

# the Journalist

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## DANGEROUS WORK

The mental health risks of journalism



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**S**afety has been on all our minds over the past year amid the pandemic. But while the coronavirus threat is thankfully receding at the moment, there are many other risks that journalists face on a daily basis.

The demands of an exacting, deadline-driven job which can involve dealing with traumatic news events take their toll on mental health as our cover feature by Samir Jeraj explores.

And increasingly journalists are facing physical and verbal intimidation for just doing their jobs as Neil Merrick reports in his feature. We also have a report from the TUC's women's conference on an NUJ motion about the spiralling abuse of women journalists.

Help is hopefully at hand to tackle intimidation after the creation of a government-launched national plan for the safety of journalists. The NUJ contributed to the drafting of the plan and will help monitor how journalists are protected in the future.

In the wake of Piers Morgan's resignation, Raymond Snoddy looks at other high-profile departures and the reasons behind them.

And on a lighter note now Spring is here, our regular media anniversary feature looks at the rise of the weather forecasters.

Wishing everyone a return to more normal life. Stay safe.

Christine

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Gary Neill



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# 400 jobs moving out of London in BBC shake-up

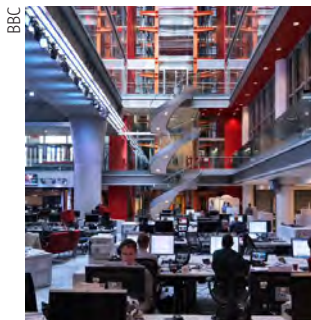
**THE BBC** is shifting 400 roles out of London including whole specialist teams in one of the biggest changes to its structure. 150 jobs will be scrapped rather than moved out of the capital.

The cuts are part of 520 job losses across news that were announced last year and part of a £800 million savings package across the BBC. News is being asked to save £85 million.

Teams covering the environment, technology, and education, will move to Leeds, Cardiff, Glasgow, and Birmingham.

Daytime programmes on Radio 1, Radio 2, and 1Xtra will be broadcast from elsewhere in the UK.

Radio 3's leadership team will go to Salford along with a



number of 6Music's staff.

A third of Radio 4's Today programme will broadcast outside London. Newsnight and Radio 4's PM will also regularly go to other regions.

The proportion of the TV budget spent outside London will increase from 50 per cent to 60 per cent in the next seven years.

Some specialists have voiced doubts about the

moves, raising expectations that there could be a series of high-profile departures.

There are plans to create 56 new roles mostly in digital and because some programmes will be regularly broadcast from outside London.

Paul Siegert, NUJ national broadcasting organiser, said: "We welcome more diversity and creating more content out of London is a good thing, as is extra investment in apprenticeships. However, it's strange that at the same time the BBC is talking about the importance of getting out of London and investing in the regions as a means of better serving the audience, it has also axed 450 posts in English regions and cut £25 million from that budget."



**Teams covering the environment, technology and education will move to Leeds, Cardiff, Glasgow and Birmingham**

## inbrief...

### RECORD COMPLAINTS OVER PIERS MORGAN

Two episodes of Good Morning Britain in which Piers Morgan made comments about the Duchess of Sussex's interview with Oprah Winfrey that led to him quitting the show, have attracted the most complaints to the TV regulator ever. Ofcom said the episodes triggered 57,121 complaints, surpassing the previous record of 44,500.

### FACEBOOK FACES LAWSUIT IN FRANCE

Reporters Without Borders, the freedom of expression campaign group, has filed a lawsuit against Facebook in France. It claims that the platform is not providing the 'safe' online space that it promises for journalists and the public.

### BURSARIES ON OFFER AT THE GUARDIAN

The Guardian Foundation is offering bursaries for aspiring journalists to study for an MA in journalism. The awards aim to help those who face financial difficulty in studying, and those from backgrounds that are under-represented in the media. The application deadline is May 22. See <https://workforus.theguardian.com>

## Plan to ensure journalists' safety

**THE NUJ** has welcomed a national safety plan for journalists which was launched by the Government in response to the growing intimidation of reporters, photographers and other media workers. The National Committee for the Safety of Journalists'

plan sets out a range of measures designed to ensure freelance and staff journalists are protected and supported. It also calls on social media platforms to do more to stamp out online abuse, and on the criminal justice system to ensure those who

attack and threaten journalists are brought to justice.

A survey of NUJ members last year found that more than half of respondents had experienced online abuse and nearly a quarter had been physically assaulted or attacked.

## Delegate meeting deadline

**UNION** branches have until May 14 to put late notice motions to the postponed delegate meeting, which is being held online on May 21 and 2. Late notice motions are to enable the agenda, which was finalised early last year, to be updated.

The union's national executive council (NEC) is asking delegates to approve an increase in subscriptions after failing to achieve an increase at the last delegate meeting in April 2018. The proposed increases range

from 6.6 per cent to 12 per cent depending on members' incomes.

Many of the motions in the agenda are already being implemented because there was no opposition from the NEC.



### International drive on Belarus

More than 50 leaders of journalists' unions and associations across Europe have written to European governments and heads of state to express their deep concerns about the intensification of the repression of journalists in Belarus. The initiative was organised by the European Federation of Journalists to mark Freedom Day in Belarus on March 25. There are currently 12 journalists in jail in Belarus and since the elections, which were held last August 2020 some 480 journalists have been detained.



# From Brixton to Black Lives Matter: international resistance to racism



**INTERNATIONAL** speakers came together to mark the UN’s anti-racism day in a webinar organised by the NUJ’s black members’ council, *writes Marc Wadsworth*. They included a senior broadcasting executive from South Africa, a Jamaican newspaper editor and a leading American civil rights lawyer.

The 40 Years of Resistance: From the Brixton Uprisings to Black Lives Matter event heard from Pan Africanist Congress of Azania activist Lindiwe Tsele, aged 86, who recounted what happened in 1960 in Sharpeville, South Africa, when at least 69 mainly young black protesters were shot dead by police.

The protesters were peacefully demonstrating against a law that forced them to carry identity cards because they were black. “Many of them were shot in the back when they were fleeing the scene,” said Tsele. “Apartheid was an evil form of white supremacy used to oppress black people in their own country.”

Johannesburg-based broadcaster Jacqui Hlongwane spoke about her late mother, Jane Hlongwane, who was general secretary of the Steel Engineering and Allied Workers’ Union and a Black Consciousness Movement activist, and growing up in apartheid South Africa: “As black children, we had to go to a different school and even a separate swimming pool.”

Hlongwane wanted to make a difference by working in the media. After graduating from Witswaterand – “a top South African university” – she got a job at a television station, where she became programme manager. However, she noted: “Since 1994, we have had black majority rule but the privileged white minority population are doing a lot better than black people.”

Grassroots Black Left activist Sophia Mangera, born in South Africa and politically active in Lewisham from her teens, spoke about the racist activity of the National Front that culminated in the 1981 New Cross fire in which 13 young black people were massacred. The huge Black People’s Day of Action march resulted. Police failed to find the murderers.

Weekly Gleaner editor George Ruddock said The Voice, a British black national newspaper, was founded a year after the Brixton disturbances of 1981.

Justice4Grenfell campaign co-ordinator Yvette Williams backed US speaker Vanita Banks, who answered a question by NUJ national executive council member Natasha Hirst. Hirst asked what white people could do to give solidarity to black people.

Participants felt the establishment of a sustainable anti-racist movement that would be a fitting tribute to fallen heroes should be explored. They were keen the incredible Black Lives Matter momentum should not be lost.



**As black children, we had to go to a different school and even a separate swimming pool**

*Jacqui Hlongwane*

## Rusbridger quits Irish media commission

**ALAN RUSBRIDGER**, a former editor of The Guardian, has left his role on Ireland’s Future of the Media Commission. This followed controversy

arising over his employment of a columnist who, it emerged, had supported the IRA. Roy Greenslade, a former senior editor at The Sunday

Times, The Sun and the Daily Mirror, recently revealed that he had supported the IRA’s use of violence during the Troubles and had

concealed the fact to protect his employment. Rusbridger said he was leaving the commission so as not to distract from its work.

Greenslade, a seasoned media commentator, left his role as honorary visiting professor of journalism at City, University of London, in March after his support for the IRA was made known.

# Scan here if you care about journalism.



**Journalists' Charity**  
Supporting journalists nationwide

# Reach closes newsrooms in radical homeworking move

**REACH**, the publisher of the Mirror, Express and Star and more than 100 regional news titles, is closing most of its newsrooms and moving most staff permanently to largely home working. Only about a quarter of its employees will be required to work exclusively in the office even when the pandemic has receded.

The move follows a survey of Reach staff which found that 82 per cent thought they did not need to be physically with colleagues to carry out their work.

Reach said there would be no redundancies in the shake-up and that homeworking would reduce costs and help protect the future of its publications.

Chris Morley, the NUJ's Reach coordinator, said: "There have been some advantages for companies and many employees in terms of better use of time, quicker communications and reshaping of work-life balance. For others,

there have been real difficulties that require help and support – so listening to individuals and their circumstances will be important.

"We should also not lose sight of the important symbol that the physical presence of media companies has for local communities – something recognised by the NUJ's news recovery plan."

Reach intends to operate 15 'hubs', where some staff – mainly in production – will work and others can hold meetings. These will be in Belfast, Bristol, Birmingham, Dublin, Cardiff,

Glasgow, Hull, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Oldham, Newcastle, Nottingham, Plymouth and another location in the south east.

Mark Johnson, Reach NUJ group chapel chair, said: "This is a massive project and our members will have lots to consider and say about the proposals. A one size fits all solution probably wouldn't be the best way and we appreciate that the company is stressing it will listen carefully to individual circumstances."



**There have been advantages for companies and many employees. For others, there have been real difficulties**

**Chris Morley  
NUJ's Reach coordinator**

## inbrief...

### TELEGRAPH PLANS TO LINK CLICKS WITH PAY

The Daily Telegraph wants to link some elements of journalists' pay to the popularity of their work. An email to staff from editor Chris Evans said that the paper wanted to use a system that graded reports and features by factors such as how many subscriptions they drive and how many clicks they get to link performance to reward.

### SHEFFIELD STAR WINS ON DIVERSITY

The Sheffield Star won top place in the Diversity and Inclusion category at the NCTJ Awards for Excellence after making 'huge strides in working towards a diverse workforce' over the past year, which enabled the paper 'to reach communities which have not previously engaged with local journalists'.

### ALDRIDGE TAKES ON SUNDAY EDITOR ROLE

Mirror deputy editor Gemma Aldridge has been appointed editor of the Sunday Mirror and Sunday People. She succeeds Paul Henderson, who left in December as part of a restructuring. Aldridge remains deputy editor of the Mirror alongside Tom Carlin and Paul Cockerton.

## NI Assembly seeks press input

**THE NORTHERN** Ireland Assembly's All-Party Group on Press Freedom and Media Sustainability has invited industry stakeholders to submit evidence on the impact of the pandemic and

their views on the long-term sustainability of media organisations.

The NUJ has been involved in establishing this new group and is encouraging NUJ members who live and work

in Northern Ireland to respond to the consultation.

Media workers and outlets across the industry are encouraged to submit written evidence about their experiences and views on the

long-term viability of the local media and how the government can help.

The call for evidence will help to inform a recovery plan that will aim to ensure local media outlets survive not just beyond the coronavirus crisis but also far into the future.

## Union condemns Bloody Sunday reporting ban

**THE NUJ** has condemned a decision to ban the media from reporting the opening statements and all witness statements in the case of Soldier F in the Bloody Sunday murder inquiry.

Soldier F is the only ex-British army paratrooper facing murder charges arising from the killings of 13 civilians in the Bogside area of Londonderry on January 30 1972.

At a preliminary hearing, as well as confirming that the anonymity put in place last year would continue, District Judge Ted Magill banned the reporting. He said that it was a question of law.

Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary, said the ruling went against the principle of open justice and the need for the criminal justice system to operate in public and be subject to public scrutiny.

## DMGT buys New Scientist magazine

Daily Mail and General Trust (DMGT), publisher of the Daily Mail, has acquired New Scientist magazine in a £70 million deal. It is thought that DMGT, which also owns the i and Metro, has guaranteed the 65-year-old title's editorial independence and has ruled out job cuts and the sharing of editorial content. The publisher said the acquisition was part of its strategy to boost its revenue through greater subscriptions and digital capabilities.

New Scientist employs about 80 staff, including 40 journalists.





# TUC supports women journalists over 'highly damaging' abuse

**THE TUC's** women's conference has passed an emergency NUJ motion on the spiralling abuse of female journalists.

The NUJ highlighted the cases of Northern Ireland reporter Patricia Devlin, who was subjected to threats including graffiti of her name against the crosshairs of a gun and Nadine White (see story on the opposite page), who was smeared online by government minister Kemi Badenoch for asking a question on a story.

The motion said: "Such attacks not only harm the individuals concerned but also normalise and legitimise the harassment of journalists at work, which is highly damaging to the critical role that journalism plays in our democracy."

Natasha Hirst, chair of the NUJ's equality council, called on other unions for support in pushing for each recommendation to be implemented.

She said: "We all know that abuse thrives behind closed doors. It thrives when people choose to look away. It thrives when we do not actively challenge it. This is why I am a trade unionist.

"Collectively, we bring solidarity and action to challenge gender-based violence in all of its forms. So, sisters, let's use our voices to drown out the trolls and the abusers and take action to make it stop."

Hirst told the conference that female writers are self-censoring

and withdrawing from online spaces because of abuse.

Trade unionists representing members in schools, shops and hospitals described the level of abuse many women experience during their working lives.



The conference heard how domestic abuse has increased under the Covid-19 restrictions, of the stubborn statistic that on average a woman is killed by a man every three days and other findings outlined in the 2019 Femicide report.

Natasha said: "Online abuse of journalists is highly gendered and is a form of discrimination and violence against women. It's intersectional too, with black women journalists being especially targeted."

She said that, as female colleagues are being forced to withdraw from online platforms, all our rights, freedoms and opportunities are compromised when that journalist's voice is silenced.

The TUC's women's committee agreed to express solidarity with women journalists and lobby for greater sanctions against the perpetrators of abuse.

NUJ general secretary Michelle Stanistreet has played a key role on the government and industry's National Committee for the Safety of Journalists, and an action plan containing powerful recommendations to tackle violence, abuse and harassment of journalists in the UK.



**Online abuse of journalists is highly gendered and is a form of discrimination and violence against women**

**Natasha Hirst**  
**NUJ equality council**

## Call to improve equality at work

**TOUGHER** laws are needed to improve employment equality, particularly as women have borne the brunt of the economic impact of the pandemic, Sara Lewis, vice-chair of the NUJ's equality council told

the TUC's women's conference. Lewis highlighted the proposed EU directive on pay transparency, quoting European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen who said that "for

equal pay, you need transparency". That is why the NUJ, unlike the government, had supported Stella Creasy's private member's bill to end the shameful situation where six out of 10 working

women do not know if they are paid less than their male counterparts, she said.

Lewis said the Equal Pay Act needed strengthening because there are too few sanctions for breaches.

She said: "The three-month time limit to bring a claim to an employment tribunal is a huge barrier to

justice. This needs to change.

"As the #MeToo movement has clearly shown, it can take a long time for women to report incidents. The NUJ also has evidence of employers delaying internal investigations, deliberately putting victims outside the time limit."

## Female Afghan TV workers killed

**THE NUJ** has joined the condemnation of the killers of three female journalists from Afghanistan's Enikass TV. They were shot by unknown gunmen in two attacks as they attempted to return home from work in March.

Mursal Wahidi, Sadia Sadat and Shahnaz Roofi, who worked in Enikass TV's dubbing division, were gunned down in different locations in the eastern city of Jalalabad in Nangarhar province. The murders are the latest

in a string of targeted attacks on media workers with the backdrop of US-brokered attempts to negotiate an end to the country's civil war.

Enikass had earlier informed Afghanistan's national intelligence agency about threats to its staff. The International Federation of Journalists and its affiliate the Afghan Independent Journalists' Association called for urgent measures to improve the safety of media workers in the country.



GHULAMJULAH HABIBI/EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK

# Majority of members feel stressed by pandemic

**MORE** than half of NUJ members have been concerned about their mental health during the pandemic, according to a survey.

Many members found that juggling work during the coronavirus restrictions caused stress and anxiety.

They said feelings of isolation, anxiety about losing their jobs, symptoms of long Covid and higher workloads led to depression and insomnia. Juggling childcare, home schooling and getting work done was taking its toll, with 45 per cent saying they had problems coping.

Almost three-quarters (72 per cent) said there had been redundancies and 85 per cent believed the continuing crisis would lead to further job cuts.

Some 61 per cent said their income had been affected by the pandemic, with 13 per cent losing all their income and 35.5 per cent earning less than half. One in six freelancers said their work had decreased sharply or dried up completely, with 13 per cent saying their work had increased or there had been little impact.



Compared with last spring, fewer editorial staff were on furlough – 14 per cent compared to 45 per cent. However, some staff at JPI Media have been off work since April.

Some of those working from home said employers made few or no allowances for coping with home schooling. Some had been encouraged to take holidays or unpaid leave to look after their children.

The survey, which had 840 respondents, was carried out between the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021.

**Strains of stress, pages 14-15**



**Almost three-quarters said there had been redundancies and 85 per cent believed the continuing crisis would lead to further job cuts**

## inbrief...

### REVENUE AT REACH DROPS 14.6 PER CENT

Reach, publisher of the Mirror, Express and Star and many regional titles, reported a 14.6 per cent fall in revenue for last year to £600.2 million and an adjusted operating profit of £133.8 million (down 12.8 per cent). It had an adjusted operating profit margin of 22.3 per cent, up from 21.8 per cent, and a net cash balance of £42 million.

### FIRST WOMAN EDITOR OF FT'S THE BANKER

The FT's The Banker magazine has a female editor for the first time in its 95-year history. Joy Macknight has succeeded Brian Caplen who retired after 18 years in the role. She joined The Banker in 2015 as transaction banking and technology editor and was then promoted to deputy editor and managing editor.

### FIELDING AND GIGGS RECEIVE DAMAGES

Noel Fielding and Rhodri Giggs, Ryan Giggs' estranged brother, have accepted 'substantial damages' from the publisher of the News of the World over phone hacking. A solicitor said Fielding thought articles published in 2006-2010 contained private information.

## Third of LGBT+ members harassed at work

**ALMOST** one-third (29 per cent) of NUJ members surveyed during February's LGBT+ History month said they had experienced bullying, harassment, ill treatment or discrimination

at work because of their sexuality or gender identity.

Colleagues were the worst perpetrators, followed by senior managers; one in 10 said an interviewee had been discriminatory or bullying.

However, almost 70 per cent said their workplace was an inclusive, safe space to be open about their sexuality. Just under half (49 per cent) said the same about gender identity.

Two-thirds had not experienced any workplace policies denying them equal access to employment rights or workplace benefits.

There were 284 respondents to the survey.

## NUJ Extra extends Covid help

**NUJ EXTRA**, the union's welfare charity, has started a third wave of support for members who have suffered financially as a result of Covid-19 and lockdowns.

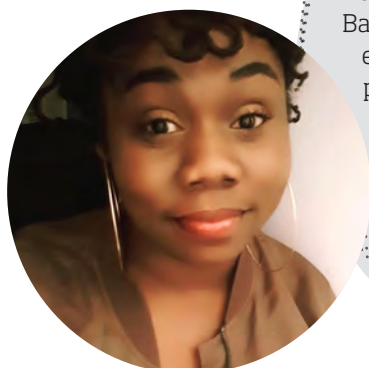
It has committed to helping with funding until restrictions are due to end on June 21.

Members should contact NUJ Extra using the form on the website (a paper version

is available). It doesn't matter whether or not you have claimed before.

If you are claiming for the first time and would have benefited from previous support, your payment will be backdated.

NUJ Extra trustees are concerned that members may be unaware of the scheme or feel they do not deserve it.



### Nadine White goes to the independent

Huffpost reporter Nadine White has been appointed the first race correspondent for The Independent. White experienced a large amount of online abuse after equalities minister Kemi Badenoch tweeted screenshots of the reporter's emails asking why the minister hadn't taken part in a video encouraging ethnic minorities to get the Covid-19 vaccine. It is thought to be the first time a news organisation has appointed a correspondent specifically focused on race. The Independent said it wanted to increase its coverage of issues affecting the lives of people of colour.





## Moscow raises the temperature amid pandemic



### Pressure on foreign reporters in Russia has been growing, says **James Rodgers**



**T**he pandemic has sparked the latest flashpoint between the Kremlin and Moscow's foreign press corps.

The race to create and distribute vaccines has become a matter not just of public health but also national pride. The Sputnik V vaccine has been Russia's representative in the competition for perceived scientific supremacy (and commercial gain).

Because that competition has played out in the international media, Moscow correspondents have been dragged in.

"That's where we in particular have felt most pressure – in our reporting of both the development of the vaccine and its distribution around the world," says a news editor for a major international media organisation. "In fact, on that latter subject, we have come under a good deal of official pressure."

A foreign reporter based in Russia agrees: "The Russian authorities are increasingly sensitive to criticism on a wide range of topics from the coronavirus pandemic to human rights."

The history of the treatment of western correspondents in Russia is also the history of Russia's relations with the west. Today, those relations, especially

with the UK, continue to sour. The distrust and disapproval are mutual.

"The growing anti-western rhetoric in Russia makes reporting from here challenging," says the reporter. "The portrayal of the West in the Russian state media as waging some kind of campaign to undermine Moscow means that western journalists are often viewed here, wrongly, as having an anti-Russia agenda – simply not the case."

In at least one case, journalists have been threatened with prosecution. Take the sensitive issue of the Soviet victory in World War II – sensitive as it has become a cornerstone of President Vladimir Putin's idea of Russia as a great and courageous nation, capable of withstanding threats of invasion from the west.

Even today, journalists mention the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact – a non-aggression agreement reached between Stalin's Soviet Union and Hitler's Germany in 1939 – at their peril.

"I once had somebody send to me on WhatsApp, statutes from the Russian Criminal Code when we'd written something that they didn't like," one long-serving western correspondent in Moscow told me in an interview for my book, *Assignment Moscow: Reporting*

on Russia from Lenin to Putin. That something related to the Soviet role in the war. "Any kind of suggestion that their World War II record is not spotless is badly received here."

The approach taken when the Western media raises questions about Russian or Soviet narratives has evolved since the Cold War. The Kremlin has gone on the offensive.

As Dmitri Trenin, the director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, put it in his 2016 essay, *Should We Fear Russia?* "Rather than hushing up criticism of Russia and its leaders, which the Soviet Union practised all the time, the Russian state-run media attack this criticism immediately, head-on, and seek to demolish the western story."

Matthew Chance has reported from Moscow for CNN since the late 1990s.

His experience in the latter part of his time there tends to confirm that. "We're seen more as hostile actors in their world," he told me. "It translates into the way we're spoken to, into the access we've got, which is negligible, and just the general climate of distrust of the foreign media that is cultivated by the authorities and by pro-Russian outlets."

The way the *Financial Times* and the *New York Times* reported Russia's coronavirus death toll is a case in point. Although the papers based their stories on data released by officials in Moscow, in May last year, the Russian foreign ministry dismissed the reporting as 'anti-Russia allegations'.

"These publications are incorrect, biased and provide an unacceptably lopsided picture," said ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova (pictured), although she stopped short of acting on suggestions from some Russian parliamentarians that the two papers be stripped of their accreditation.

In all this, there is good news for today's Moscow correspondents. They may be offered negligible access, but their work does get read at the highest level – and taken seriously. Why else would the Russian state media try to 'demolish' their stories?

**James Rodgers completed postings in Moscow for Reuters TV and the BBC during the 1990s and 2000s. Assignment Moscow: Reporting on Russia from Lenin to Putin, is published by IB Tauris**

**That's where we have felt most pressure – in our reporting of both the development of the vaccine and its distribution around the world**



# Ethics should be at the centre of journalism



A charity is working to make this happen, says **David Hencke**

**I**n an age of fake news and when the distinction between professional journalists and bloggers is becoming blurred, the ethics of publishing information are becoming increasingly important.

How do journalists distinguish between fact and fiction, comment and reporting? Does the internet foster a greater exchange of views or confirm people's prejudices in their own silos?

Thirty years ago, it was much simpler. Print newspapers and TV were the gatekeepers – if professional journalists didn't report or comment about something, it didn't exist in the public mind. The main issue then was the conglomeration of media power within fewer and fewer hands.

Then there was a short, liberating period with the spread of the internet when anyone could say and report what they wanted. Citizen journalism exploded on the scene and traditional mainstream media was put on the defensive.

Now we have the worst of all worlds. Mainstream media is owned by oligarchs, hedge funds and powerful individuals. Social media is dominated by the duopoly of Facebook and Google which are so powerful that whether you are the president of the United States or a nation state like Australia, the owners can silence you with one keystroke.

In this day and age, ethics have been reduced to an algorithm – your moral compass is whether what you write leads to mass acceptance or bombs without trace. Fact or fake, it matters not.

That is why the Ethical Journalism

Network (EJN), a small charity operating at both national and international levels, is so very important in this very dangerous, difficult age.

On the international stage media is under threat, whether it is the 119 journalists murdered by corrupt politicians or drug cartels in Mexico or censorship of the free press in Hong Kong or Hungary.

The charity is being revamped. It has a very ambitious agenda and plans to reach out to schools and universities as well as to working journalists and photographers. It holds webinars with experts to address the reporting of controversial issues, whether domestic abuse, the science of Covid 19 or the power of internet moguls in the information age.

I am one member of the 20-strong UK national committee of journalists and academics that is drawing up a programme which, if successful, could make journalistic ethics mainstream rather than a side issue or an option.

The charity has signed up with Speakers for Schools so its members can go out and talk to young people about being a journalist and working for media organisations. They can discuss issues such as fake news and how to distinguish it from fact-based news as well as how to source and rate information from the internet.

The charity also wants to work with universities that run journalism courses. The EJN is asking the 75 UK journalism course providers whether they include any teaching on ethics and, if they do, what this includes. The ultimate aim is to create a national

ethics module or, more ambitiously, a book alongside Essential Law for Journalists.

Another issue that the EJN is highlighting (in a series of online panels) is the highly controversial question of regulating social media. Should it be self-regulating, should it be regulated by national governments or should the giants of social media set up proper accountability mechanisms? And, since it is an international issue, is there a role for the UN?

Since it is such a huge subject, the possibilities for bringing the issue of ethics into journalism are endless.

The diverse EJN committee is buzzing with ideas. I am keen to link with the Migration Museum - the UK's first museum celebrating the diversity of migration – to debate the coverage of this issue, which can be extremely toxic.

Or there is another toxic issue – reporting racism – including everything from Black Lives Matter and the so-called 'woke' culture to the government's defence of what it believes is British history and culture.

The charity is going to set up an international committee that will deal with the problems and ethical issues journalists face when reporting abroad.

Without doubt, there is a real need for journalism, from mainstream media to the individual blogger, to regain the trust of the general public. That can be done only with a proper grounding in ethics. Without it, all that is left is propaganda, fake news and a culture of mutual distrust and hate.

<https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org>

**“ Ethics are reduced to an algorithm. Your moral compass is whether what you write leads to mass acceptance or bombs. Fact or fake, it matters not ”**

# Liverpool

**Ruth Addicott** asks journalists what it's like to live and work in Liverpool

**A**

s sports editor at the Liverpool Echo, David Prentice has an enviable patch, including two of the most successful clubs in English football, Everton and Liverpool. He has been

to the Olympic Games, World Cup Finals, Grand Nationals and covered all kinds of stories from relegation battles to Liverpool's European Cup triumph in 2005.

"I'm not sure I would have had as many sporting career opportunities writing in any other provincial city," he says. "It's my dream job."

For a sports journalist, Liverpool has plenty to offer.

"The national newspapers always want quality writers with innate knowledge of the city and its teams," says Prentice. "Former Echo sports writers like Brian Reade, Tony Barrett, Chris Bascombe, Paul Joyce, Dominic King and Andy Hunter have all gone on to enjoy successful careers nationally."

Born "a goal-kick from Goodison Park", Prentice has lived in Merseyside all his life and worked at the Daily Post and Echo since 1987. He began his career on weeklies, including the Formby Times, Southport Visiter, Crosby Herald and Bootle Times.

While the weekly print titles have almost all closed and the Daily Post ceased publishing in 2013, he says the Echo is now employing more sports journalists than ever because of its online reach.

He talks about the changes at The Echo in his book *A Grand Old Team to Report*, which recounts his journey following Everton as a fan, then as a reporter.

"In 1990, the Liverpool Echo sold 200,000 copies of a printed newspaper every day and editions rolled off the

printing presses in Old Hall Street at 11.30am, 12pm, 12.30pm, 2pm and finally at 3.30pm," he says. "You could get a good story overnight and still preserve its exclusivity until the paper hit the streets the following day."

"In 2020, pre-coronavirus lockdown when football matches were still being played every three or four days, barely 30,000 copies of the Liverpool Echo were being printed. But, crucially, the Echo attracted more than two million readers to its website every single day, with 900,000 readers alone clicking sports stories. If there was a big match that night, you could effectively double those figures. These were stories that could be uploaded within seconds of having been created."

Aside from the pandemic and potential further cuts, the challenges for journalists are the increasing barriers and levels of control put up by football clubs, and online abuse as a result of their higher profile on social media.

The Echo's building in St Paul's Square, off Old Hall Street, is also home to Liverpool FC's official match day programme and monthly magazine (published by Reach Sport) and other Liverpool FC books and publications. This Is Anfield is an Liverpool FC website.

Paul Salt, breakfast show presenter at BBC Radio Merseyside, also started out as a sports journalist. He began his career on Liverpool's commercial station Radio City and moved from sport into news and presenting, having covered stories such as the Louise Woodward trial, the Hillsborough verdicts and Liverpool's European successes.

Salt, originally from Stafford, moved to Liverpool 25 years ago.

"My main motivation for moving here was football," he says. "My dad is a Liverpool fan, I'm a Liverpool fan, so I tried to pick a university near Anfield."

One thing he likes about the city is its village feel. "I live in Crosby, about six miles from the city centre. I can be in town in 20 minutes but, when I come home, I don't feel close to work," he says. "We've got a beach, which everyone is amazed by, and very quickly you can be out of Liverpool and into the countryside. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else."

Stephanie Power, a freelance journalist, producer and



## Finding work

### Local news

Journalist and documentary maker Stephanie Power looked around her area and uncovered stories on John Lennon, The Beatles and Liverpool FC.

Power believes her audio abilities gave her a head start.

“I think it’s great to have audio skills. I’ve got my own studio and I’m self sufficient when it comes to making radio,” she says.

### Football

Liverpool Echo sports editor David Prentice says the internet has opened up opportunities for fans to generate and monetise their own content.

He says: “The Anfield Wrap, a Liverpool FC-themed podcast, which was launched

in 2011, now employs 11 people full time and attracts more than 80,000 listeners. There are Everton versions too – The Blue Room, Toffee TV and All Together Now.”

### Music

Elliot Ryder, editor of music magazine Bido Lito!, says the

city can be a good starting ground. “If you want to cut your teeth in music journalism, it’s perfect.

There are a lot of blogs and titles in Liverpool where you can get experience, get your feet on the ladder, then pitch to publications on a national scale,” he says.

## QUOTES

### Elliot Ryder, editor of music magazine Bido Lito!

“I’d say Liverpool is probably one of the best springboards to move to if you wanted to make your name at a title or arts organisation as a writer, curator or producer.”

### David Prentice, Liverpool Echo sports editor

“The greatest benefit of working on Merseyside is the readership. Football isn’t just a passion – it’s a religion, a way of life.”

### Stephanie Power, reporter and producer

“People will talk to you and, as a journalist, that’s great.”

and culture, whether this is music or galleries such as Tate Liverpool or the Walker. Another upside is the cost of living compared to London.

“It’s a very modern city. I think a lot of people outside Liverpool don’t realise how much culture there is,” he says. “When we had our decline in the 1990s, post-Thatcher, the city had to reinvent itself very forcefully as a leisure, culture-first destination, so we have lots of artists, makers, people doing things.

“I think the atmosphere is a lot more laid back as well, it’s not as intense – there’s not quite as strong a middle/upper class ownership of the art, there is a lot of community art in Liverpool which is on a par with the offer of the institutional galleries.”

Although the Baltic Triangle made its name off the back of venues and arts spaces, the residential development has seen many pushed out “with more in danger”, according to Ryder. It is now deprived areas such as Toxteth leading culture-led regeneration, with Birkenhead and Anfield following suit.

“People are using culture and arts to lead the regeneration rather than lots of residential money changing the place,” he says.

Journalist, entrepreneur and events director Amanda Moss says: “Liverpool is one of the most creative cities in the country, if not the most creative.”

Moss founded Liverpool Fashion Week in 2009 and runs Lifestyle magazine. She moved to Liverpool in 2001 to work on Hollyoaks, and set up the magazine after being made redundant. She now runs the Liverpool Lifestyle Awards, the Fashion & Beauty Awards and Manchester Fashion Week.

Salt concludes: “I think a big thing is the pride in local identity which, when you’re working in local radio, is brilliant. It’s such a buzz working here – it’s one of the best news patches in the country.”

documentary maker, left her BBC staff job in London to move to Liverpool in 2007. She now works for Radio 4, including the World at One, PM and the Today programme.

“I had no connections with Liverpool – I just fancied a change,” she says. “Liverpool became the European Capital of Culture in 2008 and there were so many stories, I set up my own production company and winged it.”

Power did podcasts for the Health and Safety Executive, which is based in Merseyside, and for football fans group Spirit of Shankly. With Salford only an hour away, she also worked on documentaries for the BBC – one on Hillsborough and another on Muslims in the Premier League.

“I could have picked Glasgow, but I would have walked into a massive pool of journalists because it’s a media hub,” she says. “Cardiff is a hub. Manchester and Salford is a hub. Liverpool isn’t a hub and that worked to my advantage.”

As well as being close to Wales, the Lake District, Derbyshire and the coast, Power says another big appeal is the people, who are always happy to chat.

Prentice agrees: “Scousers are naturally inquisitive and rebellious, nosy and engaging, nostalgic and passionate – and we love to talk,” he says. “We are naturally suspicious of authority and cultural elites, yet attempts to attack the city from the outside see a shared and united reaction and community support.” Opportunities and pay vary. The city has a large number of independent magazines and online publications including YM Liverpool (<https://ymliverpool.com>), Liverpool Noise ([liverpoolnoise.com](http://liverpoolnoise.com)), His & Hers Magazine ([www.hisandhersmag.co.uk](http://www.hisandhersmag.co.uk)), arts website The Double Negative ([www.thedoublenegative.co.uk](http://www.thedoublenegative.co.uk)) and music magazine Bido Lito! ([bidolito.co.uk](http://bidolito.co.uk)).

Editor of Bido Lito! Elliot Ryder grew up in Liverpool and says one of the biggest draws for him is the diversity of art



# Pandemic of

Intimidation of journalists is increasing, especially online. **Neil Merrick** reports



Like many journalists, Anna Riley is used to being criticised on Facebook and other social media.

Her writing has been compared with that of a 13-year-old, while one person called her a 'real life Miss Hitler'. She has also been urged her to 'go die'.

But should any reporter be required to put up with this type of trolling or abuse? Riley, who works for Hull Live, enjoys writing opinion pieces that both entertain and inform. They also lead to having a relatively high local profile.

She once lived off a food bank parcel for a week, and then did the same with petrol station food. She also wrote about her boyfriend moving in with her during lockdown, as well as people's reactions when she wore a face mask on a bus.

While Riley accepts it is legitimate for people to have opinions about what she writes, too often it degenerates into personal attacks. Even on a day off, she can find herself deleting comments on Facebook after one of her pieces goes live. "I don't think the news desk has the capacity," she says.

There seems little doubt that abuse and harassment of journalists is increasing, especially online. An NUJ survey last year found that 51 per cent of journalists had experienced online abuse during the previous 12 months. Of these, one in five said it was a regular experience – sometimes weekly or even daily.

When Riley wrote about being trolled, it led to a hate group being created on Facebook. "On Twitter you can block people. On Facebook, you must read it before you delete it," she says.

**51%**  
of journalists  
had faced abuse  
in the previous  
12 months

A study in 2020 by Samantha Harman, former editor of the Oxford Mail, found cases of journalists being diagnosed with anxiety or depression after receiving abuse. Some had been forced to move home, or even left the profession.

Harman, now a freelance and course leader in journalism at Oxford Brookes University, surveyed more than 400 journalists, mostly through regional publishers. Four out of five said online abuse had increased since they had started in journalism. Eighty-nine per cent had received abuse on Facebook and 67 per cent on Twitter.

For Harman, the problem became starker when she realised it was affecting her view of the world. Driving home at night after deleting abusive comments left by readers, she began to wonder if the people leaving such messages might attack her or her house. "You wonder if the person who left that abusive message is standing behind you in the coffee shop," she says.

Female journalists seem to bear the brunt of attacks. Last year, right-wing activist James Goddard was given a restraining order by magistrates after shouting abuse at Lizzie Dearden, The Independent's home affairs and security correspondent.

Amy Fenton was forced to leave Barrow-in-Furness after facing a torrent of abuse, including a threat of rape, for court stories she wrote as chief reporter of the Mail, the town's daily paper.

According to a study by the International Centre for Journalists, female journalists face daily online abuse, which can invade their private lives and lead to psychological problems as well as physical violence.

It is not only female reporters who suffer harassment. Liam Thorp, political editor at the Liverpool Echo, used Twitter to publicise the contents of an email he received warning him his 'judgment will be due very soon'.

## Attacks on the streets

**FREELANCE** video journalist Jason Parkinson is used to facing harassment and abuse when he is out filming.

In 2011, he was detained by secret police in Cairo while covering the Arab Spring. In

central London he once had both his head and camera smashed with a broomstick during an anarchists' demonstration.

Last summer, while covering the far-right protest in Trafalgar Square against Black

Lives Matter, someone threw a large rock at his knee. "It was clearly a targeted attack," he says.

Things have got worse over the past few years, partly due to 'fake news' and Covid-19. Some people claim, as a journalist, he is

responsible for the lockdown and pandemic.

Anti-lockdown protests by conspiracy theorists are especially dangerous.

"There is constant harassment by everyone," he says. "I have been verbally abused by elderly women and people try to rip the mask off your face."

Parkinson, who works mainly for Associated Press and Getty Images, believes it is vitally important to tell the story – whether it is a far-right protest, or people breaking lockdown rules by not socially distancing in a park.

The element of risk is growing. Natasha

Hirst, chair of the NUJ's photographers' council, says hostility from the public is especially worrying.

"Sometimes it's a problem when you take pictures of people shopping or in the park," she says.

"They assume the photographer is trying to make them look bad."



# abuse



The problem can be exacerbated by pressure on journalists to gain a high profile, in the community. Publication of their pictures makes them even more vulnerable. This is not something young reporters are generally prepared for, which creates pressure on news editors and editors to offer pastoral support.

“We don’t build it into our training programmes,” says Harman. “We say ‘you must have a Facebook profile and have people connect with you’. The more high profile you are, the more abuse you attract. It shouldn’t be the price you pay.”

In January, Harman presented her findings to the National Committee for the Safety of Journalists, set up by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Its members include representatives from the police and the Crown Prosecution Service.

The police, she says, are keen for journalists to report serious incidents of abuse, especially when they include threats of violence. “They are taking it really seriously,” she says. “The problem before is that we were not reporting it enough.”

A national action plan, approved by the committee, was published by DCMS in March. Measures include better training for police officers, plus a commitment from social media platforms to take tough action against abusers.

Every police force will have a designated journalist safety

“  
Levels of public discourse are parlous and have been for many years. Journalists are at the sharp end of that

liaison officer, while online platforms that fail to protect users will face sanctions, including fines of up to 10 per cent of turnover or having services blocked. A forthcoming online safety bill will enshrine protections for journalistic content and free debate online in law.

NUJ general secretary Michelle Stanistreet, a committee member, says the action plan must be the start of a process that leads to journalists working without fear of abuse or harassment.

“It’s a major plan that involves a lot of major stakeholders,” she adds. “It addresses a lot of difficulties our members are finding on the ground.”

By and large, says Michelle, the response of publishers has been poor, although there are isolated examples of publishers taking steps, such as paying for a reporter to move home.

Ian Murray, former executive director of the Society of Editors, believes threats to journalists have grown because of social media and politicians such as Donald Trump using the mantra of ‘fake news’ to cast aspersions on journalists’ credibility. “What’s fuelling it is a lack of respect for journalists which, a fair amount of time, comes from politicians and other leaders,” he says.

In January, equalities minister Kemi Badenoch used Twitter to attack Nadine White, then of the Huff Post, describing her reporting as “creepy and bizarre”. The minister published letters that White (now at The Independent) had sent to Badenoch, asking for a quote for a story about Covid-19 vaccinations. Allegra Stratton, press secretary to Boris Johnson and a former journalist, later defended Badenoch, claiming her response had been civilised.

The NUJ survey found examples of journalists censoring their own copy because they feared the abuse they would otherwise receive. “Levels of public discourse are parlous and have been for many years,” adds Michelle. “Journalists are at the sharp end of that.”

Publishers are generally reluctant to discuss the problem. Reach said in a statement that all incidents of abuse are recorded, and journalists offered emotional support via its employee assistance programme. It was unwilling to go into further detail, while a reporter at a Reach title questioned whether the process works effectively.

So, it is inevitable that journalists must learn to cope with trolls, abusive comments or worse, and perhaps treat it as part of the job? At what point do you say that enough is enough and call it a day?

For Riley, it is partly a matter of reputation. She fears calling somebody and being recognised as the person who receives regular abuse on Facebook, though this has not happened yet. “So long as it doesn’t affect my professional reputation, I will carry on,” she says.



# Strains of stress

Stressed-out journalists don't have to suffer in silence, says **Samir Jeraj**

**D**avid had struggled with mental health problems since he was a teenager and, by the time he became a journalist, his main source of support was his partner.

The unpredictable hours and stressful situations that are routine in journalism started to have an impact. There were also harrowing stories that he covered, such as the hunt for murderer Raul Moat across Northumbria in 2010. Moat went on the run after killing one person and wounding two others, finally committing suicide. "I heard the gunshot that he killed himself with," he says. The shock was almost immediate: "I remember going back that night and sitting on the balcony of my home and my partner waking up at nine o'clock in the morning and finding me drinking whisky on the balcony – I had no idea what I was doing."

Things continued to get worse as David moved home and went freelance, just as his relationship started to break down. "I think the nature of starting to freelance – you're trying to make an impression, trying to ingratiate yourself – so I was doing lots of shifts, lots of night shifts," he says. There was no guidance or support around how to work night shifts and look after your health, he adds.

The relationship breakdown led him to focus more and more on work, leading to yet more night shifts and more strain. "It just got to a tipping point where there was a night where I was considering killing myself and, luckily, rather than doing it, I rang up a friend."

He was prescribed antidepressants and went into therapy for three and half years. He feels things since have gone "very much upwards".

The reporting of mental health has improved, although there are still frequent examples around the world of distressing and damaging stories. In the newsroom, a prevailing macho culture sits alongside a growing recognition of the long-term effects of trauma among war correspondents.

However, little has been done about the effects of the job on domestic reporters covering traumatic crimes, major events with significant injury or loss of life, horrific car collisions or just dealing with the stresses of an increasingly casualised and high-pressure sector. Since 2020, journalists have been under even greater pressure, reporting on a global pandemic while job security vanished.

At least eight UK journalists have died from suicide since 2015, four of those in 2019. That number is almost certainly an underestimate for a number of reasons. There is no clear boundary of who a journalist is – if we include the production staff who sift through images and video, the comment

moderators and support staff, we would undoubtedly get a higher figure. That said, it is important "not to correlate the work of journalists with their decision to kill themselves", says Dr Sallyanne Duncan, a senior lecturer in journalism at the University of Strathclyde. "Suicide is a very complex issue with many factors in their lives that cause them to take that decision," she adds. However, the lack of robust data means it is extremely difficult to see if there is evidence of such a correlation.

"I think that education in covering trauma and interviewing victims of trauma is lacking in higher education," says Professor Natalee Seely, who studies the effects of everyday trauma on journalists in the US and found its frequency and intensity were linked to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) problems, even when taking into account previous personal trauma. She worked as a reporter for four years, covering crime on her first job. "I wasn't trained or prepared to interview victims or their family members," she remembers.

"There's this idea in society that journalists are superhuman, that they are not affected by what they do," she says, they were not meant to let things get to them. Stories that involved harm or violence to children and animals, shootings and serious car collisions were the stories that stuck with the reporters she interviewed. "One reporter said she didn't let her husband drive the car any more after a really bad car accident she covered," she says.

Some journalists cope through exercise, cathartic activities – writing or crying to 'get it out', or talking with colleagues, a partner or therapist. Many start off talking to their spouse or close personal friend but quickly stop. Seely explains: "They didn't like to burden their spouses or their significant others with the things they had seen and done, and what they were feeling."

She adds that several journalists she interviewed took comfort from the fact their role was important in serving the

## How the BBC helps worker wellbeing

**THE BBC** uses a counselling programme based on the Ministry of Defence's Trim programme to support journalists who are feeling emotionally affected by stories they are working on.

In a statement, the BBC says it places "the utmost importance on the mental

health and wellbeing of all those who work for us".

Its support includes online mental health and resilience sessions, access to more than 1,000 staff mental health first aiders, wellbeing courses for staff and managers, an employee assistance programme,

which includes a confidential 24hr helpline, and access to a remote GP. This is also open to freelancers. Employees are also able to access trauma support sessions through occupational health.

Most recently, the corporation has established an online platform that provides a confidential service to help individuals track and understand their wellbeing and mental health specialists.



public. However, others misused drugs and alcohol, or used 'gallows humour' to avoid their feelings – several expressed fears of being reassigned or losing their job if they talked about it with their managers. Some editors were supportive, for example ensuring that one day a week they were given 'happy stories' or not assigned to crime stories.

"Anna Blundy, who runs Mind Field, warns of the risks of "Going into a profession with short deadlines, where you're only as good as your last story, especially if you're going to be a foreign or war correspondent in the field." Her organisation specialises in providing therapy by video for journalists and



**I think people leave it until they aren't sleeping or are using all the classic defences of drinking, drugs, and promiscuity**



aid workers who work in areas affected by conflict and humanitarian catastrophes. All their therapists are former journalists or aid workers and have field experience.

She sees "a lot of people with pre-existing stuff going on really, which is then massively exacerbated by loneliness, stress and trauma". Mind Field puts together a block of therapy sessions that employers can buy and staff can use anonymously. Mortimer believes it is "incredibly important" to provide a high level of confidentiality as many employees are isolated and do not have a good relationship with their employer, which might discourage them from being open about a mental health problem. She says people she sees tend to be in a poor state by the time they get to her. "I think people leave it until they aren't sleeping or are using all the classic defences of drinking, drugs and promiscuity." Employers could do more in terms of making people aware of those warning signs and encouraging them to seek help early, she feels.

Going through user-generated content, including images from war zones, also has an impact on journalists.

"Increasingly it's young, inexperienced journalists who are recently out of their university programmes who are being asked to look at this content," says Duncan. "Sometimes, I don't think they have the emotional experience, the emotional literacy to deal with what they are seeing."

In May 2020, Facebook agreed to pay \$52 million to current and former content moderators who had developed PTSD. This followed the case of Selena Scola, who sued Facebook after developing the condition in the course of moderating content for the website including videos of rape, murder and suicide. The tech giant also committed to providing weekly mental health support for staff in these roles.

"When I got home in the evening, I had been seeing images where you'd blur things out – I'd see those without blurring." Sarah worked on user-generated content (UGC) desks at several media organisations. "I was there for the Belgium [terrorist] attacks – it was just really intense, you just get on with the job, you do it. You're on adrenaline – everyone is professional." The stress and trauma of the job caught up with her after her shift ended. She sank onto to her kitchen floor and started crying. She had had no time to process what she had seen. Sarah says this is common and people work on the UGC desk until they get sick. "You can sometimes say 'this is not nice' to the person who's sat next to you, but you're just doing the job and it hits you," she says.

Ann Luce, an academic at Bournemouth University, believes newsrooms should, as a minimum, learn from other frontline professions and establish a debrief system whereby staff can share what has happened, particularly if there has been a traumatic event. "It's very possible that a journalist who graduates from my programme could walk into a newsroom tomorrow and their first story could be a murder, could be a suicide, and how are they going to deal with that?," she asks. At the moment, the answer is still too much of an unknown.

Looking back, on the Raul moat case and his other experiences David feels fortunate that the team he was in at the time of his crisis were "superb". He feels there was a lot of support and understanding. His employer kept giving him day rather than night shifts, put no pressure on him to return to night shifts and his boss offered personal support. "If I said I needed anything, then it was able to happen," he says.





**Jonathan Sale** on the rise of the weather forecasters

# WEATHERING A STORM

**1** 921 was a good year for weather. Not only was there as usual a lot of it about, but also there were at least two radio stations, attached to universities, that began alerting listeners to what the heavens had in store. Both had begun a few years earlier with weather forecasts only in Morse code, but realised that 'a heavy fall of dot dash dot will be followed by periods of dash dot dash' was not exactly reader-friendly. Now, the wireless warnings came via human voices.

One of those stations, The AM band service WEW in St Louis, has survived. The university was linked to the heavens in another way, as its president was the Reverend William Robison, who read out the first 500-word weather bulletin.

Later, Rueppel broadened the station's appeal with programmes ranging from The Foundation of Catholic Faith to the less spiritual How Sugar is Made. Now privately owned, WEW still has a heavenly angle; it provides Christian radio to the local Bosnians, which you could call a niche market.

More than two centuries earlier, a weekly newspaper with the un-snappy title of A Collection for the Improvement of Husbandry & Trade had already demonstrated the British obsession with the elements.

"'Twould be of great use to have a true history of the weather from which it is likeliest to draw prognostications," wrote apothecary John Houghton in the issue of May 14, 1692. "'Twould indeed be very handy and the paper produced a chart for the next seven days. This listed only air pressure and wind readings but was absolutely accurate. How, you may ask, was this possible in an age without weather satellites or the legendary presenter Michael Fish? Easy. The crucial term here is 'history'. The May week in question was in 1691. Houghton gave the figures

for the relevant seven days in the previous year which enabled readers to produce their own DIY forecast. Or not.

Today, 'nowcasting' is the term used for forecasts for a period as short as two hours ahead; what Houghton provided could be termed 'then casting'.

Still, he did bring an element of reality to 'prognostications', which was not the case with some of the competitive publications whose resources included astrology, guesswork and pure fluke. Others did their divinations courtesy of the behaviour of animals, for example a frog in a jar: possibly it croaked once for a storm, twice for sunny spells. (I'm guessing but so was the frog.)

Daily 'state of the weather' reports were first published in 1848 in the Daily News, the paper started by Charles Dickens from which he walked out after a few short weeks as editor. Like Houghton's Collection, the paper's bulletins consisted of historical weather summaries but at least they weren't a year but just a day old; thanks to the telegraph, meteorological observations were whisked over the wires to London and printed in the next day's paper. Readers of Tuesday's edition could then be informed about what the weather had been like on the Monday. Alternatively, they could have looked out of the window at the time.

For mid 19th century mariners, unexpected storms were often a death sentence and many of the 7,201 lives lost at sea in British waters during

## Come rain or shine: Lloyd's long stint

**BRITAIN'S** first TV weathermen - and they were always men - were never seen but merely heard reading the forecasts.

When finally in vision, they were not necessarily chosen for their looks or dress sense. Today, their suits and dresses are taken as part of the whole presentation.

Siân Lloyd, our longest-serving female weather forecaster,

trained as a meteorologist and was a fan of fashion. "There's nothing worse than seeing people wrongly dressed for the weather: shivering in Ascot in a little dress," she says.

Before it was published as A Funny Kind of Love, her autobiography had the

working title of Sunshine and Showers.

There is no doubt that the woman who twice won the award for best TV weather presenter enjoyed many sunny periods. Not least in her education in which she achieved 11 O-levels, four A-levels, Eisteddfod crown at 16 and first

class degree at Swansea University, followed by postgraduate studies at Oxford and a spell

at the Met Office College.

As for the showery conditions, Lloyd wrote about her stormy relationship with Lembit Öpik, the Liberal Democrat MP who was her fiance until he ran off with 50 per cent of Romanian pop duo The Cheeky Girls. He later lost his seat and also the Cheeky Girl. Lloyd presented the ITV Weather for 24 years, from 1990 until 2014.

As well as being fluent in weather, she also speaks Welsh fluently, having studied it at school and at university.





LIAM WHITE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



SSPL/SCIENCE MUSEUM



a five-year period might well have been saved by a timely warning.

This was the theory of Admiral Robert FitzRoy (pictured above), who had already done his bit for science by captaining HMS Beagle on Charles Darwin's highly significant voyage round the globe.

He founded what became known as the Met Office, which began by providing wind charts so that ships could reduce sailing times by making the most efficient use of this free power source.

Prompted by one particularly ferocious storm that caused hundreds of deaths, FitzRoy devised a much-needed warning system. Thanks again to the telegraph system, FitzRoy could receive instant information from distant observers, calculate what the weather was playing at and send alerts to ports all over the country. (Though without, obviously, the accompaniment of today's Sailing By melody on Radio 4's Shipping Forecast.)

"The term 'forecasts' is strictly applicable," he stressed and, indeed, it sounded less loopy than 'prognostication', let alone 'prophecies' or 'predictions'. He offered them to the general public as well as to mariners – two whole days ahead. The Times published the first of these forecasts on August 1, 1861, which got the project

off to a promising start: 62° Fahrenheit in London, a cloudy 61°F in Liverpool and a sizzling 70°F in Dover, the same as in Lisbon.

The admirable admiral was so successful that a racehorse was named after him and so unsuccessful that he was mocked by readers when he got it wrong and they got soaked. Exhausted and overworked, he suffered the return of a depressive condition and killed himself in 1865. Appositely enough, he lives on in the Shipping Forecast. In 2002, the region then known as Finisterre was renamed FitzRoy in his honour.

The first BBC radio forecast was broadcast in November 1922 and, like that of The Times six decades earlier, was aimed at shipping. By the end of March 1923, the Beeb decided that listeners on land would enjoy a daily forecast. In 1936, the corporation led the world with the first televised weather maps; these filled the tiny screens of antediluvian televisions while an unseen announcer described the weather on the way.

It took a further two decades for the presenter to be in vision, the first being George Cowling, a physics teacher lookalike who appeared, to judge by the slumped appearance of his jacket sleeves, to have been caught in an unexpected

thunderstorm. The artwork was drawn by hand at the London Weather Centre and couriered over to the studio, where the presenter added final touches with a state-of-the-art wax crayon.

'Relatively low accuracy' was the verdict on the early forecasts and dissatisfied viewers were complaining about relatively low accuracy for the next half century. A Which? survey during the mid-1980s complained that the forecasts were only 50 per cent correct; one might as well have tossed a coin. As Bob Dylan had put it: "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows."

Hours before the 1987 Great Storm, when vast trees were uprooted and slates crashed from roofs, Michael Fish cheerily dismissed fears of stormy weather. His defence later was that he was referring to a hurricane off the coast of Florida. This was true but he had conspicuously failed to do justice to the killer winds that followed.

Since then, forecasts have smartened themselves up, not just in accuracy but also in fashion. I wouldn't presume to judge the dresses of the weatherwomen but the weathermen's suits no longer look as if left out in a deluge. Not even in a light-to-variable shower.





# Story behind the picture

Vigil for Sarah Everard,  
Clapham Common  
*By Jess Hurd*

**The horrific killing of Sarah Everard, who was abducted while walking home, struck a chord with people across the nation.**

Although the police had banned the Clapham Common vigil, I went down early afternoon to photograph the growing floral tributes.

I was greeted at the tube station by a large group of anti-vaxxers leafleting, which I thought odd.

At the flower-laden bandstand, the atmosphere was hushed and respectful. Couples, individuals and families clutched their flowers and each other before moving forward to place their tributes, pay their respects and read the messages of condolence.

One read: "For Sarah, you are in Londoners' hearts. May your spirit be free. We remember you, always"

The collective association with the horror of the attack hung heavy in the air. Many women were crying. I was very moved.

As the sun, set a woman with her child moved through the crowd holding a placard that read: "I need to be able to tell my children I did not stay silent."

The crowd seemed to grow organically; some joined to chant: "No justice, no peace."

A male anti-vaccine protester was shouted down when he tried to address the crowd and police escorted him from the bandstand.

I did not witness the violent arrests of women later but was horrified to see them on news reports. It was completely counter to the peaceful nature of the gathering I witnessed.

As a woman said during the subsequent protests: "They even attack us while we grieve."



# The modern spectacle of sudden downfall



Raymond Snoddy looks at three high-profile resignations

**T**here have been three serious, controversial journalistic departures in recent weeks. Two were well deserved; one was more problematic.

All three were testimony to a trend that the roof can fall in immediately on almost anyone who writes or says the unexpected, the ill-advised, the poorly considered or the downright nasty.

The first of the three, who thoroughly deserved his fate, was Roy Greenslade who, after retirement, held an honorary visiting professorship at City, University of London, where he had been a journalism professor with an interest in journalistic ethics.

He trashed his reputation and undermined a lifetime's work by admitting, for no pressing reason, in the *Journalism Quarterly Review*, that he had long supported the Provisional IRA and its bombing campaign.

He had maintained his beliefs, including the delusion that civilian IRA casualties had been accidental, to this day and across senior editorial posts at *The Sunday Times* and *The Guardian*, not to mention as editor of the *Daily Mirror* at the height of the Troubles.

His reason for obscuring his true beliefs was that he could not be honest because he was about to get a mortgage and did not want to lose his job.

Greenslade resigned from City, although the university noticeably said that for freedom of expression reasons it had not sought his resignation.

It matters little. Greenslade's reputation is now in permanent tatters, except in the very specialist quarters where it is believed blowing up children – and indeed journalists – was justifiable for the greater cause.

The case of Piers Morgan, another former editor of the *Daily Mirror*, is very different. He departed the prime presenter slot at ITV's *Good Morning Britain* because he hugely overstated allegations in his attack on Meghan Markle, the Duchess of Sussex.

Morgan said of her CBS interview that you could not believe a word she said.

There were indeed problems with her comments that her son Archie had not become a prince and that the family had not had full security protection because of underlying racism. This does not seem to be correct. Archie can become a prince only when his grandfather becomes monarch and only 'working' members of the royal family are entitled to full protection, and in this country not the US.

Morgan went much further, questioning her comments about mental health problems and suicidal thoughts, something he could not possibly have known.

He was gone with a record 57,121 complaints to communications regulator Ofcom, although another multimillion-pound TV contract may not be far away.

The third, much more serious and significant case involves someone most people outside the newspaper industry will not have heard of.

Ian Murray, a former regional newspaper editor, was until last month chief executive of the Society of Editors (SoE).

The society was set up to fight for press freedom and Murray came out fighting in defence of the UK media after the TV attack by the duke and duchess.

He was undone by two short sentences and by what he didn't say.

Murray went for an unequivocal statement that the UK media 'is not bigoted' and made it worse by adding that although some questioning was 'awkward and embarrassing', the press 'is most certainly not racist'.

The SoE should have defended itself against the precise allegation that the attacks on Meghan had been racially motivated and avoided generalisations.

Crucially, there was no mention of how much needed to be done, not least in making newsrooms more diverse.

Perhaps the worst thing Murray got wrong was a lack of awareness of just how fast individual injustices can, with the help of social media, trigger international movements that change public attitudes at speed.

It happened with MeToo, Black Lives Matter and now the way the Sarah Everard murder has led to a wider debate about the safety of women.

Murray's position became untenable when TV presenter Charlene White pulled out of presenting the SoE's National Press Awards ceremony – now indefinitely postponed – and nominees started withdrawing their entries.

As Murray departed, the society's 'statement of clarification' seemed too little, too late.

"We will reflect on the reaction our statement prompted and work towards being part of the solution," it said.

The SoE must indeed reflect, regroup and reorganise on more diverse lines.

It would be a tragedy if the society were to fall apart because of an ill-advised press release and the deeper failings this revealed.

Never has there been a greater need for a body that fights unambiguously for press freedom, which is under threat everywhere.

**He was gone with a record 57,121 complaints, although another multimillion-pound TV contract may not be far away**

by **Tim Lezard**

# arts

## Books >

**The Assault On Truth: Boris Johnson, Donald Trump and the Emergence of a New Moral Barbarism**  
*Peter Osborne*  
*Simon & Schuster*

This powerful polemic by Peter Osborne looks into how governments when they are exposed for lying shrug it off. He claims this assault on truth is an assault on the rule of law, state institutions, the fundamental idea of fairness – and even democracy itself.  
<https://tinyurl.com/y8dkk7tj>

**Crude Britannia: How Oil Shaped a Nation**

*James Marriott and Terry Macalister*  
NUJ life member, ex-Guardian energy editor and former Wapping picket Macalister tells of Britain's oil-drenched past, present and future, of a black gold empire built on financial power, political meddling and environmental destruction.  
<https://www.plutobooks.com>

## Exhibition >

**The Light of Day** by **Tony O'Shea**  
*Dublin*  
*Until April 11*

Postponed because of the pandemic, a major retrospective exhibition of work by NUJ member Tony O'Shea is being

held at the Gallery of Photography in Dublin, Ireland. O'Shea skilfully captured sporting events and political protests, alongside the always sensitively observed images made in his adopted city.  
*Details of the exhibition at: <https://tinyurl.com/y8bg397u>; buy the book at: <https://tinyurl.com/y8dpaz28>*

## Music >

**Loud Women 3**  
*Released April 4*

Arts faves Loud Women – a DIY collective that champions women in music by hosting events that are fun, friendly and frickin' awesome –



release what they describe as '22 of the best LOUD WOMEN bands on the planet'. Buy it!  
<https://tinyurl.com/ybrketb4>

## Film >

**Gunda**  
*Released April 30*

In these turbulent times, what could be more comforting than this mesmerising Norwegian documentary about the daily life of a pig and its farm companions two cows and a one-legged chicken?  
<https://www.gunda.movie>

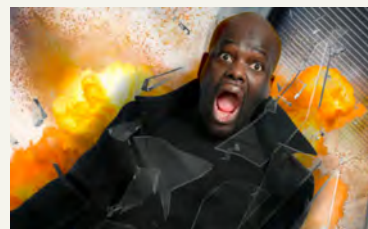
**Nomadland**  
*Released April 9*

Frances McDormand stars as Fern, a woman who packs her van and sets off on the road to explore life as a modern-day nomad after losing her job in rural Nevada.  
[www.searchlightpictures.com/nomadland/](http://www.searchlightpictures.com/nomadland/)

## Barbican Cinema

If you can't go to a cinema, why not take advantage of the Barbican's On Demand offer?  
<https://tinyurl.com/ybdj56uw>

## Comedy >



**Daliso Chaponda**  
*Apocalypse Not Now*  
*On tour from April 24*

Star of BBC Radio 4's Citizen of Nowhere and finalist of Britain's Got Talent Daliso Chaponda takes a break

from his daily online shows and returns to the road.  
<https://dalisochaponda.com/tour>

**Ellie Taylor**  
*Don't Got This*  
*On tour from May 21*

Fresh from recording her debut Netflix stand-up special, Steve Tyler lookalike and star of The Mash Report, Live at the Apollo and QI is back with a brand-new show, banging on about life, love and what will happen if one more person tells her: 'You got this.'  
[www.ellietylorcomedy.com](http://www.ellietylorcomedy.com)

## Festivals >

It is still a difficult time for festivals, with organisers facing the dilemma of cancelling early to save deposits and wasting time spent organising events or holding on for as long as possible and risk losing everything.

**Edinburgh International Children's Festival**  
*May 25-June 6*

One for the kids. Because of Covid restrictions, the 'international' aspect of this event is restricted to contributions from Scotland and the UK. It will feature theatre and dance created especially for children, performed in outdoor and small venues as well as online.  
[www.imagine.org.uk/festival/](http://www.imagine.org.uk/festival/)

**Hampton Court Palace Festival**  
*starring Tom Jones*  
*June 8*

The legendary singer, and now judge on The Voice, will take centrestage at this one-day performance at the historic royal palace.  
[www.hamptoncourtpalacefestival.com](http://www.hamptoncourtpalacefestival.com)

## Spotlight >

# Virtual shows take centre stage

"None of the world's a stage," William Shakespeare might have written. He knew what it was to suffer both personally and financially due to a pandemic.

He lost his 11-year-old

son, Hamnett, to bubonic plague – or Black Death as it was called – in 1596, and theatres were closed for business in 1593, 1603 and 1608.

Shakespeare didn't have

the internet though. And I suppose the closest he came to television was Ariel in The Tempest.

Technology is becoming the saviour of theatreland, with many archive

productions being made available online, and new productions premiering in front of houses empty apart from a range of cameras.

It's theatre – not as we know it – but theatre nonetheless. Here's a selection for you to enjoy:

Globeplayer: filmed productions that took place at Shakespeare's the Globe in

London: <https://globeplayer.tv/all>

Ballet on Demand from English National Opera: <https://ondemand.ballet.org.uk>

LIVR virtual reality theatre shows: <https://livr.co.uk/shows>

Uncle Vanya on BBC iPlayer: <https://tinyurl.com/yb7jjngl>





# TechDownload

**Chris Merriman** on technology for journalists

## byte size...

### SWITCH OFF THE ANNOYING ADD-ONS

If you use free software, you may well have come across something else being automatically included when you install an app. This is called 'bloatware' and, while usually more irritating than malicious, it would be nice not to have it. Enter Unchecky, a free app that unchecks tick boxes, even those 'helpfully' pre-ticked by the developer. That means you won't agree to installing or joining anything without the chance to check it. Simple, but elegant.

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

### SAY GOODBYE TO CABLE MISERY

Cables are one of the banes of the 21st century. inCharge thinks so too, so it makes tiny cables that clip onto your keyring. The inCharge 6 combines a micro USB, USB C and Lightning connection. A companion for a mobile power bank battery, and an end to that irritating collection of cables at the bottom of your bag. Well worth £15.

[incharge.rocks](http://incharge.rocks)

### CONTROL YOUR OFFICE BY REMOTE

Believe it or not, you already have a smart home/office – you just don't know it. The Broadlink RM4 Pro is a remote control that can turn remote controls into smart devices, which you can control using your phone or voice assistants. It's not quite as efficient as a direct connection, but it can make any remote controlled device part of your automated set-up and, at £40, it's a lot cheaper than rebuying all your gadgets.

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

## WRITING FOR REAL

**D**espite claims for decades that we are heading towards a 'paperless office', there is still no substitute for pen and paper when you're taking notes. Writing on a screen just isn't the same – but handwriting in a notebook inevitably means typing it up later.

Rocketbooks give you the best of both worlds. The pages are infinitely reusable, though you will need erasable pens (Rocketbook recommends Pilot's FriXion range). Pages come in a range of formats, dotted and lined, and you can go for speciality layouts such as to-do lists and week planners.

The clever bit is at the bottom of the page. There are six circles next to a barcode. Put a cross through



one of the circles, open the Rocketbook app and take a photo of the page. It will automatically save the document in the place you chose. The destinations can be changed in the app, too.

Rocketbook also supports optical character recognition so can turn your musings into proper text.

Available in a range of sizes and layouts and in a variety of covers, Rocketbook is the perfect marriage of analogue and digital. Prices start at £16.99 for an A6 jotter and up to £38.99 for an A4 planner.

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

## > Practical and portable

**C**hromebook devices get a rough ride sometimes but, if you've not looked at them, this is the one to start with. Google's Windows/Mac

alternative has come on in leaps and bounds in the past 18 months or so and, with the latest chips from MediaTek, the result is practical, functional and fun.

The Lenovo Chromebook Duet is a 10 inch device that you can use as a tablet as well as a laptop. You can add an stylus for design work.

It can run Office, Zoom and pretty much anything else plus apps built for Android.

With a bit of configuration, it will run Linux apps too.

While there are a few niggles – for example, there's no room for a memory card – it provides very good value. Prices start at £279.

[www.lenovo.com/uk](http://www.lenovo.com/uk)

## POSH MUGS FOR HOT TEA

**M**ost journalists seem to end up doing 17 things at once, and drinking your tea before it gets cold often takes second place.

Ember mugs contain a heating element, keeping your beverage at exactly the temperature you like (adjustable with the app) for up to two hours (or longer if sat on the charging base). Tell the app what you're drinking and it'll suggest a setting. As well as regular mugs, Ember makes a travel flask.

Ember's products are unapologetically expensive, but their build quality and simplicity mean that they are likely to be with you for months and years to come. Consider it an investment at £99 for the smallest 10oz mug and up to £180 for the travel mug.

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



CALLING GETS CLEARER

Promising Portal

The Facebook Portal should not be ignored as a business tool. It's not so much a digital assistant as a video phone, with great video quality – significantly better than we've seen on similar products – and remarkably good sound. These devices can be used with Zoom, BlueJeans, WebEx, Cisco and more, as well as with Messenger and Whatsapp. You can also play music from Spotify and add Alexa voice control. Pop one on your desk and be ready for your close-up. Prices start at £149, but deals come up regularly.

https://portal.facebook.com/gb/



# Your Say...

inviting letters, comments, tweets



**Please keep comments to 350 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](https://twitter.com/mschrisbuckley)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **£40 prize letter**

## Killing treated as clickbait shows regulation is failing

Mandy Garner's Viewpoint column about her treatment by the MailOnline and the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) underlined the problems of press regulation (IPSO failed on coverage of my Anisha's death, February/March).

The NUJ has long criticised the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) and then IPSO, its successor. Garner's description of her treatment after her daughter Anisha was killed in a hit-and-run incident and a corner-shop video of her death ran automatically on MailOnline if one clicked on the story, illustrates why.

MailOnline invaded her daughter's privacy and the family's mourning while IPSO allowed it to delay, put up barriers and make life difficult for her.

The privacy clause of the IPSO editors' code allows for the public interest - a definition that contains seven clauses, none of which apply here - while the code on bereavement calls for sensitivity and discretion, things MailOnline failed to show when it ran the video for family members to discover to their distress.

The complaints were also dealt with badly by IPSO. The Mail's titles consistently top the league of IPSO's complained-of publications, with more complaints

against them than any other newspaper in practically every year. The Mail group's method of keeping upheld complaint statistics down is to try to wriggle out of a complaint.

IPSO claims it is a major improvement on the PCC, which was condemned and ditched once Leveson shone an investigatory light onto it.

Yet IPSO has never held an investigation - one development it has claimed - nor has it fined a newspaper, another 'improvement'.

If ever I thought we needed another justification for the NUJ's policy of seeking massive improvements to IPSO (and after years of watching the PCC and IPSO, I don't), then this distressing tale is a prime example.

People do not deserve to be trampled on for a few more clicks and perhaps some of the newspapers that we are all desperate to see flourish should consider whether their collapse of circulation over recent years has been caused by such poor journalism and the way newspapers behave to complainants.

Treating a young woman's death as a public spectacle is not acceptable journalism and neither is failing to take it seriously as a regulator.

As journalists, we must support the right to free expression the right to inform the public and hold power to account but we should never trample on the rights of others without proper public interest.

My heart goes out to Mandy Garner and her daughter. Let's stop using people's pain to sell newspapers.

**Chris Frost**  
*Chair, NUJ Ethics Council*

## NUJ should show its commitment to print

Seamus Dooley's response to the letters requesting a return to print copies of The Journalist was rather vague about reviewing the suspension of print (letters, February-March).

While I appreciate that like a lot of organisations the NUJ has had to make difficult decisions, it would be nice to know that the union is firmly committed to returning to print as soon as possible.

Like the correspondents in the last issue, I value the magazine and but just don't find it as accessible online. Given the effect on journalist jobs of the

decline in print media, a printed magazine also represents an acknowledgment by the union of the continuing value of print media.

**Ann Shuttleworth**  
*London Magazine Branch*

## A real magazine in my letterbox is a treat

'Screen starers' reading this letter might guess from my life membership status that I won't like the change to a digital-only Journalist, so I won't disappoint.

I fully understand the financial conditions behind cutting the print version of our 100+ year-old magazine.

The reasons for bringing it back have been well rehearsed in previous letters, I just want to add a plea that recognises what a treat a real magazine is to outlying members like myself.

I hope that when budgets allow it is returned to my letterbox as soon as possible and as a priority.

**Jeff Wright**  
*Life member, Hampshire*

## No ink, no paper: welcome to the podcast mime

I couldn't agree more with Paul Nettleton and others who complained in the last issue about The Journalist appearing only in digital form.

As he says, merely taking the magazine out of the envelope is the beginning of the pleasure.

There is nothing like the physical existence of a printed publication which you flick through, return to, leave on the bedside table, lose under the bed, find again and tear out interesting pages.

It is like the old showbiz adage of the appeal of the roar of the greasepaint and the smell of the crowd.

The medium is indeed the message and that medium is, for us NUJ members, shiny paper and ink. Without it, The Journalist risks resembling a



mime artist trying to communicate by means of a podcast.

**Jonathan Sale,**  
London

**Journalists should know what words mean**

We journalists are supposed to be good with words, so why do so many seem not to know the meaning of the words they're using?

'Pandemic' means 'global epidemic', so 'global pandemic' is tautological and means 'global global epidemic', which is obviously nonsense. One can't expect any better of grandiloquent politicians but journalists should know better.

Similarly, few seem to know what the prefix 'pre' means, hence the tautological neologism 'pre-order'. I even heard 'pre-prepared' recently.

Also, many now use the words 'Covid' and 'coronavirus' interchangeably, when, in fact, Covid-19 is the illness caused by the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2.

There's also widespread misuse of 'trafficked' and 'traffickers'. People who are trafficked (mainly young women) come to the UK (or elsewhere) in the belief that they are coming to proper, legal jobs.

The people who come across the Channel in small boats and dinghies (mainly young or youngish men) know that they are coming illegally – that's why they come that way. The people who arrange their transport are smugglers, not traffickers.

Oh, and the plural of 'medium' is 'mediums' only when it refers to people who pretend to speak to the dead. When it means TV, radio, newspapers and so on, the word is 'media'. You'd think people in the media would know that.

**Sheila Miller**  
London N4

**Tech giants should pay tax - and for content**

The battle between Australia and Google/Facebook could offer a glimmer of hope for content producers. It seems to have taken a decade for governments to wake up to the monopoly power of the fintech giants; maybe they will start to regulate and tax these giants fairly.

What has amazed me is the way Google has 'scraped' images and content with gay abandon. The most amusing aspect of being on Google Images is that they reproduce everyone's work and add in small type 'Images may be subject to copyright'.

They and we know full well they are subject to copyright, but only now is anyone daring to ask them to pay for this. The big tragedy is that Google wasn't set up as a not for profit trust, as Wikipedia was.

It is good to see the EU and even Little Brexit England finally starting to work out how to make the fintech companies pay their way in terms of both taxes and journalistic content.

**David Siddall**  
Cockermouth, Cumbria

**Moved house or changed your email address?**



**Please let us know.**  
You can update your membership record on the website [nuj.org.uk](http://nuj.org.uk) or email [membership@nuj.org.uk](mailto:membership@nuj.org.uk)

**NUJ**  
NATIONAL UNION  
OF  
JOURNALISTS

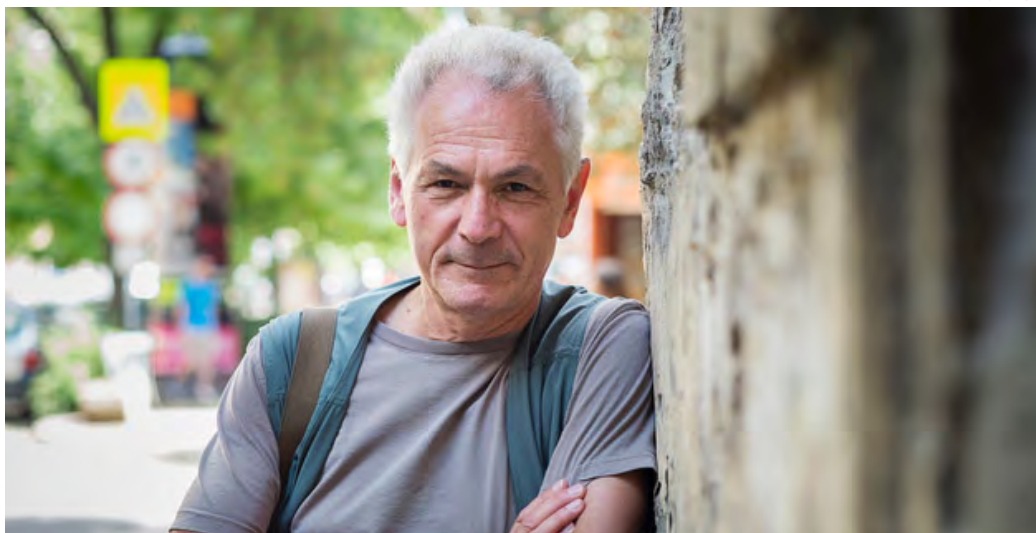
**STEVE BELL**

**THE OWNERS**





PHIL CANTOR



## Philip Wolmuth

I first met Phil, who has died aged 70, when we were both covering Shirley Porter's Homes for Votes scandal – Westminster Council's plot to sell council housing off to potential Tory voters.

Under the new tenants' choice law, the council planned to sell the Walerton and Elgin estates to private developers; however, the residents hijacked this legislation and put in a wholly unexpected and ultimately triumphant bid to buy and run their own homes.

Phil was in his element, recording the 'dirtiest fight in housing history', working alongside his neighbours struggling against the powers that be for a better life and a better world.

For him, photography was not an escape to higher things but an intimate connection with the lives others lived, where he himself lived, and where he both founded and ran the North Paddington Community Darkroom (NPCD).

This, Phil wrote, "taught camera and darkroom skills to local residents, and supported the campaigns and day-to-day activities of local community organisations. The early community arts groups sought to democratise the arts – to engage those who did not otherwise relate to the mainstream' arts world – by making the arts relevant to their daily lives and experiences".

His account of NPCD and of those times can be read online in his book *That Was Then, This Is Now* (<http://bit.ly/3qDCtoR>), which portrays the remarkable resilience and resistance of community activists in one small corner of London. Among battles too numerous to list here, they fought against rent rises, gentrification, the closure of St Mary's Hospital (sold off for luxury flats) and the sale of their cemeteries for 15p.

From there, he roamed across London, then across the world, from Georgia in the east to Cuba and Grenada in the west, the resulting archive, the Philip Wolmuth Photo Library ([philipwolmuth.com](http://philipwolmuth.com)), recording for posterity the extraordinary range of his lifetime's work.

But he always came home to one special place,

his regular haunt near Marble Arch, giving its name to the book by which he will be best remembered – *Speakers' Corner* (<https://amzn.to/3vbP71Q>). For nearly 40 years, he returned again and again, bringing the skills honed in Paddington to the centre of London and the focus, in the words of the subtitle, on Debate, Democracy and Disturbing the Peace.

Phil wrote: "When I first visited Speakers' Corner in 1977 it seemed just as George Orwell described it in 1945 – the resort of preachers, eccentrics and 'a large variety of plain lunatics.'"

As all this exotic variety of characters performed before his camera, he produced the definitive account of this uniquely British institution – if that's the right phrase for the unbridled anarchy of free speech.

A discreet observer with an empathetic eye, he brought this strange world to life, from holocaust deniers to diatribes against imperialism, preachers from the Methodist Lord Soper to

Muslims rejecting western civilisation, and he did so with quiet humour and appreciation, somehow never letting it descend into a freak show.

Phil also did the writing himself, reporting the cacophony, preaching, zany arguments and fierce debate of today as well as the history of Hyde Park, such as when a crowd of 500,000 demanded votes for women, where "eighty speakers addressed sections of the crowd simultaneously from twenty platforms spread out across the grass".

Phil said: "Whether they are aware of this or not, the speakers, hecklers, regular and irregular visitors that congregate there each week are the vibrant heirs of those who fought for, and won, the rights to freedom of expression and assembly, thereby establishing the park's worldwide reputation as the home of free speech." A legacy enshrined in this book.

The quiet, self-effacing reticence that allowed Phil such unobtrusive access may help explain why he never made a wider name for himself nor received the recognition this work deserves.

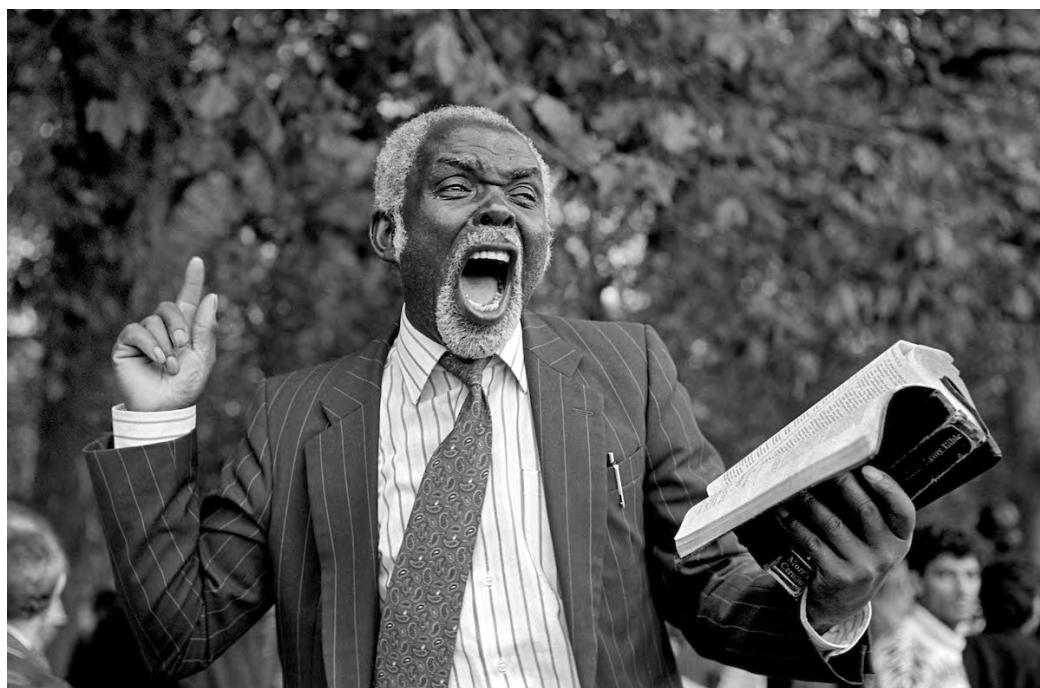
He will definitely be remembered in the NUJ, where our paths crossed again. He was an active, effective member of the London Freelance Branch for decades, and also of the London Photographers' Branch.

As photographer Guy Smallman recalls: "It was an absolute pleasure to work alongside Philip in London NUJ branches. He brought calm to difficult situations and chaired our meetings in a warm and welcoming manner that will be sadly missed."

He is survived by his partner Jane and their daughters Eva and Anna.

And I will miss his friendly face patrolling the street.

**Andrew Wiard**



A Christian preacher addresses a crowd at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park, London, 1993

# When is a journalist not a journalist?



Fake reporters undermine our whole industry, says **Chris Proctor**

**T**here's been an epidemic recently. No, not that one. I'm talking about the alarming outbreak of people who are claiming to be journalists.

All kinds of passing illiterates are picking up chewed pencils, dusting down Kodak EasyShares and announcing that they are one of our number.

Take the case of Hannah Dean. She's the delinquent who sneaked around corridors in the Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth taking snaps of empty spaces. This 30-year-old 'newsgatherer' (and fitness instructor) subsequently wrote that the images were proof that the entire hospital was empty, that no one was sick and that Covid-19 didn't exist.

A genuine newsgatherer might have ascertained that on the day of Dean's 'investigation', 426 people were being treated in the very same hospital for the virus, 47 patients were on mechanical ventilation and that nationally 744 people had died of Covid-19.

Stopped by security, this pretender-with-a-camera not only claimed to be a journalist but also to 'work for the NUJ'. In fact, her only contact with the union was to subsequently be reprimanded by our assistant general secretary Seamus Dooley.

Happily, the courts sided with Dooley and Ms Dean has now been fined and banned from entering any hospital unless she is genuinely unwell...

If she were the only example, she wouldn't be worth a mention – but the problem is that she is only the head of an oozing pimple. There are all manner of bigots and buffoons who are wannabe journalists.

Some of the Dean ilk carry pieces of plastic issued by oddball organisations that 'confirm' that holders are legitimate newsgatherers. One issuer of these 'press cards' is the Workers of England Union (WEU).

The Press Association news agency took the WEU to court to stop the impression that it was in any way linked to its card-issuing nonsense. The PA's barrister, David Ivison, called the cards 'instruments of deception' and 'fake ID'.

The leader of the WEU is a chap called Stephen Morris, who stood as the English Democrat candidate against 'sharia-appeasing' Andy Burnham in the election for Manchester mayor. The popular Morris picked up 11,000 votes but Andy edged home with 360,000.

Morris is also leader of the well-known (in only his own mind) 'English TUC' (affiliates: nil). But concern for workers is not the only string to his bow. He is also the director of SVM Consultants, where he advises employers on how to deal with uppity employees. 'Advice and support for businesses,' he calls it.

All of this leads a person to have suspicions concerning the status and validity of his 'press cards' – and the people who sport them.

And just to move into the realms of what should be fantasy, there are

people who don't exist who claim to be journalists, such as Raphael Badani.

He is an authority on the Middle East who has featured in a number of publications, including the Washington Examiner, RealClearMarkets and the dubiously named American Thinker.

Badani's CV is impressive. He was formerly a senior analyst in international relations at the US Department of Labor. Or would have been if he were a person. Except he isn't. The bloke's a robot, created by artificial intelligence to give readers some unmerited confidence in his pronouncements. He's got a picture and everything.

Does it matter that bigots, amateurs, offbeats and figments are trying to infiltrate our profession? Well, actually, yes it very much does. Because their actions threaten to undermine our whole industry.

If you get nonsense and bigotry served up on your Facebook, Instagram or Tumblr feeds, you don't mind. You know most of it is fake news, unresearched opinion or mild indignation.

But if a report is written by someone who is labelled a journalist, you should be able to be confident that it is authentic. If you can't – and this is what bogus journalists encourage – the role, the job and the media become irrelevant and redundant. Journalism is delegitimised. We're not worth our keep.

An NUJ-issued UKPCA press card is a privilege to carry, and a mark that its holders are bona fide newsgatherers. Bogus infiltrators and their agents are a menace to us all.

**Pieces of plastic issued by oddball organisations 'confirm' that holders are legitimate newsgatherers**



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Promoting open, transparent think tanks

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## Southwell, Tyrrell & Co.

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**If any of your friends complain about usually high cost of ink / toner please give them our phone number or details, thanks!**

## NUJ General Secretary Election 2021

**The National Union of Journalists is inviting applications for the post of NUJ General Secretary.**

The post is subject to election by ballot of the NUJ membership every five years. It is a full-time post based at the Union's London Head Office working exclusively for the Union. The Union is currently operating a 4-day week working pattern until the end of September 2021, when it will return to 5 days.

The application form, including details of the terms and conditions of employment may be obtained from [personnel@nuj.org.uk](mailto:personnel@nuj.org.uk).

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is **noon, Monday 3rd May 2021.**

You are advised to check that your membership details are up to date in order to avoid delays in receiving a ballot paper. You can do this at the NUJ website [www.nuj.org.uk](http://www.nuj.org.uk) or by contacting the membership department at [membership@nuj.org.uk](mailto:membership@nuj.org.uk).

**Application Forms available from:**  
[personnel@nuj.org.uk](mailto:personnel@nuj.org.uk)

**Closing Date:**  
Monday 3rd May 2021

**NUJ**  
NATIONAL UNION  
OF  
JOURNALISTS

# FREELANCE RIGHTS CHARTER

## FAIR DEAL FOR FREELANCES

**The Covid-19 crisis has further marginalised already vulnerable freelances working across the media industry - this NUJ Freelance Rights Charter demands improved protections and benefits regardless of employment status.**

**Support our call for a Fair Deal for Freelances, where all freelances have the right to:**

- 1** Trades union collective bargaining to improve terms and conditions for freelances side by side with staff
- 2** Fair written contracts free from the threat of disadvantage for asserting their rights
- 3** Respect for their creators' rights and unwaivable moral rights
- 4** Equalised rights with employees including; sick pay; maternity, paternity and parental leave; unemployment benefit; full access to benefits and social securities
- 5** Choice over how they freelance and are taxed, with an end to advance tax payments
- 6** Work free from pressure to operate on a PAYE basis, or to incorporate, or work through umbrella companies
- 7** Equal health and safety protections including parity of training, insurances and security provision
- 8** Fair fees and terms, and prompt payments
- 9** Dignity and respect at work, free from bullying, harassment or discrimination, with parity of access to grievance procedures
- 10** Equal professional rights, including the right to protect sources, seek information and uphold ethical standards

**#FairDeal4Freelances**

**#FairDeal4Freelances**