



BYLINE FEST

Annual 2018

**Political Pamphlet:
The State Of The Media**

#bylinepoliticalpamphlet

**FRONTLINE
CLUB**

Edited by Bethany Usher



Contents

Introduction: The State of the Media

1. "THE STATE OF THE MEDIA: WHY BYLINE MATTERS AND WHERE THE FESTIVAL GOES NEXT." Peter Jukes and Stephen Colegrave – Byline Festival.

"THE STATE OF THE MEDIA: A POLITICAL PAMPHLET FOR THE 21ST CENTURY".
Dr Bethany Usher - Newcastle University.

One: Celebrity, Media and Power

2. "THERE IS NO HOPE – THERE NEVER WAS." John Cleese on the British press, politics and celebrity muckraking.

3. "BETWEEN FAKE NEWS AND PROPAGANDA, IT IS HARD TO KNOW WHO TO TRUST." Gary Lineker discusses being a celebrity with opinions and how we can improve the health of public debate.

4. "I ONCE DEVELOPED A BIT OF A CRUSH ON BORIS JOHNSON. NOW I'M DESPERATE FOR JEREMY CORBYN'S ATTENTION." Alexei Sayle considers the dangers of charismatic politicians and their influence on news agendas.

Two: Brexit, Trump, Russia and the Great Data Swindle.

5. "I CALL IT THE TOP GEAR AESTHETIC. THEY THINK OF THE WHOLE THING AS LADDISH BANTER." The Guardian's Carole Cadwalladr discusses the Bad Boys of Brexit

6. "I WAS TOLD TO FOLLOW THE SEX AND FOLLOW THE MONEY." Former Guardian Russia Correspondent Luke Harding talks Trump's ties with Russia and his own brushes with the KGB.

7. "WE ARE REAPING WHAT WE SOWED AS A SOCIETY." American journalists Sarah Kendzior and Eileen De Freest lead a range of voices discussing Donald Trump and what his election means for democracy.

8. "BYLINE TALKS CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA, RUSSIAN BOTS AND THE GREAT SILICON VALLEY SWINDLE." With a leading discussion from Damian Collins MP, chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, key names in the debate around the dangers of tech companies consider whether Silicon Valley is a danger to democracy.

9. "BYLINE TALKS BREXIT." A range of opinions from speakers across the festival including Gary Lineker, John Cleese, Luke Harding and Cambridge Analytica whistle-blower Chris Wylie.

Three: Press and Politics

10. "THE GUARDIAN ARE NOW LETTING US ALL DOWN." Professor Brian Cathcart discusses Leveson Two and issues a "call to arms" to fight corruption in British news media.

11. "ATTACK JOURNALISM IS POISONING OUR NEWS AND POLITICAL DISCOURSE." Dr Bethany Usher explores why "Attack Journalism" dominates news culture and the regulatory changes needed to tackle it.

12. "THE THINGS PEOPLE ASK ME ABOUT BEING A TABLOID HACK." Byline and former News of the World journalist Graham Johnson talks phone hacking – and why he turned himself in.

13. "MASS SURVEILLANCE MIGHT NOT HAVE STOPPED KNOWN AND POTENTIAL TERRORISTS FROM KILLING. BUT IT HAS TERRORISED JOURNALISTS." Former ABC correspondent, Australian journalist, Andrew Fowler outlines the threat of surveillance to journalists.

14. "ONLY FIVE CORPORATIONS OWN OUR LOCAL NEWSPAPERS AND THE BIG TECH FIRMS ARE BUYING UP DIGITAL START-UPS. THAT IS A PROBLEM FOR OUR DEMOCRACY." Nick Davies and Tom Watson consider how media monopolies are damaging journalism's democratic functions.

15. "HOW DEBATES AROUND 'OBJECTIVITY' THREATEN THE LONG-TERM FUTURE OF THE BBC." Ivor Gaber, Professor of Political Journalism, discusses objectivity and the BBC.

16. "RACISM, ANTI-SEMITISM AND THE MONSTERING OF MUSLIMS." A range of opinions from speakers across the festival on racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, including Bonnie Greer, John Cleese, Naz Shah MP and Dr Shazad Amin, CEO of MEND (Muslim Engagement and Development).

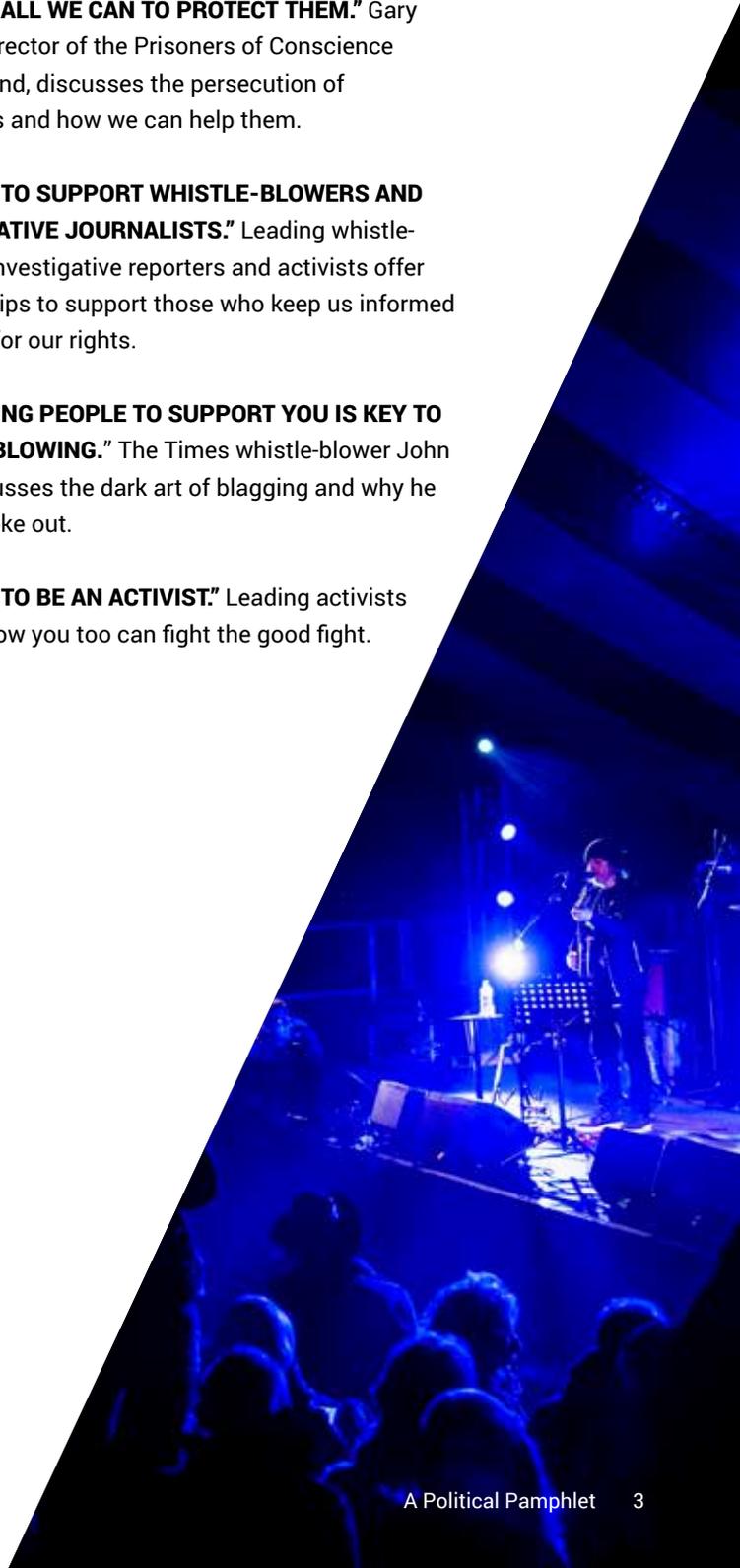
Four: Whistleblowing and Activism

17. "THERE ARE MORE JOURNALISTS AND ACTIVISTS FLEEING FOR THEIR LIVES AFTER AN ACT OF CONSCIENCE THAN EVER BEFORE. WE MUST DO ALL WE CAN TO PROTECT THEM." Gary Allison, Director of the Prisoners of Conscience Appeal Fund, discusses the persecution of journalists and how we can help them.

18. "HOW TO SUPPORT WHISTLE-BLOWERS AND INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISTS." Leading whistle-blowers, investigative reporters and activists offer practical tips to support those who keep us informed and fight for our rights.

19. "FINDING PEOPLE TO SUPPORT YOU IS KEY TO WHISTLEBLOWING." The Times whistle-blower John Ford discusses the dark art of blagging and why he finally spoke out.

20. "HOW TO BE AN ACTIVIST." Leading activists discuss how you too can fight the good fight.



1. Introduction: The State of the Media - Why Byline Matters

Co-founders [Stephen Colegrave @colegraveinside](#) and [Peter Jukes @peterjukes](#)

Changing the world can be fun. This summer over 5000 people gathered together in a beautiful forest in East Sussex to dance to Pussy Riot, laugh with Alexei Sayle and John Cleese, and marvel at the radical Fly Circus from New Orleans. But there is something else they all had in common - an appetite for truth, because without which you have no basis to make the world the better place.

Journalism is at the core of what we do. It's not just the hundreds of independent investigators and writers who've propped up the Frontline Club bar for two years in a row it's the public who - either through their own citizen journalism or curiosity - want to get to the bottom of things.

At the festival they can do this by hearing one of the 150 talks by award-winning journalists like Luke Harding or Carole Cadwalldr, watching one of the dozens of documentary screenings with Q and As, or by participating in one of the hundred or so hands-on workshops. And of course, with music stages open all day, and cafes and bars open till 2.00 a.m. a lot of the key conversations happen on a spontaneous one-to-one. Lifelong friendships are made, alliances formed and important investigations and campaigns initiated.

One great example of this from this year's festival was the announcement by Tom Watson MP, deputy leader of the Labour Party, that he would be seeking a public inquiry into Russian interference and alleged crimes around the Brexit vote in 2016. This was spurred by various panels

and speeches from Damian Collins MP, Chair of the DCMS Select Committee looking into fake news, and of course our Cambridge Analytica and Vote Leave whistleblowers. This made the front page of the Guardian and set an important agenda for the party conference season immediately after the festival.

This is only the second year of our festival, and the first year on the August Bank Holiday, but already we're ideally placed to gather impetus and support for campaigns and investigations, and becoming part of the political calendar.

But it's not all big political beasts and breaking news. Byline Festival prides itself on being inclusive, down-to-earth and grass-roots based (fitting for the lovely forest environment). Our audience are active participants and not just passive listeners. This was best exemplified by the daily Peoples Assemblies led by the radical and inspirational Icelandic 'Poetician' Birgitta Jonsdottir with the equally vibrant Jamie Kelsey-Fry.

So here's a record of just a fraction of the topics and themes of this year. Of course, a least two-thirds of the festival was theatre, dance, comedy, circus, poetry and music. A lot of it ended up on social media and we have many galleries and videos on the [BylineFestival.com](#) site.

To those who attended: we hope this is a good souvenir of the summer of 2018. For those who couldn't make it: well, you didn't miss everything.

The State of the Media – a Pamphlet for the 21st Century

Dr Bethany Usher, Newcastle University @bethanyusher

The political pamphlet is a British tradition as old as our democracy itself. The great 18th Century pamphleteers and their brave publishers, who were often prosecuted, shaped the socio-cultural and political make-up of our society.

At the time of the pamphlet movement, John Wilkes argued that “freedom of press is the birthright of every Briton”. But in this time of media monopolies, political interference “fake news” and cyber-warfare, the meaning of “freedom of press” is often muddled. It is too easily conflated with right to platform and we see constant demands – particularly from extremities of the political spectrum – that their views are published on and beyond social media, and without criticism. This is far removed from the impassioned debate, discussion and dissection at the time of the bourgeois public sphere, where argument was judged on merit, rather than the social position of the speaker.

The London-based press was the first mass media. Newspapers and pamphlets offered co-existing narratives, which often intertwined the political with the personal and used the celebrity status of pamphleteers and politicians to further the message. For those who longed for political and social change, these argued how things might be better.

Here, we offer a pamphlet for the 21st Century. Drawing together arguments from more than 50 voices who spoke at the Byline Festival 2018, it looks to the State of the Media at a period of political and social upheaval, when the very existence of democracy feels under threat.

We hope that for those in and interested in politics, power and the media will debate and discuss the content here, with the same passion of the great pamphleteers and their inspired audiences. As such, there are the Twitter handles for each of the contributors alongside their names.

Please join the conversation, using #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.

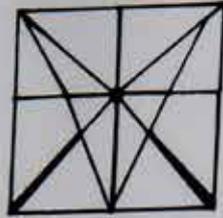
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Celebrity, Media and Power





**99%
HONEST
1% LIAR**

#BYLINEFEST



@BylineFest

2. “There is No Hope - There Never Was”

John Cleese @JohnCleese interviewed by Peter Jukes

As someone who has featured in newspapers for almost 60 years, John Cleese lived through the transformation of the British press and was at the cutting edge of their growing appetite for celebrity news. Here, he considers the state of British news media and ponders, is there any hope?

Our press does not act as a fourth estate, but as a house magazine for absent millionaires.

Inaccurate information is the travesty of our age. Soon, at least, we will be rid of Murdoch. How humiliating that Prime Minister after Prime Minister is prepared to suck up to the odious little man. When she was in New York, shortly before she called the last General Election, Theresa May ‘happened’ to visit the Wall Street Journal and Rupert Murdoch ‘happened’ to be there that day. They apparently only talked for five or 10 minutes, but when she called an election, she had the backing of his papers. How much influence, exactly, does he have?

In the subsequent Tory manifesto, it was clear that Leveson Two would not happen – the only pledge the Tories have actually fulfilled. She was just the latest in a long line to play sycophant to Murdoch. Blair, Cameron all pandered to him, to the great detriment of our democracy.

Generally, I have a good relationship with news media, because I do not fill them with bullshit and they appreciate that. However, often with British journalists they are not interested in what you have to say because they decide the line before the interview. Their editor will have an angle and they will find quotes or people who fit that.

Many newspaper editors need to control everything and so the newspaper itself becomes an expression of their personality - a reflection of who they are. This is no better evidenced than with Paul Dacre and the Daily Mail. Why would anyone read the Daily Mail? Basil Fawlty may well have read it, but not me. I cannot understand in the same way I do not understand people who dress in latex and rubber and get excited. I know there are people who do, but I simply do not get it.

It has a kind of mentality designed for people who are dissatisfied with their lives and enjoy seeing everyone else cut down to size. It makes them feel better, because essentially they are envious. But then Britain is an envious country and part of that is our small size. Perhaps we could all move on if we could admit that, we are envious of everyone, all the time. When I look at the other Pythons, for example, I like to see them get good reviews, but not great ones. Luckily, Michael's travel programmes are so arse numbingly boring I have few worries.

“

Social media makes things a bit better. In the past, you were often completely powerless against what they said – there was no way to challenge it. The fact you can answer back immediately and have people hear your perspective is an important change.

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There is also this strange belief in newspapers that they must all follow suit in producing content, which they have themselves deemed as popular. Look at the amount of content around reality television. Reality television and the obsession of news media with it, also reflects something about the psychology of the British. How miserable must your life be if it is improved by watching reality TV?

Now newspapers are certain that it sells and so produce more and more content. They do not really know people would stop buying the paper if there was no reality television in it. However, none wants to take the risk of making a change.

The incredible thing for me is how once they are working in that world journalists can justify all kinds of things to and do almost anything they are told to by the editor. A close friend of mine once challenged a journalist who had interviewed them and then written a nasty piece. Their answer was, quite simply, they had a job to do.

A few weeks ago, I was filming in London with Minnie Driver and on set she was visibly upset one day. When I asked her what had happened she told me the Mail on Sunday had called saying they had 'compromising' pictures of her with an old flame, whom she'd had met for lunch. They were offering her a chance to comment. In fact, the pictures were innocuous although some were cropped in a way that could suggest they were holding hands. However, in the meantime they had caused her deep upset that her relationship could be ruined.

Social media makes things a bit better. In the past, you were often completely powerless against what they said – there was no way to challenge it. The fact you can answer back immediately

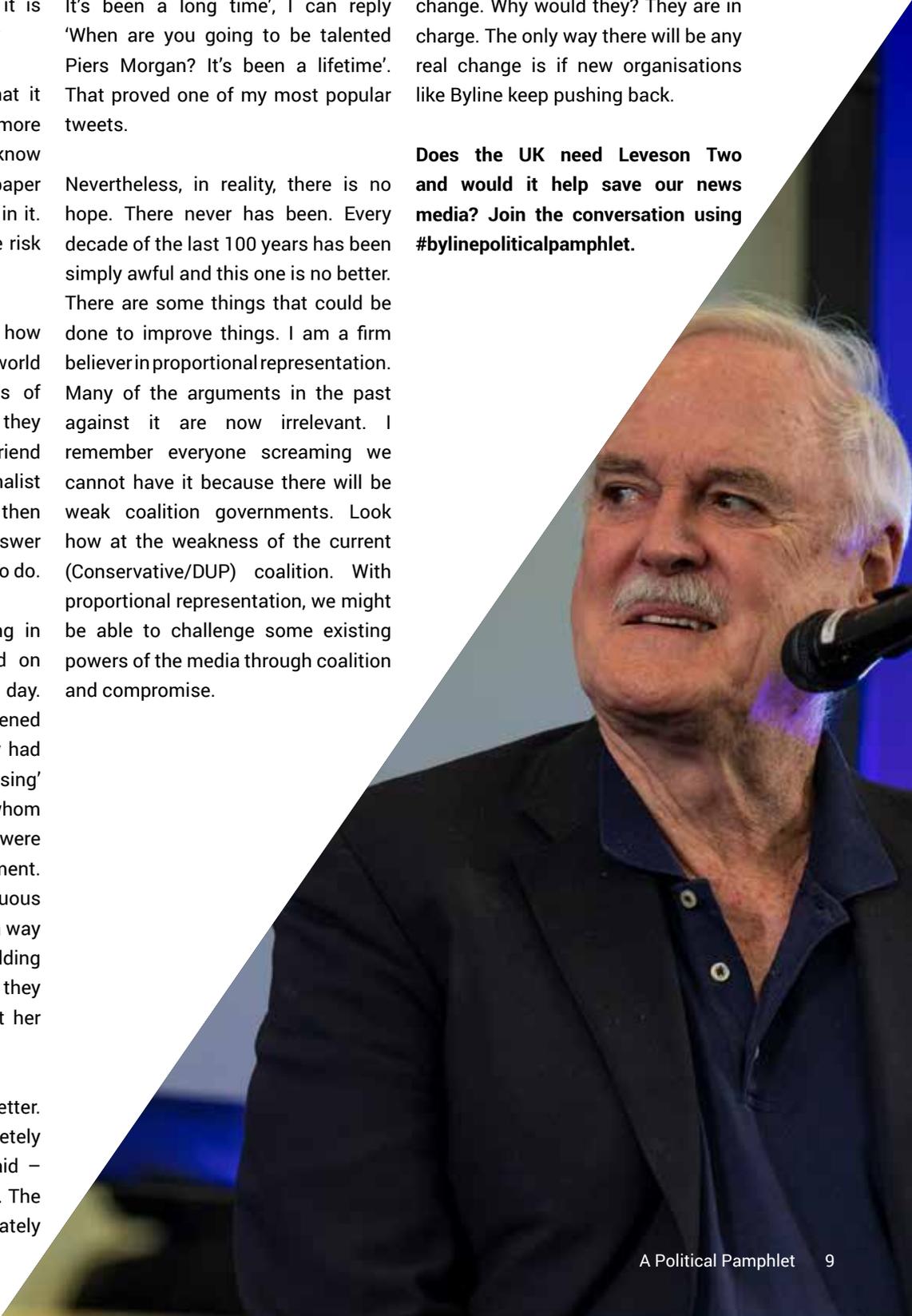
and have people hear your perspective is an important change. We truly have the right to reply and that gives us all some means to challenge the press.

For example, on Twitter, I could tweet out in support of Minnie and when Piers Morgan writes a hit piece asking 'when I'm going to be funny again? It's been a long time', I can reply 'When are you going to be talented Piers Morgan? It's been a lifetime'. That proved one of my most popular tweets.

Nevertheless, in reality, there is no hope. There never has been. Every decade of the last 100 years has been simply awful and this one is no better. There are some things that could be done to improve things. I am a firm believer in proportional representation. Many of the arguments in the past against it are now irrelevant. I remember everyone screaming we cannot have it because there will be weak coalition governments. Look how at the weakness of the current (Conservative/DUP) coalition. With proportional representation, we might be able to challenge some existing powers of the media through coalition and compromise.

Primarily we need a decent press who acts as a fourth estate and informs. We must have accurate information and Leveson Two – although I truly fear it is dead. This would make a real difference to the state of our news media. But there is little chance of this or great change because the people in charge do not really want anything to change. Why would they? They are in charge. The only way there will be any real change is if new organisations like Byline keep pushing back.

Does the UK need Leveson Two and would it help save our news media? Join the conversation using #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.



3. “Between Fake News and Propaganda, it is Hard to Know Who to Trust.”

Gary Lineker @GaryLineker interviewed by Lisa Maxwell

Gary Lineker discusses being a celebrity with opinions and the changes that need to happen to our political discourse.

It always astonishes me when people say ‘stick to football’. It is a strange perspective to think that because I am from a certain kind of public life, I have no right to have a view on other things. No one says ‘stick to plumbing’ or ‘stick to being a doctor’, but apparently, when you are a footballer you have no right to a point of view on other subjects.

We all have our own platform to express our perspectives on social media, and it just happens that because of my background, I have a large audience. However, people at times do not take too kindly when I have a political or humanitarian view that differs from theirs. As such, they can attack you for it. It means many people in the public eye are too frightened to put their head above the parapet and speak out. I completely understand why.

My political views have changed over the years and as I have experienced more of the world. I grew up in a normal working class family in the 1980s – the son of a greengrocer - and my Dad was a Thatcherite. You often follow the politics of your parents at a young age. Now my views are very different. I have voted for a number of different parties over the years, but tend to keep who to myself. It’s thankless to reveal it – you will always annoy somebody.

I have recently said I feel politically homeless. I do think Corbyn is more engaging than May in many ways. Well who isn’t? She’s essentially very boring. However, she has a very difficult job to do now and is having her strings pulled by the right-wing of her party. I do feel for her.

With so much fake news on social media and propaganda in newspapers about Brexit and other subjects, it is difficult to know what to believe and what to trust at times. We all need facts to make decisions about who to vote for, but it feels like it is becoming harder and harder to know what the facts are to make the right decision.

I would class myself as someone who cares about humanitarian issues such as social justice, fairness and safe passage for refugees. I really hope that Brexit does not turn out as bad as everyone predicts. I am a “Remainer” and I do broadly support calls for a People’s Vote.

I really do not understand why people say a People’s Vote would be against democracy. The point of democracy is that you can change your mind when you know more facts or have new information. I would like to see how the final deal pans out and then have some kind of vote on it when we know what it looks like. I think things would change dramatically and particularly that young people might come out and vote more.

I also have many friends who are “Leavers” and we have conversations about it. It does not make me like them any less – it is just their opinion. But then again, I am a footballer who never tackled anyone, so I am not one for confrontation.

I receive a lot of abuse on social media for my anti-Brexit stance. What I do not understand is the level of anger. That is what I hate most about society now – the vitriol and nastiness. There is no need to be so awful to people because they disagree with you politically. On social media, people just try to shout the loudest and often the more abusive you are the more attention you get. I do not understand the venom.

After speaking out for the rights of refugees, things got particularly vicious both in newspapers and on social media. One front page said I should lose my job. I knew what I was doing speaking out for these people. I just do not get how you cannot have empathy for human beings who were forced away from their homes by bombs. How can you not care about children running for their lives? But even when they're not children, they're still people. We are all people. They are my fellow human beings.

It is instances like that which brings it home how lucky and privileged I am to be in my position. I try to remember that every day. I am exceptionally well paid and I am not going to try to justify that I deserve my salary more than people who are doing a 'real' job. I really love Match of the Day. It is an integral part of football in this country and I enjoy being part of a different type of team. I might even enjoy it more

than when I played professional football, because in many ways the pressure is off. Football gives you an explosion of joy to which nothing else in the world compares. However, the stress of presenting is nothing like the pressure of playing and that's perhaps why I enjoy my current job so much.

I think it is important to use my privileged position in the best way I can. I do not feel the need to speak about what work I do behind the scenes, but I give a lot away and I pay a lot of tax. I also try to use my Twitter platform as much as I can. It baffles me sometimes that I have so many more followers than say the prime minister, but that does mean I have a voice I can use.

I have two rules. I don't tweet when I've had a drink and I always re-read the tweet and don't send it out if there's anything I'm uncomfortable about. I am just grateful there was not social media when I was playing!

Join the conversation at our very own public sphere using #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.

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4. “I once developed a Bit of a Crush on Boris Johnson. Now I’m Desperate for Jeremy Corbyn’s attention.”

Alexei Sayle interviewed by Stephen Colegrave

Alexei Sayle considers the dangers of charismatic politicians and their influence on news agendas.

Several years ago, I lived near Boris Johnson and would often bump into him on the street. He is very charming and I developed something of a crush on him, as we would stand and talk. He was all politeness and blonde floppy hair. Here I was, this stalwart socialist with a crush on a Conservative politician. Now it is as if he has taken off that mask to reveal evil Terminator eyes.

He is one of the architects of a fiscal fascism that has blighted our country. Brexit, the rise of the right, are all the result of the austerity agenda that attacked ordinary people and expected them to pay for the greed of the banking system. The Tories have pulled off this amazing con of acceptability by being as fiscally far right as you can go, but at the same time being socially liberal. It is incredibly clever and incredibly dangerous. The UN have talked about the human rights abuses against the sick and disabled and when you look at that, or the growth of street homelessness, we can see that their policies kill people.

It is funny how your view of politicians can shift and the influence of the dynamics of celebrity. I’ve known Jeremy Corbyn for a long time through our work for the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign and I’d always thought of him as a funny vegetarian who wasn’t really made for the world of mainstream politics. Now, of course, I think he is the answer to all my prayers and when our paths cross, I am desperate for his attention. He has brought proper socialist policies back into the mainstream. The work of Momentum has been brilliant. My wife Linda has been involved.

It is well documented that my parents were members of the Communist Party and part of the revolutionary struggle in Liverpool when I was a boy. My Dad was a railway man and shop steward and that meant we could travel anywhere due to free tickets for British rail union officials. Travel was a big part of our lives and I had a unique kind of political and social education with them. My family always knew we were different. It was something that we revelled in. Generally, we were happy with that difference. It made us feel good about ourselves.

In many ways, we were ordinary, working-class people, but communism was always there, for instance, in the choices we made about what was on television, which was anything by the Unity Theatre. Watching the news was always interesting because they'd yell 'lies' at the screen all the way through.

Now I find myself doing the same when watching BBC news. Over the past couple of years it has been truly terrible, but the way they have joined in the attack on Jeremy Corbyn who – whether you agree with him politically or not is a genuinely decent man - is shocking.

Jeremy himself seems unaffected by the bile poured on him by newspaper and magazine columnists and even those at the BBC, and that is to his credit. But, by any stretch of the imagination, the idea he is a Communist spy, a Hezbollah agent, an IRA terrorist, anti-Semitic, leader of the Labour Party and still manages to tend his allotment, is either incredibly impressive or completely ludicrous.

The BBC when I was there, was nothing like the corporate organisation it has become. At the time comedians such as me, Ben Elton, Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders were given space to develop and experiment. Some of our stuff on Thatcher was so close to the wire and I don't think that comedians would get away with being as critical of the Prime Minister in today's climate. We had genuine freedom of speech.

There just is not the same space

for creativity for up-and-coming comedians now.

People sometimes come to me and say, "My daughter or son wants to be a comedian or a writer, what can I do to help?" And I say, "Make sure they fuck their kids' life up in childhood as much as possible."

My parents' politics were ingrained in me at childhood, but since then I've watched the collapse of authoritarian communism across the world. I have mellowed and that's not a vision of the future I want. After all, creating something like the Soviet Union is like making an omelette. You cannot do it without murdering 40 million people.

Our future lies in meaningful socialism where people are looked after fairly and kindly. That is why I want everyone to give Jeremy Corbyn a chance. For the first time in a generation, we have a real opportunity to make the kinds of social changes our country needs. Viva Corbyn!

“Watching the news was always interesting because they'd yell 'Lies' at the screen all the way through.

Now I find myself doing the same when watching BBC news. Over the past couple of years it has been truly terrible...”



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DON'T PLAY DUMB

Brexit, Trump, Russia and the Great Data Swindle



5. “I call it the Top Gear Aesthetic. They Think of the Whole Thing as Laddish Banter.”

The Observer’s Carole Cadwalladr on the Bad Boys of Brexit. @carolecadwalla

We all believe that we are rational beings who are engaged in a debate and then voting based on the facts. It is very hard to realise that propaganda works at an individual level and how it has influenced us. During the referendum we were sitting ducks really - we were just so innocent and naïve. It was all just too easy for Russia.

There are things we know. We know that Vote Leave released their adverts and they were made up bollocks. We know that they made up stuff and sadly, it worked to convince people. We know the referendum was neither free nor fair.

We also know that laws were broken in relation to funding and we need a version of the Mueller investigation – a public inquiry - to find the underlying cause of what happened. This must be in conjunction with the other inquiries into Russian interference across the world. I am sure that eventually there will be such an inquiry, even if it is in 20 years’ time. It is simply too much of a car crash of illegality.

One of the first moments where I realised the magnitude of this story, was during a chat with Andy Wigmore, leader of the Leave.EU campaign, back in January 2017. The meeting came about because I wrote an article that had a

sentence about Cambridge Analytica, which stated it had worked for both the Trump and Leave campaigns. Shortly after, we started getting letters from Cambridge Analytica saying that they never worked for Leave.EU.

The readers’ editor told me that there was a complaint, and that we might have to apologise and take it out of the article. But it was all over the internet. I showed him where Alexander Nix, the CEO of Cambridge Analytica, had said they worked for the Leave campaign and the campaign website where they announced they had hired Cambridge Analytica. I really could not see the problem and so we wrote back to Cambridge Analytica and told them that.

Then we got another letter from Cambridge Analytica repeating that they did not work for the campaign and we went backwards and forwards until eventually we just contacted Andy Wigmore. Andy wrote back and said, “Cambridge Analytica did work for us, but we didn’t pay them because they were happy to help.” I thought, “Hmmm ... is that, like, a gift?”

“As a journalist, it can be so frustrating... We are showing that there is evidence of law breaking, but nothing is happening.”

I met with Wigmore at Pret A Manger in Westminster shortly after Trump's election. During our conversation, he fished his phone out of his pocket and showed me a picture of the 'Bad Boys of Brexit', including Nigel Farage, outside the gold lift with Donald Trump. He was the person who had taken it. I had just walked through this Trump demonstration and there he was talking about his trip to meet the president. "Oh he's such a laugh," he told me, "He doesn't really take any of this seriously."

We then had this extraordinary conversation about Cambridge Analytica and one of his key points will always stay with me. He told me that facts do not matter. All you have to do is make people either very angry or frightened.

When we received Arron Banks' emails, it confirmed many of our suspicions. We spent a great deal of time preparing the story, through a very torturous process of verification, which all of our investigative journalism at The Observer involves. We sent Arron questions about whether he had met with the Russian ambassador and whether they offered him the chance to invest in lucrative opportunities involving gold.

Arron first replied that he could not answer because he was at the cricket and he needed to consult his office diary. I could not quite believe it – he needed to consult the office diary to remember if he had colluded with the Russian Government?

We waited with our lawyers for his response, working overtime to get everything ready. In the meantime, he phoned The Sunday Times, went through all of my emails with him and

handed over an entire stash of his emails. It was only then that we have the story confirmed.

In Britain, we are susceptible and even fond of this kind of laddish behaviour. Whenever I think of Arron Banks and Nigel Farage and what they have gotten away with, it reminds me of Top Gear. It is all just a bit of a laugh. Now Arron Banks has brought out an autobiography called 'The Bad Boys of Brexit' and in it he makes it quite clear that he met with the Russian ambassador and treats it all as a joke.

He describes how at the UKIP conference in Doncaster, someone called Oleg - who turned out to be the KGB's man in London - invited him to the embassy for lunch. They had such a laugh! First vodka, then the brandy. What a hoot! Yeah, Arron, alleged subversion, is just hilarious!

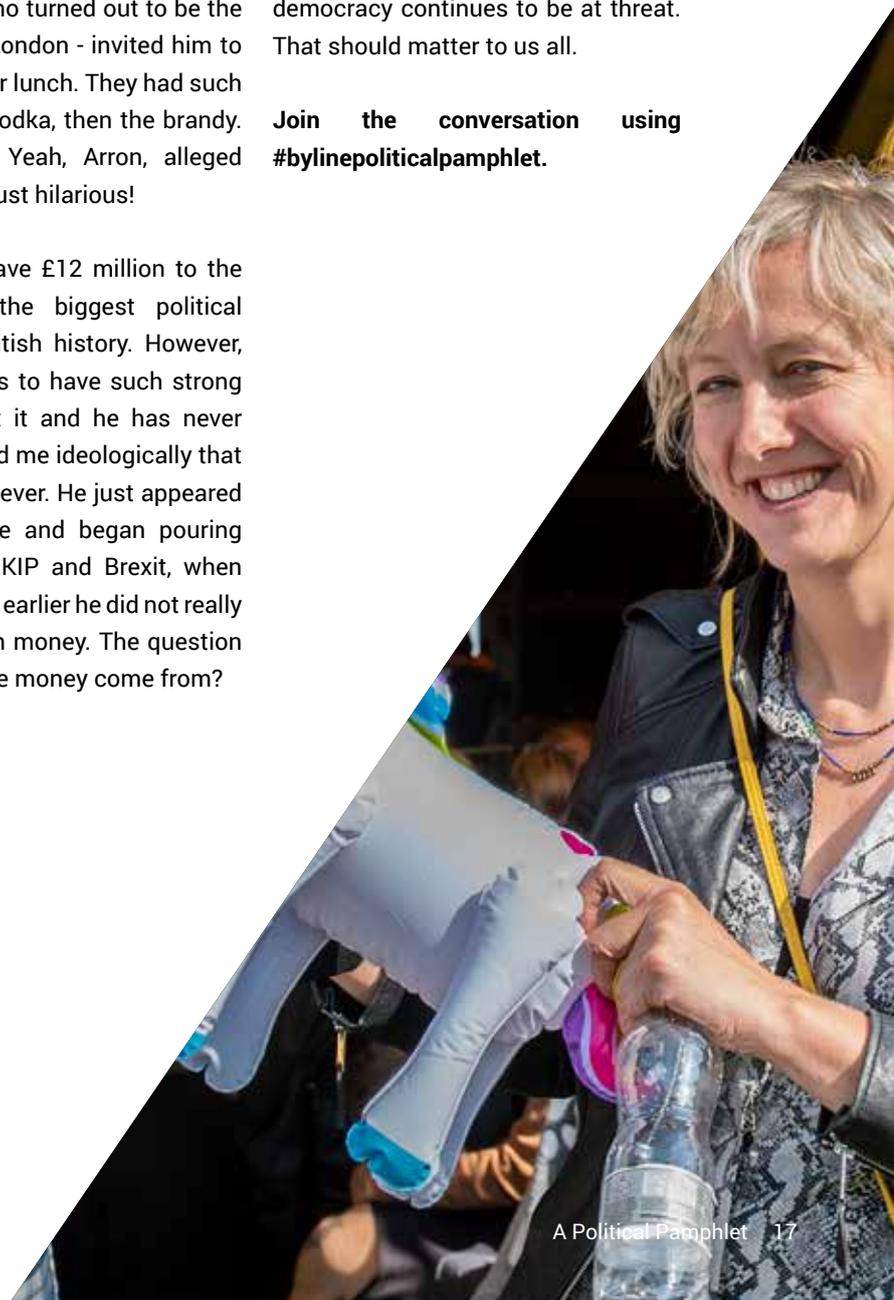
Arron Banks gave £12 million to the campaign – the biggest political donation in British history. However, he never seems to have such strong opinions about it and he has never really convinced me ideologically that he is a true believer. He just appeared out of nowhere and began pouring millions into UKIP and Brexit, when just a few years earlier he did not really have that much money. The question is, where did the money come from?

We have evidence of at least attempts at collusion by the Russian Government, but the country seems happy to ignore it, because it is seen as a partisan issue.

We need to shift the conversation so that it is not about political beliefs, but a question of the law.

That is why I am a supporter of Byline and what it is trying to do. Part of the problem in this country is the very partisan nature of the press, which has made The Guardian and The Observer very lonely voices in all of this. Until we have a critical swell, demanding an investigation, our very democracy continues to be at threat. That should matter to us all.

Join the conversation using #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.



6. “I was Told to Follow the Sex and Follow the Money.”

Former Guardian Russia Correspondent Luke Harding talks Trump's ties with Russia and his own brushes with the KGB. @Lukeharding1968

In the spring of 2016, as Trump was kind of ascending from being a no-hoper, fringe, joke candidate to clinching the Republican nomination, my attention was drawn when I read that Paul Manafort became his campaign manager.

The reason was that I had actually met Paul Manafort before, when I was Moscow Bureau chief for The Guardian and he was acting as a consultant for Viktor Yanukovich. Yanukovich is an unreconstructed Soviet thug, and Manafort was kind of transforming him into a twinkle-toed, Western politician with slogans, along the lines of 'Make Ukraine Great Again'.

I was curious as to what an American Republican strategist who wore extremely expensive suits and did not speak Russian was doing in this corner of the Soviet Empire. So I investigated him. I soon found him to be one of the best-connected American lobbyists in terms of his relationships with Russia.

When I saw Manafort was campaign manager for Trump, I began ringing round Ukrainian contacts and soon we all heard the lurid rumours about Donald Trump and his sexual behaviour while in Russia before the Steele Dossier was released. Then, of course, Trump won, much to everyone's surprise and horror including, I think, in Moscow.

That December, we were still working on the story, and I was investigating Deutsche Bank which was the only bank in the world prepared to loan money to Donald Trump, who has been bankrupt six times. The pattern of lending was extremely unusual, because back in 2008 Trump had defaulted on a \$45 million loan and he sued the bank for \$3 billion claiming it was co-responsible for the financial crisis. You would think, therefore, that Deutsche Bank would take his client file and put it in the bin. But, they then lent him another \$300 million.

We were talking to sources inside the bank and we said, 'Look, is this normal, this lending to Donald Trump?' and they would say 'Are you fucking kidding me?' The suspicion became that this was underwritten, covertly, by Russian entities.

It was back in 1987 that the Soviet government first wooed Donald Trump. The Soviet ambassador knocked on Trump's door in Trump Tower, invited him on an all-expenses paid trip to Moscow, allegedly to discuss a hotel, and within three weeks of returning Trump announced for the first time that he might be interested in running for President.

There was an enormous social media operation to support Trump and set up thousands of accounts to demolish Hillary Clinton in social media space, and it was highly effective. It really is KGB 2.0 updated for Facebook and Twitter.

The 21st century is conceptualised in Moscow as a kind of war for the mind – a war to govern what people think. The political technologists working for the Russian state genuinely believe there is no such thing as truth. They believe that truth is just a cover for criticising Russia and they take this relativism to the ultimate degree where every fact or truth can be disputed.

What is real, following this logic, is only what people think. If you tell people a lie, but you tell it in quite an emotionally convincing way it works.

This is where you see the overlap between Putin and Trump. As much as we may loathe Trump, we need to realise he is a communicator of genius. To his base, via Twitter, he lies all the time, but there is kind of an emotional resonance and what the Russians have got, what Trump I think intuitively, rather than cognitively understands, is that you can create a kind of meta reality – a parallel reality – where what you say becomes more real than what is real.

It is scary. You watch Fox News, you listen to Evangelical Radio, and you think Trump is a great guy, beset by evil liberals, like you and I, trying to do him bad. Trump was asked directly, “Did Russia hack the 2016 election?”, because Mueller had very strategically just laid out in incredible detail how the GIU, the military spy agency had done precisely that. Trump could not

bring himself to acknowledge this in front of Putin.

It is clear that Trump is terrified of him. I am sure in these private discussions he is saying, “I will never betray you Donald. I am your friend, I am your rock, and you can trust me.” This is just classic KGB operational psychology and on someone as dim-witted as Donald Trump, it works, to the point where he is really careening into traitorous territory.

Vladimir Putin has described himself in the past as an “expert in human psychology” and he is running certain key Western leaders, Trump in particular, in the same way a classic KGB agent would handle an asset. It is encouragement, it is love, but it is also the threat of a big stick.

When I began this investigation into Trump and Russia, I was given one piece of advice by a contact: “Follow the sex and follow the money.” As we look at where we are at with Trump – and this sordid scandal – that has proven to be invaluable. It is all about sex and money.

What do you think about Trump's alleged ties with Russia? Join the conversation on Twitter using #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.

“ There was an enormous social media operation to support Trump and set up thousands of accounts to demolish Hillary Clinton in social media space, and it was highly effective. It really is KGB 2.0 updated for Facebook and Twitter. ”



7. “We are Reaping what we Sowed as a Society.”

Sarah Kendzior covered the 2016 Trump campaign for a range of news organisations, including The Guardian, Al Jazeera, The New York Times and Teen Vogue. Journalist and Radio 4 contributor Eileen De Frest is a US citizen living in London. Here, they reflect on why Trump won the presidency, the role of news and social media, and the future of American politics.

Sarah Kendzior @Sarahkendzior

Trump first began talking about running for a president in 1988, but he was waiting for the right time. When he ran and won in 2018, it shocked many people. But, while it shook me, it did not shock me.

Trump did not emerge in a vacuum. His presidency relates to a decline of institutions’ stability and accountability. The USA failed as a society and we need to try to repair the problems that led to his presidency. Degradation of quality of life, the 2008 great recession, the inequality of regional recovery – all of it had an impact.

Then we had social media emerging, liberating and changing news economy completely. As it picked up pace, ideas of truth and trust were decimated. This was the perfect habitat for the emergence of Trump.

In the media, Trump found the perfect mark. News organisations were struggling financially and he was good for ratings. They did not take his political aspirations seriously and so were willing to promote his campaign as almost a celebrity-based trivial story.

However, while he was campaigning, he was also transforming our political culture and continues to do so. We should be putting focus back on to policies.

The Trump administration will strip the US by part and sell it off to the highest bidder. They will privatise and sell our institutions and they seem completely unconcerned about serving the public.

Perhaps it is little surprise that he is the least popular ever for this point in a new presidency. The initial shock may have waned, but I encourage people to hold on to their sense of rage. Even if you do not expect your needs or values to be met, you must hold on to them and fight.

Now we see a rise in many right-wing movements across the world and in that respect, Trump is part of the greater theme. It is not just about him, but also his backers – both foreign and domestic – and what they want for the USA.

Trump’s only real threats are those who can legally hold him to account for potential crimes. But, if he goes down, understand it will be kicking and screaming. I hope that will not include dropping a nuclear bomb. Unfortunately, I am not joking.

Eileen De Freest @eileendfreest

The Trump phenomenon is definitely unique, as his was the first presidential election where social media had such an influence.

Like many people, I was drawn into social media and found a home with a large number of like-minded people. However, I also found that the extremist right-wing had a powerful voice. It's a great place to transmit information – it make us all junior political editors – but that includes many on political fringes who would never have a voice via mainstream news media.

Social media made me an activist. It is an extraordinary tool, which can move humanity forward. However, it is a

double-edged sword because without some form of regulation, it is against us. We are governed by disinformation and increasingly through political chaos.

The Republican Party has extraordinary Fascist tendencies. It has a capacity to reject all enlightened ideas and, as such, in many ways Trump was perfect for them. But, the resistance is coming to include anyone who is not buying into Trump or the Republican Party and is thus ever stronger. Helping each other and fighting for our basic constitutional rights, now seems to be subversive. That is where our political culture is and that is how we can stop the rise of the right.

The reason why the world is watching the descent of American democracy so closely is that often what happens

to us first, happens to the rest of the world next. Our politics trickles down to other countries. Now, across the globe, we see the rise of far-right and fascist politics. Frankly, people are scared and they are right to be afraid. People are not used to seeing the American leader in bed with Russian president or totalitarian figures in places of political power. The rise of right-wing autocratic and anti-democratic power is in many ways the success of the actions of the Russian state. The equivalent in the UK is Brexit.

Against this kind of backdrop events, festivals and news organisations such as Byline, have an ever more important role to play. Through this, we can spread the truth and give people the information they need to vote for change.

Byline Talks Trump

Carole Cadwalladr, Observer Journalist and lead investigator of alleged illegalities in Brexit campaigning. @carolecadwalla

What is interesting about it is the way that Arron Banks, funder of the Brexit campaign, and Donald Trump are using exactly the same strategies and learn from each other. Arron's response to our stories was that it was "Fake news!" and then he began calling the press "Enemies of the people." At the same time, nothing sticks.

Cambridge Analytica's offices in New York were inside the News Corporation headquarters, and we know that Rupert Murdoch and Donald Trump are very close. We also know that Michael Gove got the first interview with Trump and that Rupert

Murdoch was in the room at the same time. Therefore, there are some weird questions about the relationship between these entities and what looks like possible coordination in the referendum and Trump campaigns.

*Thomas Huchon, producer of the documentary *Trumping Democracy* @ThomasHuchon*

Power has always gone to those who know how to argue and seduce and this is key to Trump's political strategy. He can argue, seduce and lie with such conviction that there are always those who are going to believe them.

It is quite extraordinary to consider how little of what Donald Trump says is actually true. A tiny number of his comments are completely true. It is all smoke and mirrors, suggestion and seduction.

John Cleese @JohnCleese

Trump is perhaps the greatest ever triumph of ego over reason. He is beyond satire. If you had written him in a script, he would have been considered too unrealistic.

It is the most hilarious thing to me that we have a president of the United States who has probably – according to his biographer – never read a book. Sometimes simple truths are the funniest thing of all. Every time I think about it, I laugh aloud.

Michael Janofsky, formerly of the New York Times @mjanofsky

In America, we now wake up every morning and ask 'what he did now?' Today's indignity makes you forget the previous one. It has been both a revolting and unique experience in American history.

8. “Byline talks Cambridge Analytica, Russian Bots and the great Silicon Valley Swindle.”

Social media and digital technology was hailed as a great hope for the extension of democracy worldwide. Now it has become a key threat to the fairness of elections, used to commit data fraud, spread fake information and directly target voters.

With leading analysis from Damian Collins MP, Chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Committee, Byline considers the role of digital tech in the US and Brexit votes and asks: has Silicon Valley become a danger to democracy?

Damian Collins MP, Chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee. @Damiancollins

These platforms now function almost as public utilities – a key part of everyday life and are the source where people get their news. However, they do not face anywhere near the amount of regulation as they should. You as a consumer have a right to know how they work, how they use your data and the ways they police and keep us all safe from disinformation.

These companies simply refuse to face up to reality of what is going on. When we request information about how the data they collect is used, they will not provide it until we prove beforehand that use was incorrect. They need to start co-operating more meaningfully with official investigations.

There is proof that Facebook knew about the data breach in

relation to Cambridge Analytica, but never spoke up about it. They made internal investigations but they never made them public or shared the findings. Currently, the strategy is to deflect, manage the situation, carry on and hope that everyone forgets it. People still carry on using it, no matter what. This then results in gradual erosion of trust of social media and governments' ability to police it.

It is crucial we tackle fake news, not just due to the volume of social media accounts, but because most of the UK now get their news from social media. We need to get to grips with who is spreading misleading campaigns and information and how are they doing it. In particular, we must understand systematic campaigns aimed at influencing the way people vote in elections. It is not enough for tech companies to say it is the users' responsibility to spot the “real” from the “fake” or that this is a clamp down on free speech. We are not asking them to arbitrate opinion but to highlight the difference between truth and falsehood.

Voters also have a right to know who is contacting them, why they're contacting and how their information is being used. People need to know how they're in danger and how and when they're being targeted. This requires education and for that, the tech companies must step up to the mark.

That is why we propose the levy on tech companies which we will use to invest in media literacy, invest in an information commission and figure out ways to educate people about how their data is being used and how they are political targets. We need regulators to check that tech companies are doing the right thing with data.

We can do this by identifying attacks on digital networks. I believe the advertising standards committee should regulate political advertising, particularly in terms of where information comes from and if it is factual. We must figure out how to stop the spread of disinformation to protect our democracy.

I think people were shocked that their data was harvested from Facebook and then used in different ways. The idea that the Brexit vote might have been influenced in some way is even more shocking. I also do not think it is good enough that extremely wealthy people donate extreme amounts of money without explaining where it came from. For example, where did the donations from Arron Banks as a record donor come from?

We do need a Mueller-style investigation into how all of these elements may have influenced the Brexit vote. We need something that pulls all of these related issues

together and gives us the information we need to protect the long-term health of our democracy. We need to have a parliamentary inquiry into all of these related matters that influenced the Brexit vote.

It is also a question now for the police to follow up on reports and see where and whether data laws were broken. The way foreign governments could exploit social media and the lax protection of data by tech companies was something we never fully appreciated. I fear if we do not act, it will undermine confidence in our government and media. We have to see the threat of foreign influence and confront it. We must do more to thwart attacks.

**Observer journalist
Carole Cadwalladr, lead
investigator of Vote Leave's
use of Facebook and
Cambridge Analytica data.
@carolecadwalla**

These companies damaged our democracy. Now there were a number of elections across the world that tech giants played a pivotal role in to subvert electoral laws. We must have a public inquiry into how this happened.

As a journalist, dealing with these companies can be simply ridiculous. If they do not want to comment, they do not comment. They have all the power and knowledge in the world about us and that is absolutely a tool in authoritarianism. We know that these companies have played a part in foreign interference in several elections around the world now.

There is a gross naivety amongst "tech bros" about the potential impact of what they are doing. They saw a problem and as engineers, they solved it creating these platforms. They look at them as tech tools. However, these platforms are now an arena of digital warfare. The answer to this is not going to come from more technology, but from moral philosophers.

Facebook effectively is an unaccountable foreign power, but it should be accountable in the same way as if Russians were interfering. They do not want to answer any questions about the fraud that was committed. Facebook fucked up our democracy and are getting away with it.

It is crucial we tackle fake news, not just due to the volume of social media accounts, but because most of the UK now get their news from social media.



Jamie Bartlett, author and tech blogger for The Spectator and Director of the Centre for the Analysis of Social Media for Demos. @JamieJBartlett

This is not just about evil capitalists in California. There are loads of ways the internet is helping democracy for many people. However, we are blinded by obvious benefits to the fundamental problems caused by the technology. Elections are now going to resemble personalised data science. What does it do to our personal responsibility if we believe that machines can make better decisions than we can?

That they are better even at making moral decisions than we are. How do we make our judgement if algorithms decide our right to know? Social media is feelings based and is leading a re-emergence of tribalism. We do not speak, we just scream at each other. Silicon Valley's utopia is that more information means more calm and informed citizens, but instead we are overwhelmed and annoyed by the amount of information. We can no longer calmly participate in our democracies.

The tech companies have a fundamentally important part to play in policing the health of our democracies, but they will not do that if it is bad for their business. They have a reason not to remove certain content because it is popular. We need to pass laws and police them so tech companies know it is people who are the boss not them. They cannot simply say, "Oh we're just the platform" and refuse to take responsibility any longer.

Chris Wylie, Cambridge Analytica whistleblower @Chrisinsilico

People are now more aware of how they are part of a pervasive, corrupt system. If a politician is misleading a mass group in a public talk, there is a shared experience between the audience and it can be discussed and analysed.

However, technology is also used to influence voters' opinions in all kinds of ways, like a whisper behind closed doors. The officials in charge of regulation do not understand the technology enough to make meaningful regulation and that suits the tech companies. The less they are understood, the more likely they will not be meaningfully regulated.

Democracy has changed throughout history. From the early democracy of Greece in its embryonic stages to the democratic structure in the States, where the colour of your skin affected your right to vote, and finally to modern day "hyper-democracy" where the very concept itself is under threat. Advancements in technology that we hoped would benefit democracy are destroying it.

We need independent regulators to decide if this utility or service is acting in a way which is a risk to the public. Are they protecting their users? If not, then it simply should not be running. We would stop any other utility if they were risking their customers. Why are tech companies any different?



9. “Byline Talks Brexit”

A range of opinions from speakers across the festival.

At Byline Festival Tom Watson MP, shadow secretary for Media, Culture and Sport, became the first member of the shadow front bench to call for a public inquiry into Brexit. @tom_watson

We have to find the underlying cause of whether the Brexit Referendum was stolen due to Russian interference and the Government needs to confirm whether the National Crime Agency is investigating the various components of Brexit.

If they're not, I think there does need to be an adequately resourced public inquiry so that people know the facts of the referendum. We need to get to the bottom of it and the Electoral Commission is not the right body to be tasked with investigating state interference.

Jeremy Corbyn highlighted these issues during his speech on media reform. There are too many statutory bodies looking at different components and nothing that pulls things meaningfully together.

John Cleese @JohnCleese

The awful thing about the Brexit debate was the scare tactics on both sides. Operation Fear organised by Cameron and Osborne was truly terrible. It was not a reasoned debate, but hate-fuelled nastiness on both sides.

I did support Brexit because bureaucrats run the EU and I do not want a country run by people who cannot consider the exceptions to rules – a challenge for all bureaucracy. Will it be a disaster? Maybe, or maybe it will work out well. We simply do not know.

Luke Harding, former Guardian Correspondent @Lukehardin1968

You have to ask, why is the Kremlin courting Arron Banks and offering him covert business deals? It is classic Moscow espionage. You target people, you want political intelligence, you want to be on the inside track sending cryptic cables back to Moscow on what's going on, but you are also an actor seeking from outside to influence events.

I do not know whether Arron Banks' multi-million pound donation for Brexit was his money or someone

else's. What I do know is that we need something like the Robert Mueller investigation. Without this, Brexit is invalid. If there was cheating and malign Russian covert assistance and espionage in the Leave campaign, then I do not see how democratically it can stand.

Putin hates the European Union: a strong, powerful bloc on his doorstep and that is why he has done everything he can to subvert it. Brexit has been a great triumph for him.



Chris Wylie, Cambridge Analytica whistleblower. @Chrisinsilico

Since Brexit and the revelations about how the referendum – our very democracy – was hacked, people have become more aware of how information is shared. People voted based on false promises and flat-out lies.

Offering people to rethink that decision is not undermining democracy but ensuring that democracy works. A People's Vote would not be a second referendum, but a first legal, fair and free referendum.

Molly Cato, Green Party MEP for Southwest England. @MollyMEP

People want freedom and the leave slogan 'Take back control' really made it clear that was what people were looking for when leaving the EU. The most important question we can ask ourselves in terms of Brexit is who is taking back control, and from whom?

The irony is we are going to end up considerably less free, if we allow Brexit to go ahead. The control of central Government and the ability for recourse will be considerably reduced because of Brexit.

Brexit is the result of fear of change and particularly of the speed of globalisation. We are now able to fly around the world and connect with people across the globe, but we have also become less connected to our communities. Brexit was a symptom of people's frustration at the breakdown of their communities. What we need to do is focus on the cause, rather than the symptom, so we can move forward meaningfully and together.

Francisca Oxley, Marketing Director for a travel company.

Many EU citizens who have been living in the UK for a long time are not aware about their immigration status, which could make them illegal or undocumented. They can be in jeopardy, in danger of losing their jobs and getting their bank accounts frozen, and it can really destroy people's lives.

The Government has a big task trying to reach all of these EU citizens and my message here is that they should not underestimate how difficult it is going to be. The infrastructure and application process alone will cost the taxpayer millions of pounds – but the human cost of getting it wrong could be catastrophic.

Do we need a People's Vote? Have your say at #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.



BYLINE FEST

Press and Politics

10. “The Guardian are now Letting Us All Down”

Hacked Off activist Professor Brian Cathcart, of Kingston University, issues a call to arms to fight corruption in British news media. @BrianCathcart

Journalists often say ‘most journalists are doing a good job’, but it’s a message I am fed up hearing. Actually most journalists are shirking their responsibilities to inform the public. Journalism is about the truth, and good journalists do not walk by; good journalists do not ignore truths that are right before their eyes.

In a BBC interview in 1968 – when he was looking to buy The Times – Rupert Murdoch said that newspapers have a great power for good and discussed how they shine lights on scandals, hidden from the public eye. He also said that newspapers have a great power for evil – the power not to report things, the power to hide the truth from their readers.

A recent poll asked ‘Do you believe journalists tell the truth?’ In the case of red-top journalists, only seven per cent of people said yes. In the case of the Daily Mail you may be surprised to hear it was as high as 14 per cent. This lack of trust in journalists is not a problem across Europe, it is a British problem and reflects the way our press is failing us. Britain is 33rd out of 33 countries in the ‘trust’ league for journalism. Not a single newspaper in this country has reported this damning statistic.

The entire UK newspaper industry is complicit in hiding the truth of the scandal that is the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) complaints procedure and the scandal that is the cancellation of Leveson Two. Journalists are walking by, ignoring the important issues about how the press works in this country.

Yvette Cooper MP raised the perfect example during the “Hate Speech” session of the Home Affairs Select Committee. She pointed out that during a 12-month period IPSO had received 8,148 complaints relating to discrimination and had upheld just one. IPSO admitted this was true.

This was incredible. By turning its back in this way the regulator is effectively telling newspapers they have leeway to discriminate. Again, however, not a single newspaper covered this and not even one reporter attended the committee. I trolled the Guardian on Twitter, asking where they were and why they were not covering the story. They have scarcely reported anything about the failures of IPSO over the past four years. That is why The Guardian are failing us all. They are no longer reporting on the scandal that is our press.

It gets worse. When the issue of Leveson Two came up in Parliament, the Guardian – the newspaper that unveiled the scandal of phone-hacking – actually published a leader arguing against a public inquiry into press criminality.

It was a fourfold betrayal. It betrayed their own journalists, who with Nick Davies leading the way, laboured brilliantly to expose criminality and wrongdoing at national newspapers. It betrayed the blameless and often vulnerable victims of those crimes, who were promised a full inquiry. It betrayed their readers and it betrayed the public at large, who as Sir Brian Leveson pointed out, are entitled to know the true scale of what went wrong, how newspaper managements allowed it to happen and what lessons can be learned.

How can that be? It is about money.

The Guardian, like every other British newspaper, is up to its neck in the Cairncross Review, set up by the former Culture Secretary Matt Hancock to look into the sustainability of what is described as 'high-quality' journalism in the UK. Ministers plainly expect it to propose ways of milking tech giants for money, which can then be handed over to newspapers. The Guardian does not want to be left out when cash it is given out.

Now it is possible that the review will simply suggest a better online advertising deal for news providers, but it is hard to see why we need a review for that. Everyone already knows such a deal is desirable and if there is anything the Government or the industry can do to make it happen, they should surely be doing it now rather than sitting on their hands for a year. Far more likely is that it wants the review to propose some kind of tax and to help sell the idea to the public and in Parliament by providing a winning rationale in the form of dire warnings about the plight of 'high-quality journalism'.

So let us be clear: any money raised as tax is public money – our money – and the idea that this might find its way into the pockets of Rupert Murdoch, Lord Rothermere, the Barclay brothers or the people who run the Mirror and Express is unacceptable. Of the many reasons why it is unacceptable, here are three.

- We would be subsidising mainly low-quality or bad journalism, since these organisations obviously do not consistently produce 'high-quality journalism' and refuse to accept regulation capable of upholding high

standards;

- It would be good money after bad, since we already subsidise their businesses very generously (notably but not exclusively through VAT zero-rating) and the returns for the public in terms of journalistic standards and innovation are so meagre;

- It is wholly inappropriate, and indeed, it is corrupt, for a one-party minority government even to consider unilaterally offering public cash to organisations whose job is to hold it to account.

Many of these newspapers, moreover, are divisive, dishonest and cruel in their coverage of minorities – and that is never a badge of 'high-quality journalism'. They operate as a cartel, rarely reporting on one another's' business and never investigating one another's' activities, so that the public is hardly ever offered insight into their wrongdoings and failures.

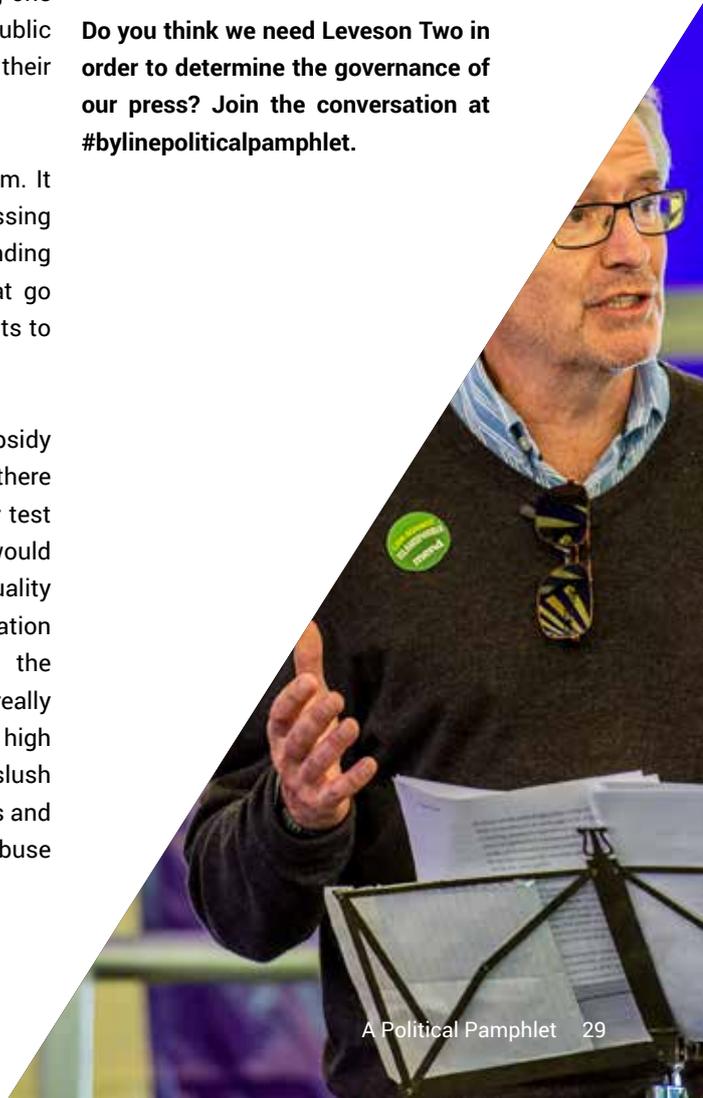
This is not high-quality journalism. It is thuggery and corruption passing itself off as journalism and demanding the freedoms and privileges that go with it. And the Government wants to subsidise it.

Let's be clear. If there is to be a subsidy for journalism – and many agree there is a case for it – the only proper test of where the money should go would be a Leveson test. Where the quality of journalism is upheld by regulation meeting the standards set in the Leveson Report, the public can really be confident that it will be of high quality. Otherwise it will be a slush fund for the Government's friends and a subsidy for organisations that abuse ordinary members of the public.

If you want to know anything about the prospect of corrupt press subsidies or the cancellation of Leveson 2, or if you want to know about the disgraceful excuse for a regulator that is IPSO, don't read the press. They are exercising their great power for evil.

The journalists working at the papers that do this, indeed all of the journalists, including those on local papers, who are content to operate behind the screen of a sham regulator that fails complainants and dishes out cruelty, are tainted. They are not doing a good job; they are doing a bad one. And to those who make the excuse that they have mortgages to pay and can't buck the system I reply that they clearly have their price. They are prostituting their talents and can make no claim to journalistic principle.

Do you think we need Leveson Two in order to determine the governance of our press? Join the conversation at #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.



11. “Attack Journalism Poisons our News and Political Discourse.”

Dr Bethany Usher, lecturer at Newcastle University and former tabloid journalist, explores why Attack Journalism dominates news and politics and the regulatory changes needed to tackle it. @bethanyusher

Trust in journalism has collapsed. While polls in both the UK and US show that more than 80% of people believe journalism has a crucial part to play in our democracies, as few as 30% think that it is doing so.

Audiences particularly pinpoint fake news and political bias as damaging their ability to know the facts. Both fuel spectacles of attack. Used by politicians and journalists to shore up their own influence and diminish that of others, attacks are now networked, snaking across social media timelines and websites, television and the pages of newspapers. They seem to develop lives of their own, framed and reframed again; debated, dissected and disseminated.

Attack journalism — the process by which one or several journalism publications target individuals using personalised and sustained criticism — is the cultural and linguistic father of this culture. Brutal and aggressive, it tears at the image of an individual, simultaneously raising their public visibility and casting them as beyond the pale.

Few industries have a “pack mentality” like journalism. If a story is important to one news outlet, it perks the interest of others, often republished without further verification. Early research into news culture identified how it works to frame our understanding of others and ourselves, our leaders and our institutions.

Attack journalism can ostracise those who threaten political, social, economic orders — and indeed the cultural hegemony of the industry — from public spheres.

As part of both political and celebrity news cultures, it constructs potentials and barriers to how we should - and can-live. It is a noisy example of how discourses of “us” and “other” maintain versions of identity, which perpetuate the symbols, values and beliefs which govern society. As an adversarial technique, it can increase political polarisation and limit engagement in the public sphere and should be moved to the margins to build civility and open-mindedness into the foundations of political debate.

Attack Journalism is not new, and ironically, given this publication aims to resurge the pamphlet; it was Thomas Paine — the greatest of the 18th Century pamphleteers — who was arguably its earliest target. His popularity made him a substantial risk to social and political norms by many newspapers — economic and social hegemony of the ruling classes — and so they attacked him.

Attack Journalism is not new, and ironically, given this publication aims to resurge the pamphlet; it was Thomas Paine — the greatest of the 18th Century pamphleteers — who was arguably its earliest target.

Criticisms of Paine were often class based; he had a “mind not disciplined by early education” and was part of the “greasy multitude” (Oracle, October 3 1792). This coverage coincided with arrests and trials for booksellers caught with copies of Rights of Man after it was banned in late 1792. The impact of these events on the news agenda should not be underestimated – Paine’s exile in France was the “Principal Occurrence of 1792” in the New Year lists of The Oracle, Sun and True Briton. Celebrification became a weapon aimed to prevent readers from engaging with his views.

It was in this attack that the use of belittling adjectives – a still familiar technique to readers of British tabloid newspapers particularly – was established.

Newspapers represented Paine as an outcast and traitor. They described how he was “hissed and hooted” at by crowds as he made his escape across the channel into exile (Public Advertiser, September 19, 1792). He was literally the devil – a “Beelzebub” (The Times, July 14, 1792, Morning Herald, June 15, 1792)- as well as a “Traitor” (Morning Herald December 22, 1792); a “public pest”; “envious” of the wealthy (The Times, May 7, 1792); (Oracle, October 3 1792); “seditious” and “scandalous” (Morning Herald, Jan 22, 1793) and was dismissed as “Mad Tom” and “Poor Tommy” (The Times, July 14, 1792). Newspapers reported they had obtained his military records, which “reveal[ed]” he was a thief” (Public Advertiser, December 28 1792). They questioned his sexuality, suggesting that his breeches were found in the “water closet” (The Times, May 11 1792) and described his effigy being burnt across the country, from Devizes

(The Oracle, December 24 1792) to Essex (Morning Herald, December 22 1792), Taunton (Morning Chronicle, December 25 1792) to North Yorkshire (Morning Chronicle, January 7 1793).

Recent targets for this kind of discourse include Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn and England footballer Raheem Sterling. The attack on Sterling, for example, was led by tabloid newspapers, whom he both slighted by refusing to give interviews (a commercial risk in a competitive market) and openly criticised for their representations of young black men (a risk to their representations of “white privilege”). His unapologetic displays of “blackness”, discussions of his difficulties as a child immigrant and that he should be considered an exception rather than as an example of social inclusion (The Player’s Tribune, June 22, 2018), are considered an affront to the perspectives on immigration and race purported by parts of the British press. They argue his “otherness”, despite his position as a leading figure in English football and, via social media, encourage their audiences to do the same.

So what can we do about it? I propose we need to tackle it at both an individual and regulatory level. Firstly, we can all spot it and call it out using our own platforms. The hallmarks are it is sustained, usually across multiple publications and it often refers to characteristics of difference such as class, race, gender or sex, sexuality, religion or disability.

It moves beyond or there is no ‘public interest’, it often creates false narratives or ‘fake news’ and it offers little space for ‘right to reply’.

When you spot these hallmarks, challenge those writing and circulating the content via letters to editors and on social media.

Secondly, there is need to redraft current Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) and OFCOM codes to include ‘harassment’ and ‘fairness’ also to consider what happens at publication, rather than during ‘newsgathering’ as they currently stand. Through this, editors across news platforms would have to ‘defend’ incidents of attack in the public interest, rather than it being the current free-for-all. That could make a real difference to the health of our public debate.

Have you come across other examples of ‘attack journalism’? Join the discussion #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.



12. “The Things People ask me about being a Tabloid Hack.”

Byline and former News of the World journalist Graham Johnson talks phone hacking – and why he turned himself in. @Graham_Johnson

I wrote a book called Hack in 2012, blowing the lid on what it was like to be a News of The World reporter, at the height of its lawlessness, before phone hacking busted it out. Here’s the chapter I wrote on private investigators – the secretive foot soldiers at the dark heart of Britain’s biggest ever white-collar organised crime group.

When I started at the News of The World, it was like becoming a ‘made man’ in the mafia. I got access to a secret world that I never knew existed. Vice and secrecy were the stock-in-trade. The objective was simple - the destruction of peoples’ lives with hitman precision. The mafia use trained button men to do their dirty work. Our secret weapon was the private detective.

Sixteen years later News International Exec Chairman and super scion James Murdoch may not have liked his company being compared to the mafia. And he denied to a parliamentary committee to ever knowing about the private detectives that his company employed to smear lawyers investigating phone hacking.

But for me, working at the Screws was like watching a live version of Goodfellas streamed in real-time before my eyes in which everyone was getting leaned on. And private detectives were the enforcers that would have made Sammy ‘the bull’ Gravano wince.

Not long after my first day, I was given a list of confidential numbers.

One for a shed-worker gumshoe that could ‘spin’ phone numbers. Another for a ‘blogger’ – a professional impersonator/mimic – who can deceive people into giving out valuable info on the phone. Another for an expert ‘tracer’ who can find the whereabouts of anyone in the world, by tracking their financial footprint. A ‘sub-contractor’ with a contact at the Driver and Vehicle Licencing Agency (DVLA), that could ‘convert’ car registrations. An ex-Customs officer, who had an insider in the passport office, that could slip out mugshots and bio data of anyone who had ever been abroad. A retired copper that could pull CROs – criminal records – including confidential police intelligence reports. A mind-boggling array of ‘secret squirrels’ were just a phone call away.

Private detectives were like smart bombs. They enabled me to destroy peoples’ lives with surgical expediency. Without having to do lots of tedious legwork. Like the CIA calling in a drone strike, I didn’t even have to leave the office.

I had no idea papers used these ‘inquiry agents’, as they were called, despite selling stories to national newspapers for two years.

I found out by accident about one week into the job when I was desperately trying to come up with a story. I was trying to trace a couple of alleged real-life body-snatchers using electoral rolls and a phone book. But the Features Editor walked over and said:

'Take this number down,' he said. 'His name is Steve Whittamore. He's a PI.'

On the other end of the line was a jovial, avuncular voice with a dry wit. Steve lived in a sunny part of Hampshire on the coast. He had a gentle but mischievous sense of humour that was a refreshing ray of light in the tricky atmosphere at the News of the World. We hit it off immediately. I gave Steve the surname of the person I was trying to trace.

'Do you know where they live?' Steve asked. I gave him the name of the approximate cities and towns where I thought the person might be.

'All's I know,' I said, 'is that one of them is in Wiltshire and she's a woman in her mid thirties and she's probably married.'

Within half an hour he was back on with an ex-directory phone number.

'Do you want anything else?' he asked.

'What like?' I said

'Well, I've got her address, and the names and ages of the woman and everyone who lives at that house with her.'

In 30 minutes, he'd traced a target that it would have taken me two days to find in a previous life – saving me a 200 mile round trip to Wiltshire and a ball-aching day of banging doors looking for people who like to have sex with dead bodies.

Steve was basically at the centre of a spider's web of secret inquiry agents. Each one had a crafty speciality.

For instance, in Salisbury, Steve knew an investigator whose talent was pilfering mobile phone companies, including British Telecom, of their data.

The sub-contractors could have dealt direct with us, but because Steve was such an amenable and trustworthy

person, they all bounced off him. He was a front-of-house broker for Britain's network of shady data pirates.

I began to use Steve on almost every story that I worked on and found out the full reach of his services.

Steve Whittamore's business was raided by the police in 2003, and he was convicted of data protection crimes in 2005. His files were confiscated by the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office.)

My name was amongst the first to be discovered in his News of the World 'books' – and on his contacts list.

Today, Steve Whittamore is a witness for the claimants in phone hacking and blagging litigation at the High Court.



Private detectives were like smart bombs. They enabled me to destroy peoples' lives with surgical expediency. Without having to do lots of tedious legwork.



13. “Mass Surveillance might not have Stopped Known and Potential Terrorists from Killing. But it has Terrorised Journalists.”

Former ABC correspondent, Australian journalist, Andrew Fowler outlines the threat of surveillance on journalists. @AndrewJFowler

Thanks to Edward Snowden, the former US National Security Agency (NSA) analyst, we now know that every mobile phone is a tracking device, every mobile phone tower acts as a surveillance arm of government, we are all being watched and examined like never before.

Journalists, in particular – and their sources – are under a surveillance siege, in the so-called Five Eyes countries – the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the English-speaking intelligence-sharing cartel led by the NSA. Ironically, it is one of the smaller nations, Australia that leads the pack. Since 2001, they have enacted a record-breaking 58 separate pieces of surveillance and counter terrorism legislation since 2001.

Such is the secrecy surrounding many of these draconian laws the first a journalist may know the government believes they have broken the law is a knock on the door and an arrest warrant. Anyone who tells the journalist that there’s an inquiry taking place into his or her activities can be jailed for two years.

The UK has the Investigatory Powers Act (2017) and in the USA, it is the Freedom Act. Like Australia’s laws, they supposedly protect us from terrorism. But do they really? As an exercise, in my latest book, *Shooting the Messenger: Criminalising Journalism*, I decided to examine just how effective mass surveillance was in stopping terrorist attacks. In the 37 cases of terrorism against the West since 9/11, I identified that in 29 of the cases the killers were already on a watch list, or the security agencies knew about them. Three-quarters of the terrorists were already known to security agencies.

While the spies were using mass surveillance to watch everyone else, those they should have been guarding closely – that they already knew about – got through. The Bataclan in Paris, London Bridge and Borough Markets, the Boston Marathon and in many other places, greater focus might have saved lives.

Mass surveillance might not have stopped known and potential terrorists from killing. However, it has terrorised journalists. Research by the Pew Research Centre and Dr Paul Lashmar, of City University, reveal the 'chilling effect' these laws are having on journalists. They are so fearful of being tracked, they are turning away from important stories about national security.

In 2014, Human Rights Watch (HRW) produced a 90-page research report 'With Liberty to Monitor All: How Large-Scale US surveillance is Harming Journalism, Law and American Democracy'. Several journalists told how the new challenges they faced significantly impeded news coverage of 'matters of great public concern'.

Many also emphasised the extra time needed to protect their sources and communications. "It's a tax on my time," said New York Times reporter Bart Gellman. "I could do double the work if I weren't spending so much effort on encryption and a secure workflow between networked and air-gapped machines."

Part of the delay came from journalists shying away from digital technology, opting for pre-internet forms of communication to avoid surveillance. "Mail is slow," observed Martin Knobbe, a New York-based correspondent for Stern Magazine. "It can take two weeks to get an okay to meet someone."

Many journalists pointed out that the amount of information provided or confirmed by sources was diminishing. Informants were becoming less candid when communicating through email or by phone. There were other problems too. Fear of surveillance forced journalists to carry out often expensive travel to meet their sources face to face – money that cash-strapped media organisations were disinclined to provide for speculative ventures, which may produce nothing after months of work.

// **Journalists, in particular – and their sources – are under a surveillance siege, in the so-called Five Eyes countries – the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand** //

As Peter Maass, a senior writer for The Intercept noted, 'The government doesn't need to know what people are talking about – just that they're talking.' Maass described an approach by a would-be source, whom he never heard of again after he urged him to mail him information rather than sending it electronically. Maas suspects the reason is that he made him aware of the dangers.

With sources drying up, and journalists fearful of accusations of criminal activity, simply for doing their job, the ability of the Fourth Estate to play its vital role in holding government to account, is seriously under threat. Perhaps that is what governments want. But we must do all we can to support journalists who are still working to expose the truth.

Andrew Fowler is the author of Shooting the Messenger: Criminalising Journalism (Routledge, UK, 2018). Join the discussion #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.

Journalist Nick Davies at BylineFest 18



14. “Only Five Corporations own our Local Newspapers and the big Tech Firms are Buying up Digital Start-ups. That is a Problem for our Democracy.”

Nick Davies and Tom Watson MP consider how media monopolies are damaging journalism’s democratic functions.

Tom Watson MP @Tom_Watson

In the last ten years, the media landscape has changed completely. Hundreds of local newsrooms have closed, which then means they do not cover large parts of the country at all. There are half the number of regional reporters. At the same time, five companies have bought up most local newspapers.

We are also seeing the development of digital monopolies with now two companies – Facebook and Google – dominating the digital advertising landscape, with about 60 per cent of total revenue. There have also been five trillion dollars’ worth of media merges. This landscape of media monopoly is simply anti-democratic.

We are coming to the end of the age of Murdoch and Dacre. However, we do not want billionaire, unaccountable, Silicon Valley oligarchs simply replacing billionaire, unaccountable press barons. It would not help democracy to replace Rupert Murdoch with Mark Zuckerberg. We need to shake up the entire media market and tackle monopolies.

It is against this landscape, that we need to consider ways to shake up the regulation and management of our news

media. I think we need to look at the introduction of more public interest tests, holding people accountable for their corporate leadership and consider how we can ensure they are not working in the interests of corporations.

If you look at what is happening at the London Evening Standard, for example, we have discovered that businesses are paying for positive editorial. It is crooked, it is corrosive to public debate and it breaks every ethical code in the journalism book. The first thing you learn is the difference between editorial and advertising. We need to ensure we have regulators who are robust enough to deal with issues such as this.

Secondly, I think we need to look at an innovation test for competition laws. We have to stop giant technology companies hoovering up all our creative start-ups in the digital and media space.

Why is that important? Because Google has bought 215 businesses since 2000. Facebook has bought 69 companies in the last decade. They are becoming data monopolies that are stopping new forms of media models from having any chance of competing in the current market.

My colleague Liam Byrne did a very good job at proposing a digital bill of rights that would enshrine in law the idea that citizens own their own data which would sort of rebalance the power between the citizens and the big tech platforms. It focused on misuse of personal data or the unknown commercialisation of their content, which I think is what troubles many people in this country.

Another suggestion is a regulator just for these monopoly tech platforms. I think that would mean that the existing regulations – European and UK laws – would be enforced and new legislation could be drafted when needed. Through these kinds of actions, we can stop the monopolies causing democratic crises.

Nick Davies @Bynickdavies former Guardian reporter, who led the phone-hacking investigation, discusses the shift from Murdoch media monopolies to digital ones.

People often misunderstand the problem with Rupert Murdoch owning so much of our media. They think it is about him telling journalists what they must write or cover and of course, he does do that sometimes, but his focus is primarily about making money.

The bigger issue is political power and interference with democracy. For example, over the summer, Australian Prime Minister Malcom Turner was ousted and Murdoch played a key part by using his news media to call for his resignation. He is constantly trying to manipulate power.

He also stops criticism of him. He was able to prevent a film focusing on his influence because people in the media fear him and do not want to step in his way or face his wrath. They can face a 'Rupert Roadblock'.

At the height of the phone-hacking scandal, Tom Watson made a speech about how Murdoch breeds fear both in and beyond journalism. While ordinary people are not frightened of Murdoch, powerful people often are. They have seen friends and colleagues have their private lives exposed and so they do not want to risk the same. This, of course, extends his power.

We need Leveson Two to find the underlying impacts of his power and we need to implement an independent regulator, where serving editors are not involved. This is not about the state telling the news media what to write,

but rather ensuring that they are acting fairly and properly. Newspapers are making space for fake news and advertorial dressed up as editorial in order to make money. Mainstream news media are publishing falsehoods, often because resources are slashed to the bone in newsrooms. Journalism cannot work properly without investment. Taking time from journalists by stretching what is expected is like taking steel from steel workers.

This is why we have vast increases in the number of PR stories in newspapers. Now more than 60 per cent of articles come from press releases and PR companies. Publicists are literally deciding what newspapers publish about their companies.

We have crossed into a kind of information chaos, where communication channels of all kinds, are riddled with falsehood. Can the traditional press really point the finger at fake news on social media, for example, if they are doing it too?

There is increased levels of propaganda, not just by Russia but also by the USA and NATO. One of the biggest problems we face is the number of fake accounts – eight million on Facebook alone – where Russian operatives pretend to be Yoga teachers and suddenly, when there is a moment of democratic action, they kick into play. They add poison into our system during democracy's most vulnerable and important times. We need new rules of regulation to tackle the way these sophisticated tools are making are creating information bias.

At the same time audiences are not protected. User data is crunched and sold on to advertisers. Digital companies have stolen media's business model and now have a monopoly over the digital advertising market. Facebook and Google dominate it and that information is used in a whole manner of different ways.

So how can we tackle these issues? One thing, which should be done quickly, is taxing Google and Facebook to put the money back into newsrooms so that they are properly funded again. This kind of investment would mean journalists, once again, have the time to report and investigate properly.

“ We have crossed into a kind of information chaos, where communication channels of all kinds, are riddled with falsehood. ”

15. “How Debates around ‘Objectivity’ Threaten the Long-Term Future of the BBC.”

Ivor Gaber, Professor of Political Journalism at the University of Sussex and a former political journalist with BBC Radio and TV, ITV News, Channel Four and Sky News. @ivorgaber

“Objectivity means stating this fact is wrong, and that fact is true, and not giving any airtime to total nonsense at all. Where facts can be established, your duty is to tell the truth. Objective truth really exists. Your job is to find it and tell it. Have confidence, broadcasters. Your country needs you!”

These words were spoken by Matt Hancock, former UK Secretary of State for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport, who was then responsible for broadcasting, before a gathering of the great and the good of the British broadcasting industry in March 2018. They represent both a startling naivety and an ominous threat to the short and long-term standing, and funding, of public service broadcasting in general, and the BBC in particular.

At a time where concerns about fake news are a prominent preoccupation, and with Britain wrestling with the problem of Brexit, the preservation and enhancement of a strong and independent public service broadcasting news service is ever more vital. The BBC, warts and all, forms the bedrock of the UK’s Public Service Broadcasting system. In the words of Michael Grade, when he chaired Channel Four. “It’s the BBC that keeps us honest”.

The Conservative minister’s recent words were not spontaneous, but part of a prepared speech that was subsequently distributed to journalists and posted on the ministerial website.

It might sound like a call for clarity, but in fact, it reflects serious threats to the future of public service broadcasting in the UK.

The notion that there is a simple ‘objective truth’ that broadcasters locate and disseminate, is not just naïve, but dangerous. How does a regulated news service, with obligations to fairness and impartiality, report a campaign or party that is clearly seeking to mislead the public? Does it challenge the misrepresentations at every turn, making every on-screen interview sound the same, running the risk of boring the viewer and alienating the offending party? Should the broadcaster follow every misrepresentation with a fact-checking balancing statement, running the same risks? Alternatively, should the broadcaster simply ignore the offending party or campaign, risking being seen in breach of their fairness obligations? Indeed, all three cases leave the regulated broadcaster facing the risk of being sanctioned by their regulator and it is in this context we must view Hancock’s discussions.

“The BBC, warts and all, forms the bedrock of the UK’s Public Service Broadcasting system. In the words of Michael Grade, when he chaired Channel Four: “It’s the BBC that keeps us honest”.

This is not simply theoretical. The 2016 EU referendum campaign presented broadcasters and the BBC in particular, with very real problems. Most of the BBC's political staff that I have spoken with felt that later in the campaign they were required to give greater prominence to 'Leave' rather than 'Remain'. They told me it was because BBC News management were increasingly concerned that they were giving 'Remain' greater prominence and so the order went out to tilt the balance of coverage to 'Leave'. If imbalance there was, it was because, as one political correspondent told me, he was getting no 'real' news from the 'Leave' campaign, other than press releases containing unsubstantiated assertions. "I was going back to 'Leave' saying 'your press releases are rubbish', he said. "I would ask them to harden up the stories. I remember, whilst working on one Sunday night package, I was told to have more 'Leave' clips than 'Remain'. This meant I was delivering unbalanced packages to compensate for what was seen as some earlier imbalance."

Thus the BBC, in seeking to meet its fairness obligations, 'balanced' statements of verifiable fact from the Remain campaign with simple denials or assertions from Leave. For example, they 'balanced' 10 Nobel Prize-winning economists with a refutation from one Leave-supporting economist. This was not about objectivity or fact.

Subsequent to Matt Hancock's speech at Oxford, I challenged his understanding of 'the truth' – and how easy it was to define it. I cited a recent example of the Prime Minister claiming that extra funding for the National Health Service would be a "Brexit dividend". Every leading

economist had dismissed it as manifestly untrue; but when I put it to Mr Hancock that this is, a classic case when broadcasters should focus on 'objective truth' he blithely rejected it. He simply claimed that the Prime Minister's contentious prediction was "a true fact" and the opinions of the economists were "wrong facts".

The Minister was out-of-step with the regulations that govern news coverage on the BBC and the other public service broadcasters. The Corporation's own Editorial Code, and the Ofcom Broadcasting Code, make no mention of 'objectivity'. Instead, both stress the notion of 'due impartiality' in news coverage. This concept has proven invaluable to broadcasters in their arguments with governments, and others, who believe that they have been unfairly treated. 'Due impartiality' requires that broadcasters are judged, not by the fairness of one particular item or programme, but by how 'fair' they have been across the entire output of that particular channel. For the Government to maintain that 'facts' are either true or false, and that there is an 'objective truth' waiting to be discovered, means they can move from merely complaining to intimidating the broadcasters. For the BBC, dependent on government approval of the licence fee, this represents a real threat to their continuing ability to provide the UK with a news service that, until now, has been the most used and most trusted source in Britain.

Despite a plethora of research demonstrating the broad political impartiality of the BBC, Conservatives have long complained that the Corporation is biased against them. In the heightened political polarisation

of Brexit, these complaints could turn into action. The combination of this with governmental naivety and prejudice, could lead to severe damage to Britain's broadcasting ecology. It is not inconceivable that a future Conservative Government could suggest the abolition of the licence fee, which has been under increasing pressure because of the rise of pay-to-view and streaming services.

Indeed, only recently Sir Michael Lyons, a former Chair of the BBC Trust said: "We had here a charter review process which has been littered with wild kites flown which, although we can't see that the string is held by the Secretary of State, the suspicion is that actually it's people very close to him. His own comments suggest that we might be blessed by a future without the BBC. Is the BBC strong enough to withstand a challenge to its integrity and impartiality?"

It would be tragic if the failings of the BBC over Brexit and their biased coverage of Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn – which has alienated many of the Corporation's natural allies on the left of the political spectrum – provides the real enemies of public service broadcasting the ability to further undermine it. Right-wing politicians and sections of the printed press, who have commercial and ideological scores to settle, are looking for opportunities to reduce its power as part of the national public sphere. If they succeed, it risks the quality of our democracy.

What do you think about the BBC and balance? Is our public broadcaster at risk? Join the conversation at #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.

16. “Racism, Anti-Semitism and the Monstering of Muslims”

A range of opinions from speakers across the festival on racism, Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, including Baroness Warsi, John Cleese, Naz Shah MP, Dr Shazad Amin, CEO of MEND (Muslim Engagement and Development) and Gary Lineker

Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, former chairperson of the Conservative Party, discusses institutional Islamophobia. @sayeedawarsi

The press dehumanizes politicians and certainly, you have to go and talk of them and defend the indefensible. For me, that reached breaking point following the Conservative Party stance on Gaza on 2014 where they defended the actions of Israel and wandered off further to the right.

After I left, I wrote a book titled *The Enemy Within* and the title came from an Islamophobic slur made about me when I was a politician. I was on the National Security Council and a right-wing journalist stated after a terror attack that it was “having the enemy at the table”. This is just one example of the many instances of Islamophobia I faced while I was in a senior role for the Conservatives.

I am done with these loyalty tests or slurs against me and other Muslims. I will not take lessons in patriotism or loyalty from people who deeply despise the wonderful and diverse place this nation is.

What Boris Johnson’s column did was highlight again how British Muslims – and particularly British Muslim women – are a convenient political scapegoat. Questions must be asked. If we do not show that abuse such as this is out of line, we are not committed to being an inclusive party.

The Labour Party must do the same in regards to anti-Semitism. If minority groups are feeling uncomfortable, then both political parties need to do some soul searching. We do not want to get into a situation where there are separate political parties for different ethnicities. It should be about ideas. However, why, as things stand, would a Muslim vote Conservative or a Jewish person vote Labour?



Naz Shah MP at BylineFest 18

Dr Shazad Amin, CEO of MEND, discusses how news handles islamophobia differently to other forms of racism. @DrShazadAmin

Islamophobia is not a new thing; it did not start with Boris Johnson's comment or the latest The Sun headline. However, what is becoming clearer is the difference in how it is tackled in comparison to other types of racial abuse.

Muslims are a racialized group. Racial legislation protects the Jewish community and there should be equal protection for Muslims too. The perfect example of the imbalance is the way anti-Semitism in the Labour Party was reported in comparison to Islamophobia in the Tory party. The media has been relentless in pursuing Jeremy Corbyn and Labour. No matter what is said – or done – the story never ends. Why is it so different for Muslims in relation to the Conservative Party?

The media, quite rightly, afforded victims the loudest voices and debate was driven by voices from the Jewish community. However, when discussing Tory islamophobia most news outlets ignored the perspectives of Muslims. There have been various letters and examples provided to the Conservative Party about its issue with Islamophobia, yet they still deny that there is a problem and the press appear willing to go along with that.

It only became a story when a high profile politician such as Boris Johnson made Islamophobic comments. Even then, victim's voices were of little importance – compared to the coverage focused on Johnson himself. The media waited outside of

his house, drank his tea and almost completely ignored Muslim voices. We were not even given space to discuss it.

John Cleese, comedian and writer. @JohnCleese

The difference between comments made by Boris Johnson describing Muslim women as letter boxes and the kind of satire of religion the Pythons did in films such as the Holy Grail and Life of Brian is the intent and consequence.

In order to be funny, it cannot be cruel. You have to consider how much pain it is causing to people and we had long discussions about some of our sketches. For example, one of the funniest scenes in the Holy Grail is when the knight has his legs and arms chopped off. It is funny because he does not show any pain. He just keeps on going, unruffled by what has happened. It is not a laugh at the real pain of another human being.

What Boris said about women and the Burka is not funny because it is directed at real women and it causes real pain to them. The statistics around increased attacks speak for themselves.

Naz Shah, MP for Bradford West, has both experienced islamophobia as an MP and was accused of anti-Semitism after she posted a meme commenting on Israeli policy on Facebook. @NazShahBfd

It is disheartening where the political parties are in regards to these issues and that the communities do not feel they have a place in both political

parties. There should be no hierarchy between Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. I was suspended from the Labour Party for anti-Semitism for a meme I once shared on my Facebook page, which I regret. The Labour Party had an enquiry and I was suspended as a result. That is what happens when a complaint is made and it is what should happen.

I want people to accept others and celebrate their differences and I want our political leaders to do the same. Political parties should be embracing the different and focusing on what we have in common.

We must address problems with anti-Semitism and islamophobia across political parties and lines. One argument is that people in politics are also exploiting those issues and other people for point-scoring and that is certainly true. However, if there is not a problem, then it cannot be exploited. It is important we focus on tackling the cause and not the symptom.

We need to reach out and build bridges with the community and gain back the trust that we lost. We need to engage with all sections of the Jewish community. It is not just Jeremy's job; it is all our responsibility in this party. The Jewish community must define anti-Semitism as they see fit and the Muslim community should define Islamophobia. From that starting point, we can then begin to tackle the reality of these issues.

What Boris said about women and the burka is not funny because it is directed at real women and it causes real pain to them. //

Isobel Ingham-Barrow, scholar of Middle Eastern studies, Head of Policy and Research at MEND. @mendcommunity

Is it enough that we ask our political representatives, the ones that we are supposed to see as our role models and the pinnacle of our society only to adhere to criminal guidelines on racism?

One of the things that was overlooked in Boris Johnson's comments on the burka, for example, was that he said that he would ask women coming to him to take off their face veils to speak with him. Now that is an issue of democracy, because these are his constituents and he is their political representative. His actions mean they are less likely to speak to him.

This is not just about criminality; this is about a failure in democracy.

Author and civil rights activist Bonnie Greer argues that Black Lives Matter must learn from the history of the civil rights movement. @Bonnie1Greer

Bonnie Greer at BylineFest 18

Young people need to take advantage of the tools at their disposal to explore Black History. We are in a bad time, but it is certainly not the worst it has ever been. We need to analyse the ark of history and to build on what has gone before in the civil rights movement to move forward.

Young people need to be selfish, greedy and smart.

We are moving forward, but we need to move forward together. I am from the leader generation where most were killed and that is messed up. We need new leaders.

What is happening with Black Lives Matter shows the problems that there are in the US police force. With respect to the police force, not all cops are bad, but the institution is bad and should be fixed.

Gary Lineker on the 'Take a Knee' campaign. @GaryLineker

One of the most powerful moments in sport recently has been the actions of young NFL players such as Colin Kaepernick and the 'take the knee' stance. I was really shocked by Trump's reaction. I do not think they are disrespecting the flag – I think the President is twisting their actions. I think they are genuinely making a point and standing up for black people in America.



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equal to all.
- ⑦ Openness, autonomy and equality.
- ⑧ Universal empathy
- ⑨ Fundamental equality: end pay gap.
- ⑩ Value Humanity, Learn to listen
to each other.
- ⑪ We are not subjects
- ⑫ Open and free Press.
- ⑬ Coop based Sustainable economy
- ⑭ Affordable housing.
- ⑮ Decoupling financial influence
from political influence.
- ⑯ Evolve towards a caring Society
encompassing environment, political
collaboration, cooperation and social
equality.
- ⑰ Climate justice: Acknowledge
our responsibility: individual and
Societal in addressing climate change
No more destructive exploitation of
nature.
- ⑱ We are part of one global
ecosystem Less patriotism, more
interconnectivity.

Whistleblowing and Activism

17. “There are more Journalists and Activists Fleeing for their Lives after an Act of Conscience than Ever Before”

Gary Allison, Director of the Prisoners of Conscience Appeal Fund discusses the rise in persecution and how we can help support those who risked their lives for the rights of others. @POCappealfund

<p>Our mission is to protect and advance human rights across the world by helping to transform the lives of brave people who have exercised a non-violent act of conscience.</p>	<p>An act of conscience can be the start of an uncertain and isolated existence. Without financial help, those who have bravely made a stand may be separated from their families, in exile and without any resources for their basic human needs. Immediate assistance might include relief grants, facilitating family reunions, funding for travel arrangements, and subsistence while in hiding, in exile or fleeing danger.</p>	<p>Another is a Kurdish lawyer, human rights activist and single mother who fled Turkey with her children following government crackdowns on free speech. We awarded an academic bursary to enable her to re-qualify in the UK. She now works as at a law centre supporting refugees and others like her fleeing persecution.</p>
<p>There is a global increase in the number of journalists who are persecuted and forced to flee their countries after standing up for freedom of speech or human rights. Until 2014, we received about half a dozen applications for emergency funding to help families escape each year from journalists. In 2017, the number of grants totalled 21 and between January and August this year, we made 27 grants.</p>	<p>Examples of those we have worked with include a radio journalist from Rwanda, at threat from reporting on opposition parties – which are banned – and marginalised minority communities. Having suffered physical attacks, persecution and death threats in Uganda and subsequently in Kenya, he and his family sought resettlement via the UNHRC. At their time of acute need, we sent two grants to help them with basic living essentials and subsequently a move to secure and safe accommodation.</p>	<p>These examples show the importance of protecting journalists and activists who have risked their lives to fight for human rights. What we do is provide rapid financial assistance through grants to support safe resettlement at the greatest time of need.</p>
<p>We are also making an increased number of repeat grants for journalists who are in limbo, waiting resettlement. While journalists face similar challenge to other refugees, they are also specifically targeted and followed across borders by security forces from the countries from which they fled. In such cases, we find them accommodation in hiding, away from the main refugee camps.</p>		<p>In order to keep this work going and protect journalists we are always looking for donors and people who would like to be involved with our organisation.</p>

Please email or call us for any further information. www.prisonersofconscience.org, or email info@prisonersofconscience.org.

18. “How to Support Whistle-blowers and Investigative Journalists”

Leading whistle-blowers, investigative reporters and activists offer practical tips to support those who keep us informed and fight for our rights.

Ellen Chubb founded the Compassion in Care hotline for whistle-blowers after her own experiences speaking out against abuse of the elderly in care homes. She argues that there must be greater protections for anonymity. @CompassnInCare

We have supported more than 8,000 whistle-blowers from every sector and there are some common characteristics. They all have put other people's need to know before themselves.

We just published a special report called There is No Me in Whistleblower where we argue whistle-blowers should be protected and not to do that is simply unlawful.

I spoke out against physical abuse against elderly people. When I was questioned, I mentioned physical assault four times. However, there were no questions or interest in that from the board. All the questions were instead about fraudulent claims.

If you spent an hour working on our helpline, listening to whistle-blowers and their families, you would understand that to them it is a question of conscience. Their silence cannot be bought.

Thousands of people are abused in the care system every day in this country. There is no such thing as safeguarding. Law and justice are now different things. Whistle-blowers do not want rewards or compensation. They just want protection.

I fight for whistle-blowers, because every day I see things that happened to me happen again and nothing being done about it. So if you are going to speak out, join forces and ask for help from experienced groups like us. We take no money from official sources – we are supported through fundraising – which means we are truly independent. We promise to protect your anonymity when you reach out to us.

Find out more or contact Compassion in Care at <http://www.compassionincare.com/>

Dr Chris Day was a junior doctor when he spoke out against safety issues in a hospital in which he was training. After two years, his tribunal is due to be heard in 2018. @drcmday

Imagine you are a junior doctor and working in a hospital you realise there is something significantly wrong happening in your hospital and you raise it with the heads of the hospital. Instead of dealing with the issue, they ignore you and there are two deaths as a result.

Back then, I knew nothing about whistleblowing, but that is exactly what I did. I was accused of making up the allegations and there were systematic moves to keep me quiet. Evidence was 'lost' and more than £100,000 defending against me, instead of putting right the problems which risked lives. I am the walking example of what needs to change in order to protect whistle-blowers.

In the UK, we choose to consider this as an employment issue. We go from scandal to scandal and we do not see any further meaningful changes. Too much money is wasted trying to shut us up, instead of putting right the things we expose. As a result, the majority of people stay quiet, as the potential repercussions for their lives are too great.

Blowing the whistle is supposed to be easier than this. I made a disclosure to Health Education England (HEE), which oversees the training of junior doctors and to the hospital trust. Instead of supporting me, there was a number of counter-allegations and HEE cancelled my training number. It had a drastic impact on my career.

So if you need to speak out what can you do? I crowdfunded to fight for a tribunal after it was initially thrown out because HEE claimed that, as they were not my employer, they had no duty to protect me. Now – after three and a half years, four employment appeal tribunals, two court of appeal tribunals and with support from the whistleblowing charity PROTECT – my tribunal will finally be heard.

It is a long road, and it has been arduous for my family and me. However, the public support through crowdfunding and the work of PROTECT have helped get us all through what turned into a living nightmare.

For more information on PROTECT visit <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

Steve Middleton, chief adviser to Banking Confidential which supports financial services whistle-blowers, argues that we need a new system of protection. @stevemiddi1

Why is free speech so important in financial service?

Well not one senior banker faced repercussions for their actions in this country and that was because people did not dare speak up about the horrendous financial abuses. If you speak up, you will not only lose your job, but also have your life ruined, and in many cases have struggles with mental health issues.

We need an independent body to regulate whistleblowing in order to support people who know it is the right thing to speak out. The rules are not designed to protect whistle-blowers, so they need to be independently reviewed. Those brave people who do speak up, need to be protected, incentivised and have true anonymity.

We need to find a way not to change, but completely replace, the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) with something that works. Current rules do not protect you and the minute you speak out, you lose your anonymity.

Mary Inman is a partner in Constantine Cannon's London Office. After more than 20 years representing whistle-blowers in the US, she moved to London in July 2017 to launch the firm's international whistle-blower practice. @MaryInman94

I spent the past 23 years representing American whistle-blowers. In our country, there is a real tradition for this. We passed Lincoln's Law in 1867, which allows you to bring a case as a whistle-blower in the face of the government. In the UK, it was 1998 before we first saw legalised protection for whistle-blowers.

There are protections for whistle-blowers in the law, but also across a number of agencies. For example, in 2006 the Inland Revenue Service started their own whistleblowing service. The information goes directly to people who can do something about the wrong. In the UK often there is no place for the information to go. When people blow the whistle, managers can shoot the messenger or not listen to the message. Agencies such as the NHS need to formalise a way to listen to the message.

There needs to be more protection and support. Whistleblowing can devastate lives. Individuals can feel targeted and turn to alcohol or drugs. We need support mechanisms in place so that we value those who speak out for the good of us all.

The logo for 'BYLINE FEST' is displayed against a dark background of trees at night. The word 'BYLINE' is in white, and 'FEST' is in white letters inside a blue and green brushstroke graphic. There are some purple and blue circular light effects in the upper left corner.

BYLINE FEST

Carole Cadwalladr is an investigative reporter for The Observer who has worked with whistle-blowers to expose the malpractice of the Brexit Leave campaigns. @carolecadwalla

One of the things I feel very strongly is that we have to find a better way to fund the press. Many important issues are simply not covered. It was why it was such a relief in a way to have other journalists coming on board with the Brexit investigation, for example.

The Guardian and The Observer have no money. The money for investigative journalism is so tiny, but is so vital so it is brilliant that Byline is trying to do things to support investigative reporting and whistle-blowers.

We need to put pressure on politicians and the agencies for the change we need. People must stand together, so those speaking out and investigating are protected from threats and abuse.

What is also amazing is what is going on on Twitter. People like digging, and the sleuthing that goes on is just incredible. Anybody can do it, so I would encourage you to get involved and leak stuff. There is strength in numbers.

Whistleblower Dan Evans at BylineFest 18



Luke Harding Guardian journalist and author of New York Times best-selling book, Collusion: Secret Meetings, Dirty Money and How Russia Helped Donald Trump Win. @lukeharding1968.

There was a great mega consortium of investigative journalists who worked on the Panama Papers. There is a real sense among journalists all over the world that times are so troubled that the old paradigm of getting a scoop and hugging it tight is gone.

Investigative reporters are confronting transnational problems such as the rise of the far right, offshore money laundering, and the corruption of the political class. We cooperate, swap stories. We publish together and occasionally talk in small conspiratorial groups: in Amsterdam, in Kings Cross (where The Guardian and Observer are located). We publish and we help each other and this sharing thing, I think, is one of the few pieces of good news to come out of what has been a disastrous few years.

So what can you do to support this vital work? Well on a practical level, you can give us your money. Buy Carole a sandwich or a cup of coffee or join The Guardian as a supporter and pay us £5 a month. If you do not like The Guardian, support another democratic ventures, investigative or whistle-blowing charities. We really need you. We need your engagement. We need your activism, but we also need your cash.

Want to talk to people who are changing the world? Join the conversation using #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.

Whistleblower Shahmir Sanni at BylineFest 18



19. “Finding People to Support You is Key to Whistleblowing.”

The Times whistle-blower John Ford discusses the dark art of blagging – and why he finally spoke out. @JohnFordBlogger

Why did I blow the whistle? Vainglory, riches, fame and Snowden like notoriety – well, it was all a bit tempting. Yet, the main driver, simply, was it was doing the right thing. Murdoch and his lieutenants need stopping.

The eight years leading up to the decision were Dantean, as I descended down through stages of purgatory and hell. Steps led through gilded cages of recognition and remuneration, into a final inferno of self-loathing and despair.

Between 2010 and 2012, I felt the heat ever closer and closer. Leveson was more popular daytime television viewing than Jeremy Kyle. Mulcaire had emerged as its surprising poster boy. The mercurial Robert Jay danced around the amnesiac press. Hacked Off would hate me, so I thought. Everyone hated me. I had danced for the devil and now I used the soothing juice of the grape to numb my senses, or else my head was ablaze with fear, self-loathing and shame.

Luckily, for me, my former gang-master, John Witherow, lied under oath at the Inquiry and somehow I escaped justice. There was a knock on the door at some point from Lord Ashcroft’s solicitors, accusing me of heinous acts, but I brushed that off with more vino and sweet Diazepam. I shut the world out and waited for my next big chance. It seems funny now, but hope rested on becoming an artisan baker. I was sick, but what I did not know was that I would get sicker. Guilt and fear can do that to you. There is a lot to tell, but Johnny Cash put it pithily:

I fell into into the burning ring of fire

I fell down down down down into the deepest fire

And it burns burns burns burns the ring of fire the ring of fire

The ring of fire

The question here though is what restored me? I could not honestly answer without mention of The Samaritans. They actually listened and did not judge. They were always there. They helped me to see there was a way out of the darkness. There was one clear and consistent message – things will improve.

Yea, right! Improve so much that you need to sell your home and then all your worldly goods to keep enough petrol in the car just to drive the kids to and from ballet and football in a desperate attempt to still be some kind of dad. As I chewed extra strong mints at sidelines, I nervously looked around. I was sure all the other parents knew. I was easy to find on Google now and with a name as generic as John Ford, that is quite an achievement. Job interviews were always great for the first session, but once invited back the froideur was palpable.

It really began to change, when I began to write. My only friends – Amazon’s Audible and BBC Radio 4 – filled my head with words and gingerly, at the beginning, I popped a few down on paper. Hearing about the Sky bid and more Murdoch hegemony drove me on. I knew I was storing a nuclear weapon – the actual truth – but who would want to listen?

My first encounter with Peter Jukes was in a lawyer's office. I was twitchy, he was velvet collared and reminded me of a shifty David Essex. Still, it was now 2017 and I no longer felt the threat of evisceration by him or his funny website Byline. They were offering me a rope, but not to wrap around my neck. This was one to scale.

Several weeks later, after much cloak and dagger, I was a guest at Mr Jukes' home and there I met redeemed News of the World journalist Graham Johnson. Together — pacing up and down — we found unison in the power of telling the truth.

I chose to blow the whistle because I wanted to achieve redemption, for me, for my legacy and for my children. I wanted to see justice for the victims, including my own. I wanted to walk with my head held high in the light. I wanted peace. I still want Leveson Two.

And you know what? We might not have quite reached Calvary yet, but the path is righteous and my cross of shame is now less painful to bear. Byline saved me. Now it is up to us all to save journalism itself from its own descent into Dante's Inferno.

Whistle-blower John Ford at BylineFest18



20. “How to Be An Activist.”

Leading media and data, environmental and civil rights activists discuss how you too can fight the good fight.

DATA ACTIVISM AND PRIVACY

Hannah Couchman, advocate on technology and human rights for Liberty. @Hannah_Couchman

Schools should be inclusive environments, where you can be free about who you are and your background, but actually that is no longer the case. When a government enforces a policy like the ‘hostile environment’ on schools, it can become almost completely entrenched.

There is enormous movement for change and there have been real successes. A group of organisations including Liberty, but also Action against Borders for Children and some other fantastic grassroots organisations came together to stop the practice of collecting nationality data in schools.

There are people who are fighting on the frontline and we need to amplify those voices and start working out what role we can all play in this brick-by-brick dismantling of this horrific policy.

James Skinner, spokesperson for Docs not Cops, which fights against ID checks for medical treatment @DocsNotCops

We are a campaigning organisation made up of healthcare workers and patients campaigning together against the introduction of charges into the NHS and the introduction of racist and xenophobic policies.

All NHS Trusts are now obliged to check patients’ immigration status before providing them care.

If they are ‘ineligible’, they are charged an upfront fee before receiving treatment. We know that people are selected for immigration checks based on their appearance, based on their name and that is simply wrong.

An introduction of such suspicion and fear in the NHS is driving more and more people away and every day we see the devastating impacts of people being too afraid to access care. Our activists understand that healthcare is a fundamental human right and are making small steps every day.

Kawoon Khamosh, BBC Journalist reporting on international human rights. @KawoonKhamoosh

There is a lot to talk about in relation to digital and human rights across the globe and how governments, against activists, journalists and the public at large, use data. In Afghanistan, for example, during the presidential election, many candidates hired troll teams to attack whoever criticised them on social media. I call them digital vampires. It is a kind of counter-activism used to prop up power and it is increasingly dangerous to the development of Afghan democracy.

Josef Davies-Coates, founder of Better Media UK. @jdviescoates

I am kick-starting a campaign called Better Media, which focuses particularly on the future for digital. We are seeing more and more tech powers. Apple sits on \$50 billion in cash. Facebook faced a record fine for misuse of data, but it amounted for just 15 minutes of their profit. They promised not to merge data they had from WhatsApp, but did it anyway.

So how do you tackle these big tech giants? Well first, as Corbyn recently suggested and France has done this successfully, you levy them. Then we have to fund the open source world and get individuals to donate to those who are doing brilliant things in the tech industry.

We have to find out how to fund the future tech innovations that may make our world a better place. Tech giants would not exist without open source software. They all use it.

There is an emerging movement of data memberships. In Switzerland for example, people are pooling their data together for medical research so that progress can be made in a consented way. If it is sold on, they put the money back into the research.

We have already run out of time to stop privacy issues. We need policy change. GDPR seems like a step in the right direction.

ACTIVISM AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Jacob Crawford, Copwatch @wecopwatch

Cop TV shows desensitize the public to police brutality. We don't see the full picture and the extent of the violence. What we do is arm communities who are suffering from police brutality with video cameras so they can record what is going on.

We are not against the police, but the institution of the police force is in itself racist and corrupt. In America, they kill people because of the colour of their skin. That is just a fact.

We document the way the police mistreat the public. They are supposed to be a servant of the people but they are a tool of oppression. We urge everyone to do the same. If you see the police mistreating someone, take out your mobile phones and film them. Documenting their actions is the way we can advocate for change

Harriet Wistrich, police action lawyer and founder of Centre for Women's Justice. @HWistrich.

The massive cuts have affected our court system and fuelled injustices. In particular, victims of sexual violence

and domestic violence are denied justice due to cuts on legal aid.

I have also seen an increasing number of cases of men who have committed domestic violence and are supposed to be monitored on probation, committing offences that are more serious such as rapes and murders. The criminal justice system completely fails to understand the nature of abuse and domestic violence. Resources are too often used to criminalise the vulnerable such as women fighting back or doing what they can to escape and feed their families.

The media can be a positive tool in our campaigning to support women who have killed their abusive partners. We try to publicise those cases. Sometimes the good publicity works. However, it is very easy for the media to create monsters out of people who are vulnerable and need help, and often never get justice.

Jon Robins, editor of The Justice Gap website @justicegap

We are going through a crisis in the criminal justice system – it is broken – and that means there are miscarriages of justice.

In its 20 years of history, the Criminal Cases Review Commission has referred about 30 cases per year back to the Court of Appeal. If you are a victim of wrongful conviction and you are in prison, this is the only route to the Court of Appeal. In 2016, the numbers massively dropped off with just 12 cases referred to the Court of Appeal.

The Criminal Cases Review Commission is the part in the criminal justice system most hit by austerity cuts and yet the workload has gone up by 60% in the last 10 years. The body simply cannot perform how we expect it to and that is a massive problem for justice in this country.

Another problem is the Court of Appeal is rarely scrutinised. There are numerous cases stuck forever in the system that does not work and press largely does not report on these cases. There is a responsibility on the press to report about the justice system, but it is not fulfilling this function. Journalism is also hammered by cuts and that is why they are not in our courts. That means justice is really under threat.

ACTIVISM AND GUERRILLA ENVIRONMENTALISM

Nicky Mabey, chief executive and a founder director of E3G (Third Generation Environmentalism). @Mabeytweet

This summer has particularly shown the consequences of what we are doing to the environment, the things predicted are happening. There is a huge rise in veganism and vegetarianism movements, and various technological advancements of cleaner energy sources.

As activists, we need to act local, but think global. We need to consider the global consequences of our actions and then make meaningful changes at an individual and community level to play our part in preventing them. From community-based agriculture, to home energy improvements, all of these things are small acts that can make a real difference to the environment.

Vicki Hird, award-winning author and policy advisor for sustainable farming. @vickihird

Making small changes in terms of what you buy and eat is important, small-scale activism that reflects your attitude to the environment. That conversation is driving industry to change and so by being part of it you can help drive the changes we need. We can all start being activists today.

I listened at Byline Festival to various panels discussing how social media influences us. That is because it is based on emotions. Emotional decisions and conversations we have with people around us about what we buy and what we eat are perhaps more important than anything else, because they help us change our perceptions.

Emma Goodwin, Landholders Alliance, South East.

The term 'guerrilla' environmentalism implies that we are a small group of activists fighting against a larger authority. I would like to suggest that we are not a small group; we are a massive group who want the Government and people with money to back us as we trying to do the right thing for our environment.

Small-scale growers holding about 30% of resources produce around 70% cent of the world's food, which means the other 30% of the world's food is produced by the industrial agricultural model, using 70% of the world's resources. How can we tackle that? The key is to think global but act local, working together as small-scale growers to impact meaningful change. Small landholders and growers need to get together across the globe – pool resources – to challenge the big corporate food chain.

Do you have any tips for activism? Want to talk to other people who want to change the world? Join the conversation using #bylinepoliticalpamphlet.



21. “The Future of the Byline Festival.”

Peter Jukes and Stephen Colegrave explain their plans to extend the principles of the Byline Festival

The occasional criticism we get is that the Byline Festival doesn't represent all shades of opinion. But the reality is – you can have your own opinions but not your own facts. We don't want false balance. We are inquisitorial rather than adversarial. We want light rather than heat. It's objectivity we seek, not neutrality.

Then it goes like this – facts generate arguments. Arguments generate activism. Though the Byline Festival remains politically unaligned, we are partisan about seeking out the truth, and once a whistle-blower has revealed a wrong doing, or a journalist reported an atrocity or a crime, it is incumbent on us all to do something about it

Though it can sometimes be overwhelming and exhausting, we and our partners Frontline Club are determined to expand this unique mix of independent journalism, free speech and activism in the years ahead. It's our mission, and we feel the times need it.

The festival was born out of a concern about the rise of populism, fake news and a need to rediscover the power of journalism. These threats and opportunities show no sign of going away. Unlike most other festivals, programmed around PR launches or booking bands, we are focused on the “fierce urgency of now” and will constantly adapt to respond to current events.

We also fear that, with nationalism on the rise, Britain might become cut off from currents of thinking and investigating abroad. So we aim to be more global over the next few years.

The festival is already international, with speakers, festival goers and performers from North America and Europe. Our

ambition is to make it more so. We want the UK festival to attract journalists, commentators and politicians from all over the world and build on the success of our first international festival with Frontline Club in New York last year.

The next step is to work with partners to expand the festival to Berlin and to East and West Coast in the US. In the UK, we want to add a 'winter' indoor festival perhaps in Manchester to complement the Pippingford Park summer festival. Fortunately, we have the capability to triple the size of the festival at Pippingford, so there is plenty of opportunity to grow. Already, it has become an occasion for politicians and journalists to meet up and tackle big issues before the Party Conference season begins.

But growth is not our only focus. We want to attract even more high-profile and inspiring speakers to ensure the festival is the most exciting and thought-provoking place to be, especially for a younger generation who are even more aware of the rise of propaganda on social media and the need for independent, trustworthy reporting.

Who knows who will be the whistle-blowers, great investigative journalists and political newcomers of the future. But our intention is to make sure they are all speaking at the festival. You can rest assured that whatever the big stories are in the future, they will be discussed first, and in more depth, at Byline Festival than anywhere else.

We can only do this with the support of all our friends.

Without your help, none of this will be possible and this book is dedicated to all of you who have supported us financially, professionally, or just with your kind words and engagement.

BYLINE FEST







BYLINE FEST

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With special thanks to our team of student rapporteurs
for their content from across the festival.

Sophia Simoes (Lead Reporter) @Sophiesimoessvh

Jacob Phillips
Mansoor Ahmed
Kotryna Kairyte
Sophie Hukisson
Lucy Hollis
Gemma Biss
Tali Fraser
Beth McMillan

Photography: Raphael Moran and Moran Films

Design and layout: Guestlist

Published by BylineFest Ltd. www.bylinefestival.com @BylineFest