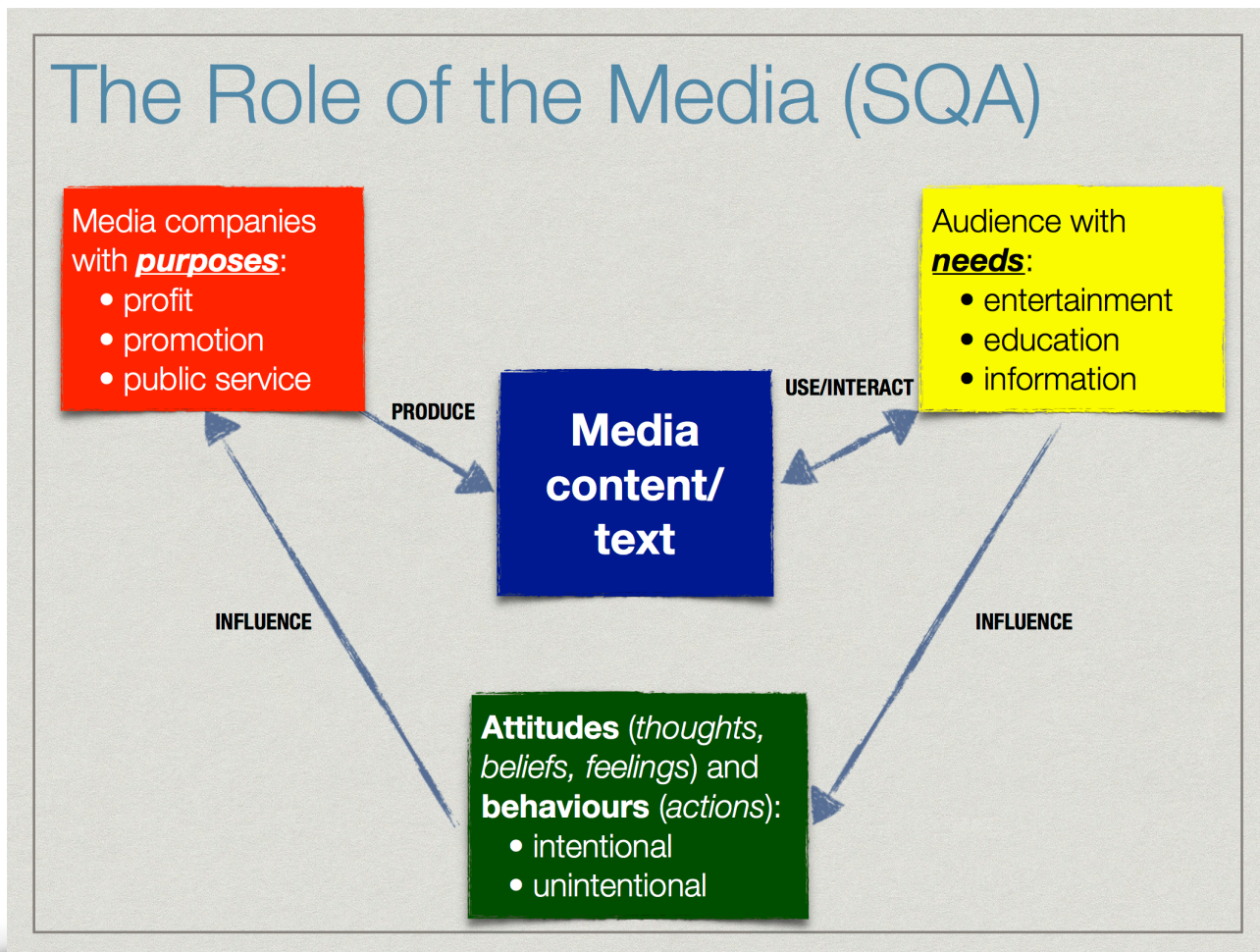


# ROLE OF MEDIA NOTES



## Media freedom in a democracy

Genuine democracy consists of the sovereignty of the people and thus government by, for, and of, the people

A democratic social order requires:

- a **separation of powers** so that no one institution or social force dominates the society and polity
- an **informed electorate** that can participate in public debate, elections, and political activity
- **freedom of the press/broadcast media** to ensure they would be free from domination by any political force so that it could criticize the government and promote vigorous debate on issues of public concern

Broadcasting is seen as a **public utility** subject to **regulation** to ensure that broadcasting serves democracy

These ideals are expressed in the **NUJ code of conduct**, TV News regulation and the aims of some commercial media companies e.g. **The Guardian**

# NUJ Code of Conduct



**The** National Union of Journalists has a code of ethics which expresses this idea of media freedom.

A journalist:

1. At all times upholds and defends the principle of media freedom, the right of freedom of expression and the right of the public to be informed.
2. Strives to ensure that information disseminated is honestly conveyed, accurate and fair.
3. Does her/his utmost to correct harmful inaccuracies.
4. Differentiates between fact and opinion.
5. **Obtains material by honest, straightforward and open means, with the exception of investigations that are both overwhelmingly in the public interest and which involve evidence that cannot be obtained by straightforward means.**
6. **Does nothing to intrude into anybody's private life, grief or distress unless justified by overriding consideration of the public interest.**
7. Protects the identity of sources who supply information in confidence and material gathered in the course of her/his work.
8. Resists threats or any other inducements to influence, distort or suppress information, and takes no unfair personal advantage of information gained in the course of her/his duties before the information is public knowledge.
9. Produces no material likely to lead to hatred or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age, gender, race, colour, creed, legal status, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.
10. Does not by way of statement, voice or appearance endorse by advertisement any commercial product or service save for the promotion of her/his own work or of the medium by which she/he is employed.
11. Shall normally seek the consent of an appropriate adult when interviewing or photographing a child for a story about her/his welfare.
12. Avoids plagiarism.

---

## Regulation of UK broadcast news



Broadcast news is regulated by **Ofcom** (*broadcasting codes*). Regulation covers commercial media (*ITV, C4, Five, Sky* and commercial radio) as well as the **BBC**

Regulation of the **BBC** passed from the **BBC Trust** to **Ofcom** on 3rd April 2017. **Ofcom** have stated that one of their "...central responsibilities is to hold the **BBC** to account for fulfilling its mission and promoting its public purposes."

Ofcom requires that news, in whatever form, is reported "with due accuracy and presented with due impartiality"

TV news journalists:

1. should ensure that **fact** and **opinion** are distinguished
2. **should not editorialize** i.e. offer own opinion

## Regulation of UK press

From 1995-2014 press and magazines were regulated by the **Press Complaints Commission (PCC)** – *This was the period during which the **NotW** were actively involved in phone hacking*



This meant self-regulation by the industry (*essentially, the newspapers themselves decided what was and was not acceptable*)

The Leveson inquiry was heavily critical of the PCC

Government has not yet intervened to impose more independent regulation

Since September 2014 PCC replaced by Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO)



IPSO is PCC with same code of practice except that it has a few retired judges and civil servants on the board to give an impression of greater independence

---

## Murder of Milly Dowler

On 21 March 2002, Amanda Jane "Milly" Dowler, a 13-year-old English schoolgirl, was reported missing by her parents after failing to return home from school and not being seen since walking along Station Avenue in Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, that afternoon. Following an extensive search for her, her remains were discovered in Yateley Heath Woods in Yateley, Hampshire, on 18 September.



On 23 June 2011, Levi Bellfield, who was already serving three life sentences for the murders of Marsha McDonnell and Amélie Delagrangé and the attempted murder of Kate Sheedy, was found guilty of abducting and murdering Dowler and sentenced to an additional whole-life tariff.

Dowler's murder played a significant role in the **News of the World** phone-hacking scandal. In 2011, media reported that **News of the World** reporters had accessed Dowler's voicemail after she was reported missing. The resulting outcry from the British public contributed to the closure of the newspaper and led to a range of investigations and **inquiries** into phone hacking and **media ethics** in British media.

---

## Leveson Inquiry

The **Leveson Inquiry** was a judicial public inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the British press following the **News International phone hacking scandal**, chaired by **Lord Justice Leveson**. A series of public hearings were held throughout 2011 and 2012.



The Inquiry published the **Leveson Report** in November 2012, which reviewed the general culture and **ethics** of the British media, and made recommendations for a new, independent, body to replace the existing **Press Complaints Commission**.

The then Prime Minister, David Cameron, who set up the inquiry, said that he welcomed many of the findings, but **declined to enact the requisite legislation**.

Part 2 of the inquiry was to be delayed until after criminal prosecutions regarding events at the **News of the World**, but the Conservative Party's 2017 manifesto stated that the second part of the inquiry will be dropped entirely.

## Leveson findings on PCC

Leveson found that the PCC:

- Is a self-regulatory system run for the benefit of the press **not** of the public
- Is aligned with the interests of the press and has a profound lack of independence from the industry
- Its appointment process appears to be **neither transparent nor impartial**
- Is restricted by the limited resources which the industry supplied
- Is in reality a complaints handling body and **not actually a regulator at all**
- Is at the mercy of what newspaper editors tell them in response to complaints
- Has **not properly monitored press compliance** with the Code
- Code Committee which sets the rules is wholly made up of serving editors allowing them to **protect each others' interests**
- Treats privacy cases as complaints, thereby **preventing them from going before the courts**
- Has sought to mediate far too many complaints rather than reach simple findings, so **allowing newspapers to wear down members of the public** through 'complaint fatigue'

## Editors' Code of Practice

With the establishment of **IPSO**, a new *Editors' Code of Practice* was created. It covers:

Accuracy	Children in sex cases*	Financial journalism
Opportunity to reply	Hospitals*	Confidential sources
Privacy*	Reporting of crime*	Witness payments
Harassment*	Hidden devices/subterfuge	Payment to criminals*
Intrusion into grief/shock	Victims of sexual assault	There may be exceptions to the clauses marked * where they can be demonstrated to be in the <b>public interest</b>
Children*	Discrimination	

Exceptions may occur when in the **public interest** e.g.:

- Detecting or exposing crime or serious impropriety
- Protecting public health and safety
- Preventing the public from being misled by an action or statement of an individual or organisation
- Public interest in freedom of expression itself

## Public Interest

- Public interest is a difficult term to define
  - Obviously related to some sense of whether news coverage serves the public good
  - But often newspapers will deliberately confuse such a sense by defining public interest as 'what interests the public' in order to justify stories which intrude into the private life of individuals in the news and sell newspapers through sensationalism and titillation
- 

## Criminality at the NOTW

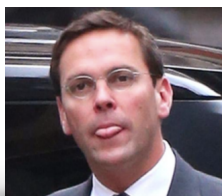
What follows is essentially a summary of the main points from *Panorama - Hacking: Power, Corruption and Lies* (BBC TV, tx: 25/6/14)

- In 2007 **NotW** journalist Clive Goodman and hacker **Glenn Mulcaire** were jailed for hacking mobile phones of the Royal Family
- Murdoch empire claimed these were the work of *a single rogue reporter*
- In 2014 **Rebekah Brooks** told the court that she had not realised when editor of **NotW** that phone hacking was illegal!
- In 2011 Guardian reporters broke the news that in 2002 **NotW** had hacked the cell phone messages of a missing 13 year-old girl, Milly Dowler
- They accessed her messages and deleted messages making her family and police think she was still alive
- **NotW** journalists used the material to write stories about her
- **The Guardian** revealed that London police had 4000 allegations of phone hacking of celebrities, politicians, Royals, ordinary public (these were gleaned from convicted hacker **Glenn Mulcaire**'s notebook)
- In 2007 **NotW** editor **Andrew Coulson** resigned after the case over the hacking of the Royals
- He was later employed as *Director of Communications* from 2010-2011 by Conservative **Prime Minister David Cameron**
- More stories appeared about hacking, paying police for tips and information and the use of private eyes (detectives)
- In 2011 **Coulson** was arrested and charged with hacking and other illegal activities along with former **NotW** editor Rebekah Brooks.
- Advertisers then began to refuse to place ads in **NotW**
- On 7 July 2011 **James Murdoch** (Rupert Murdoch's son and Executive Director of News International who owned the **NotW**) announced that the 168 year-old **News of the World** would be shut down
- At the time **Murdoch** was trying to gain full control of **BSkyB** cable/satellite company

- ▶ **Ofcom** questioned whether **James Murdoch** was a fit person to be in charge of a major media corporation
- ▶ On 13 July 2011 **Rupert Murdoch** announced he was abandoning the **BSkyB** takeover
- ▶ The same day PM David Cameron announced the setting up of the **Leveson Inquiry**
- ▶ High ranking police chiefs resigned when it was revealed that they socialized with Murdoch employees.

## What Happened Next...

**RUPERT MURDOCH:** replaced *NotW* with a Sunday edition of *The Sun* on 25 February 2012. He promised that *The Sun on Sunday* would be : "...fearless, outspoken, mischievous, fun and **ethical...**"



**JAMES MURDOCH:** UK Parliamentary report said Murdoch had '**...showed wilful ignorance of the extent of phone-hacking**' and found him '**...guilty of an astonishing lack of curiosity...**' over the issue.

Was made Chief Executive Officer of **21st Century Fox**

**ANDY COULSON:** Editor of *NotW* 2003-2007. Resigned 2007 when a *NotW* journalist was jailed for phone hacking. Became PM David Cameron's spin doctor in 2010. Had to resign 2011.

Jailed for hacking June 2014.



**REBEKAH BROOKS:** Editor of *NotW* from 2000-2003, editor of *The Sun* from 2003-2009.

Cleared of hacking June 2014.

### AUGUST 28TH, 2015

August 28, 2015 5:54 pm

## Rebekah Brooks returns as News Corp's UK chief executive

Matthew Garrahan in New York and Henry Mance in London

Share Author alerts Print Clip Comments



Rebekah Brooks is returning to [News Corp](#) as chief executive of its UK division, a year after being **cleared** of all charges related to the phone-hacking scandal, according to people familiar with the matter.

Her return to the job she quit four years ago at the height of the scandal could be announced as soon as early September, people familiar with the situation said. Her appointment is part of a reshuffle of News Corp's UK operations which will include the departure of Mike Darcey, chief executive of News UK, and the appointment of a new editor of The Sun, Britain's best-selling tabloid.

News > Media > Press Frontpage >

## Rebekah Brooks return to News UK described as a 'massive two fingers' to phone-hacking victims



Fury as she returns to the helm