focus on features and be more glossy. A couple would not mind it being even less regular. Others, such as myself, think it should be more regular, as that way it could do an even better job and provide up to date information and greater insight.

Good journalism has never been under greater threat. More people are becoming freelancers and some work from home in remote locations. The Journalist, the only publication of its kind, is a constant reminder they are not alone. If it meant a slight rise in the subs to make it monthly, I would happily accept.

**Luke Jarmyn**  
**Penrith**

### There should have been more space for Bob Norris

It's a pity you didn't have space for a decent obit of Bob Norris (last issue). The general secretary called him a 'union legend', which might have justified a fuller account of his career, for he was the most significant NUJ figure in the second half of the union's first century. Short of becoming general secretary himself, he held pretty much every job, covered all the ground, was known to everyone and never let anyone down. Hundreds of members will remember him kindly. Perhaps you could steer people to the lengthy page of stories and tributes at [www.nuj.org.uk/news/nuj-bob-norris/](http://www.nuj.org.uk/news/nuj-bob-norris/)

**Tim Gopsill**  
**London**

The same edition of The Journalist carried a full page about how Bob inspired the NUJ's work on dementia. It referred to the tributes to him and included his family's fundraising initiative: [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/bobnorris](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/bobnorris)

## obituaries

More obituaries at [www.nuj.org.uk](http://www.nuj.org.uk)



### Hugh McIlvanney

**Hugh McIlvanney OBE, who died in January aged 84, was for almost 60 years the best known and leading figure in sports writing.**

Hugh won many awards including British SportsWriter of the Year (seven times), Journalist of the Year in the British Press Awards and the Nat Fleischer Award by the American Boxing Writers' Association.

Hugh, who was a member of the NUJ until he retired three years ago, was born in Kilmarnock and grew up in a council house with three siblings including novelist William.

All the children were keen readers and Hugh's move into journalism began when, aged 16, he took part in an adults' debating

competition and came second. One of the judges was John Lyon, editor of the Kilmarnock Standard, and Hugh soon began work as a news reporter.

He went on to the Scottish Daily Express and The Scotsman. In 1963, he moved to the Observer, where he worked for 30 years with a year out at the Daily Express, covering news. He joined the Sunday Times in 1993 and retired in 2016.

Hugh had a high regard for and close relationship with boxer Muhammad Ali. It began when he interviewed Ali at length shortly after the boxer won the Rumble in the Jungle world heavyweight match in Zaire in 1974. After the match, Hugh had gone uninvited to Ali's villa outside Kinshasa in the early hours of the morning.

As documented in his 1997 BBC TV programme The Football Men, he also got on well with Jock Stein, Bill Shanky and Matt Busby. Later, he helped to write Sir Alex Ferguson's first autobiography.

His children Conn and arriage survive him, as does Caroline, his third wife.



### Ian Benfield

**My father Ian Michael Benfield (Bunter) passed away peacefully in his sleep in December in Felixstowe after a debilitating two years with vascular dementia.**

Ian was born in Bingley, Yorkshire, in 1934 and was the last surviving member of his Yorkshire family of three brothers and a sister. He was educated at Bingley grammar school and still had friends and fond memories from there.

Ian married Effie in 1958 with whom he had me and my sisters Anne and Jane. He had seven grandchildren and six great grandchildren. After several heart operations, Effie sadly passed away in 1997.

Ian was fortunate to find a second wife in Mary from Felixstowe in 2000. He and Mary spent several years travelling together before Mary was taken from him by a brain tumour in 2013.

Ian worked on several provincial papers including the Yorkshire Post, Telegraph and Argus, Birmingham Post and the Nuneaton Tribune, before moving to Suffolk in 1969 to join the East Anglian Daily Times. From here, he finally made it to Fleet Street, commuting regularly to work for Express group newspapers and News International.

A keen golfer, he was a member of Felixstowe and Rushmere golf clubs. Although he had a collection of more than 100 clubs, his handicap never fell much below 20. He always enjoyed the exercise and cherished the many friends he met while playing the game.

His real passion was cricket – a game he played as a boy and as a young man. He was a member of Essex county cricket club and travelled to watch them.

**Guy Benfield**



**Raymond Snoddy** notes major missed issues amid useful ideas

# Two cheers for Dame Frances...at best

**I**f just one of Dame Frances Cairncross's nine modest proposals to sustain high-quality news is implemented, she will not have laboured in vain.

The proposal is the extension of the VAT exemption enjoyed by the printed press to their electronic versions and electronic-only publications.

It's an obvious anomaly and a judge has already ruled that there is no real difference between print and electronic publication, but legislation would be needed to make the VAT change.

It's no great shiny thing but would be worth about £200 million a year to the industry – hardly transformational but certainly helpful. If it ever happens.

Culture secretary Jeremy Wright says he is prepared to discuss this and raise it with colleagues responsible for tax policy. The modest proposal therefore has a degree of political support.

However, in the midst of Brexit chaos, it is difficult to see the Treasury volunteering to hand over £200 million a year to the newspaper industry.

Another recommendation that is more likely to happen is an inquiry by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) into the operation of the digital advertising market.

An inquiry – one that the CMA was thinking of doing anyway – might indeed be launched. Naturally, culture secretary Wright was willing to sign up for that one.

The best hope is that the Cairncross Review might be a catalyst for some sort of useful change some time in the future. But don't hold your breath.

The trouble is the review sidestepped the main cause of harm, which is the near total dominance of the tech giants over digital advertising. There was no

sign of what many publishers wanted – a levy on advertising or on overall revenues of the social media groups to fund what Cairncross calls 'public interest news'.

Also missing was any recommendation to have social media billionaires officially designated as publishers. This would make them responsible for their content and do something to even up the heavily unbalanced scales.

Instead, Cairncross proposes a code of conduct to 'rebalance the relationship' between online platforms and publishers, with oversight from an unnamed regulator. If that oversight doesn't work, the unnamed regulator could have unspecified sanctions.

Amid the vagueness are two useful ideas.

The government should launch a fund focused on innovation to improve the supply of public interest news. It should have £10 million a year for the next four years and 'work closely with Google and Facebook'.

For some reason Dame Frances can't quite bring herself to say the obvious – that the money should come from social media groups.

The fund – if it ever happens – should be administered by a new, independent Institute for Public Interest News which would act as a sort of Arts Council for news.

This body would coordinate the efforts of many groups and organisations, including the BBC-funded Local Reporting News Service, a service that should be expanded.

It is surprising that Dame Frances, an economist as well as a journalist, does not display greater clarity on how such an institute should be funded. Money, or more properly the lack of it, is at the heart of the problem with the Cairncross Review.

She does a thorough but hardly unexpected job of analysing the crisis facing legacy media and public interest journalism, particularly local papers.

Alas, when it comes to solutions, Dame Frances falters and fails to state unambiguously that this should be a case of the abusers paying up. Codes of conduct fall a long way short.

It's a case of two cheers for the work of Dame Frances Cairncross – at best.



**// The trouble is the review sidestepped the main cause of harm, which is the near total dominance of the tech giants over digital advertising //**

 For the latest updates from Raymond Snoddy on Twitter follow @raymondsnoddy

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Some of the best things to see and do with a bit of political bite

For listings email: [arts@NUJ.org.uk](mailto:arts@NUJ.org.uk)

## Theatre

### You can't move for Miller!



**At the last count, five productions of Arthur Miller's plays were running or about to run in London.**

So why the revival? Is it because it's the 70th anniversary of Death of a Salesman? Fifty years since his works were banned in the Soviet Union? Or just that his plays are as relevant today as they were when they were written?

Controversy and politics – both big 'P' and little 'p' – are never far away in Miller's work. Whether it's war, bank-inspired financial ruin or a witch hunt, it does not take a huge leap of imagination to transport the issues of 20th century America to 21st century Britain.

The Crucible, Miller's account of the 1692 Salem witch trials written during the 'red scare', is often described as the ultimate post-truth play. Is it also the ultimate post-fact play?

The Yard Theatre's promotional material boasts "A story from the past brought crashing into the present, a world in which lies and truth are indistinguishable" – £350 million a week for the NHS, anyone?

It's a bold step to cast a woman (as yet unannounced) as troubled and tragic farmer John Proctor, but

one that will undoubtedly shift the focus of the play.

Both The Price and The American Clock look at the consequences of the Great Depression.

The Price focuses on two brothers (David Suchet and Brendan Coyle) being reunited after 16 years of estrangement while The American Clock features the once-wealthy Baum family who are forced to move from Manhattan to live with relatives in Brooklyn. Clarke Peters (The Wire) and Sule Rimi (Sweat) share the role of businessman Arthur Robertson.

Another Wire star, Wendell Pierce, makes his UK stage debut as fantasist Willy Loman in Death of a Salesman with director Marianne Elliott looking at the tragedy through the eyes of an African-American family.

Last but not least, Bill Pullman and Sally Field star in All My Sons, a Greek-style tragedy about past crimes coming back to haunt successful suburban businessman Joe Keller.

If you're in London at any stage during the next few months, surely it's Miller time?

[www.oldvictheatre.com](http://www.oldvictheatre.com)  
[theyardtheatre.co.uk](http://theyardtheatre.co.uk)  
[www.youngvic.org](http://www.youngvic.org)  
[www.wyndhamstheatre.co.uk](http://www.wyndhamstheatre.co.uk)



by **Tim Lezard**

## Exhibition

**Can Marketing Save Lives?**

Museum of Brands, London  
Until 26 May

Dig for Victory, Measles is Misery, Don't Die of Ignorance – these campaigns have frightened, inspired and educated the British public over the years.

They all feature in this exhibition of historical posters, TV commercials and objects that span a century of public health marketing. See how many you can remember.

[www.museumofbrands.com](http://www.museumofbrands.com)



## Theatre

**Carrying David**  
On tour

Dramatised by NUJ member Ed Waugh, this 'County Durham Rocky' tells the tale of how TV pundit Glenn McCrory became a boxing world champion.

It also looks at the love between two brothers, one fighting for boxing fame, the other fighting for his life.

[www.facebook.com/carryingdavid/](http://www.facebook.com/carryingdavid/)



## Books

**The Suspect**  
Fiona Barton

Journalist Kate Waters, who has not seen her son for two years since he left home to go travelling, gets emotionally involved writing stories about two 18-year-old women who go missing in Thailand. It is described as a 'twisting psychological suspense about every parent's worst nightmare'.

<http://tinyurl.com/ycyle4ol>

## Queenie

**Candice Carty-Williams**

This is a novel about Queenie Jenkins, a 25-year-old Jamaican British woman who works for a national newspaper where she is constantly forced to compare herself to her white middle class peers.

It is an examination of a society in which she straddles two cultures but slots into neither.

<http://tinyurl.com/ybb4z9qz>

## Slumboy from the Golden City

**Paul Joseph**

Activist Paul Joseph's political awakening began as a 15-year-old Indian in a racially segregated school in 1930s Johannesburg. It continued with his commitment to the fight against apartheid and led him to take part in virtually every political campaign since.

Joseph, who now lives in north London, gives accounts of being held in detention following the Sharpeville Massacre, being placed under house arrest and being tried for treason alongside Nelson Mandela. An astonishing historical read.

<http://tinyurl.com/y989hb9a>

## The Man Who Shook His Fist at the Tsar

**Jack Robertson**

Longstanding NUJ member Jack Robertson offers a new translation of one of the most influential works of Russian literature, Alexander Pushkin's epic poem, the Bronze Horseman.

In this new version, Robertson paints Pushkin as a serious historian who gave voice to Russian radicals.

<http://tinyurl.com/y8dlyf6y>



## Comedy

**The Guilty Feminist****On tour**

Deborah Frances-White hits the road to record her podcast in front of a live audience.

Be badly behaved in the audience as she explains how she feels guilty at not being a very good feminist.

<https://deborahfrances-white.com>

**Mark Thomas****On tour**

Mark Thomas is 54, the NHS is 70, and national average life expectancy in the UK is 84.

If Mark makes it to 84, the NHS will be 100 – what will they both look like?

Based on a series of interviews with experts on and within the NHS, Mark uses his own demise to explore the state we're in.

<https://markthomasinfo.co.uk>

## Film

**Loro 1****Released 12 April**

This comedy – comedy, not biopic – by director and social critic Paolo Sorrentino about Silvio Berlusconi and politician-bribing escorts is merely the first half of the drama.

It was released in Italy last April; the sequel, Loro 2, was shown in May. The first part grossed €4 million in one day – this is our chance to see what the fuss is about.

**At Eternity's Gate****Released March 29**

Shot in France in places where Vincent Van Gogh lived, this film stars Willem Dafoe as the tortured painter as he enters his last days

## Music and spoken word

## Remarkable, ordinary lives

**TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady and Beast of Bolsover Dennis Skinner MP are just two of the star performers on Robb Johnson's latest opus, Ordinary Giants.**

The triple album about the life and times of Johnson's father, Ron, also includes contributions from Roy Bailey, Maddy Carty, Alan Clayton, Matthew Crampton, Tracey Curtis, Claire Martin, Rory McLeod, Phil Odgers, Tom Robinson, Fae Simon, Justin Sullivan, Miranda Sykes, Bobby Valentino, Steve White – and the children of Hertford Infants School,

where Johnson worked as a reception teacher.

His previous song suite, Gentle Men, used the biographies of his grandfathers to explore the First World War and its consequences. This was hailed as a 'folk classic' by Robin Denselow in the Guardian, with Billy Bragg considering it "a wonderful mixture of the political and the personal".

Ordinary Giants consists of more than 50 songs and spoken word pieces, looking at Ron's life, recounting how as a young man he volunteered for the RAF to fight against fascism and, after the war,



dedicated his life to state education.

With his chronicle of unremarked yet remarkable lives, lived by ordinary people through extraordinary times, and a celebration of their aspirations, endurance and achievements. Johnson records a funny, moving and, above all, fitting musical tribute to his father and his times.

[www.irregularrecords.co.uk](http://www.irregularrecords.co.uk)

at the age of just 37. More of a personal reimagining than historical account, Julian Schnabel's film is earning rave reviews.

[www.ateternitysgate-film.com](http://www.ateternitysgate-film.com)

## Music

**Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott****20 and 21 June Edgeley Park, Stockport**

The former Housemartins vocalist and Beautiful South duo are playing consecutive nights at Stockport County FC.

Support comes from former Pulp guitarist Richard Hawley. There aren't many tickets left, so you'd better hurry up.

<https://t.co/ZMZXHYHDZcm>

**Cork International Choral Festival 1-5 May**

One of Europe's premier international choral festivals, this event welcomes choirs from across the world for a programme of gala concerts, schools' concerts, competitions and world-class performances. This is, I'm sure we can agree, something to sing about.

[www.corkchoral.ie](http://www.corkchoral.ie)

**Sleaford Mods/Liines March, April, May On tour**

A brilliant double-bill of shouty bands. Nottingham electro-punks Sleaford Mods take all-women Manchester post-punks Liines on tour.

Both bands are very exciting live, so I'm in no way clutching at straws when I say Liines have been

compared to London-based Desperate Journalist.

<https://sleaford-mods.myshopify.com/pages/home>

## Television

**MotherFatherSon****BBC 2**

This eight-part drama, scheduled to hit our screens

later this year, looks at the workings of one of the most powerful families in the world who, naturally enough,

own a UK newspaper.

Richard Gere (in his first major TV role) plays a self-made American businessman, Helen McCrory plays his estranged wife and Billy Howle plays their son who actually runs the newspaper. Nothing like the Murdochs, then.



## Performance

## Curtains raised at union HQ's theatre

**London's newest venue is very close to home for the NUJ. As a matter of fact, it IS in the NUJ's home.**

Run by the Workers' Beer Company, the team behind the award-winning Bread and Roses Theatre in the

Clapham, the newly founded Chapel Playhouse is in the basement of the NUJ's HQ at Headland House.

A wide range of theatre, comedy – Shappi Khorsandi and Mark Dolan are two of the names to feature – and

cabaret is promised ... and all within five minutes' walk from London's King's Cross station.

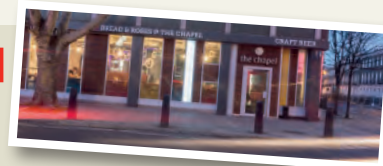
NUJ general secretary Michelle Stanistreet said: "Having the team at Bread and Roses is a brilliant

opportunity to create a space that attracts NUJ members and the wider journalistic community, but also acts as a hub for other trade unionists.

"I'm a strong believer that opening up the buildings that trade unions inhabit, and using them for

cultural and social gatherings is a great way of showcasing what we do to the many prospective members out there who have yet to join our movement."

[www.chapelplayhouse.co.uk](http://www.chapelplayhouse.co.uk)



and finally...

## Venturing into the gladiators' arena

### Chris Proctor gets confrontational

**I** was woken the other morning by a loud argument. This is not unprecedented in our block of flats, but the dispute was on the radio. Nick Robinson was doing battle with Michael Gove.

They were arguing about whose turn it was.

Robinson was outraged. "You keep talking over me," he wailed, which did appear a trifle pot-black-kettle-calling. Saddened, he declared that, in the old days, the system was that the interviewer asked a question and then the guest replied.

Actually, that hasn't been true since television went colour and wirellesses stopped needing valves. Before then, you can find BBC folk introducing the prime minister with the words, "so what do you have to tell us, prime minister?", remaining mute until the premier concluded his words of wisdom and then thanking him for coming.

Modern, thrusting interviewers take a different approach. The greeting has become a thinly disguised, "So what are you lying to us about today, you snivelling untrustworthy little hypocrite?"

A few moments are allowed for the interviewee to clear her throat before the derisive snorts come.

"So where are you going to find the money?"

"Two sources: an increase in ..."

"And how are you going to pay for it?"

"We have planned ..."

"If you're not going to answer a direct question, why did you bother to come onto the programme?"

"You asked me."

"There's always someone to blame, isn't there? All right, you've got six seconds remaining. Can you explain the government's fiscal policies, outline your approach to religious bigotry and comment on the expanding universe theory?"

"I think it might take a bit longer ..."

"I wanted a straight 'yes' or 'no', but we're getting nowhere. I'll have to cut you off there while we move on to a story about a five-legged dachshund with bunions."

Andrew Marr went a step further when he was chatting to Shami Chakrabarti and she said she didn't know if he was a democrat.

"Don't try and patronise me," he snapped, headmasterishly. The baroness assured him of two

things: "I certainly wouldn't try to patronise you, and I'm sure you would never try and patronise me." They both nodded. And their noses grew longer.

Probing interview questions have included Eddie Mair asking Boris Johnson, "You're a nasty piece of work, aren't you?" which, I have to concede – despite where my sympathies lie – is a tough one to answer. Then Andrew Neil came up with the innovation of continuing the argument long after the red light has gone out. After coming second in a discussion with journalist Carole Cadwalladr, he tweeted that she was 'a mad cat woman'. Which she is not.

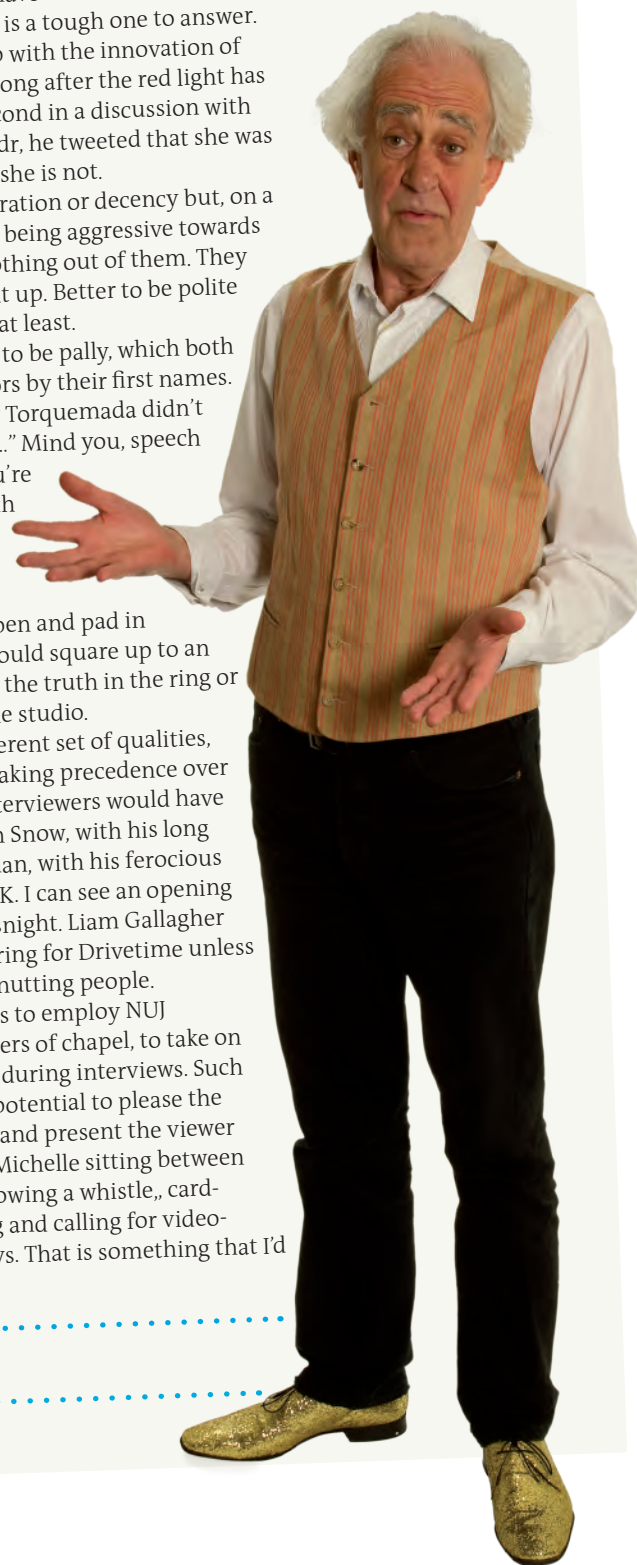
I hold no brief for moderation or decency but, on a practical basis, if you start being aggressive towards an interviewee, you get nothing out of them. They don't like you, so they shut up. Better to be polite – until your last question at least.

It's no good pretending to be pally, which both sides do, calling tormentors by their first names. Heretics facing Inquisitor Torquemada didn't start with, "Well, Tommy ..." Mind you, speech is at a premium when you're hanging upside down with your head in a bucket.

Alternatively, we could all adopt the 'shouty shouty' model. Leaving pen and pad in the changing room, we could square up to an interviewee and slog out the truth in the ring or the alley at the side of the studio.

It would require a different set of qualities, with physical presence taking precedence over sharp intellect. Many interviewers would have to go, but the likes of Jon Snow, with his long reach, and Jeremy Paxman, with his ferocious appearance, would be OK. I can see an opening for Joey Barton on Newsnight. Liam Gallagher could be worth considering for Drivetime unless Sara Cox could pick up nutting people.

My favoured option is to employ NUJ members, ideally mothers of chapel, to take on formal refereeing roles during interviews. Such an innovation has the potential to please the public, boost numbers and present the viewer with the vision of our Michelle sitting between Robinson and Gove, blowing a whistle, card-waving, finger-wagging and calling for video-assistant referee replays. That is something that I'd get out of bed for..





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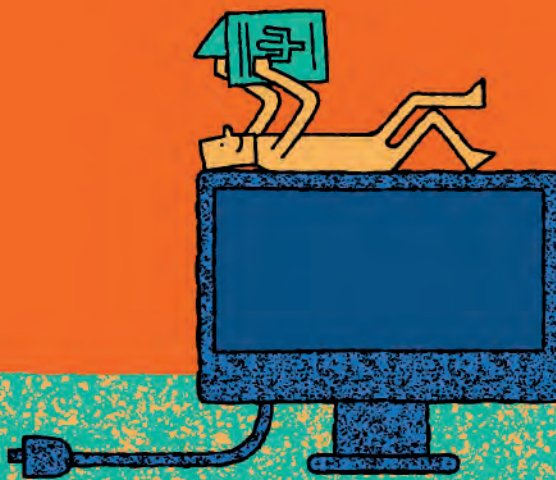
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