

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

Informed

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Press become target of the far-right

Guy Smailman



Anti-fascists at the counter-demonstration at Salford's Media City

The NUJ has taken a hard stance against attacks on the press by far-right groups, including a demonstration at BBC's offices in Salford, and the harassment of journalists and photographers by extremists.

An estimated 4,000 supporters of the former English Defence League leader and Ukip adviser, Tommy Robinson, real name Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, protested outside the BBC's offices in Salford because Panorama was carrying out an investigation into him. Speakers called the BBC the enemy of the people and told their supporters to cancel their TV licences. Opponents staged a counter-demonstration.

The NUJ put out a statement

condemning the action by the far-right thugs saying: "BBC staff should be free to do their jobs without these threats. Intimidation and violence carried out by far-right protesters systematically targeting the media, especially photojournalists, are becoming more frequent and we will always call out this behaviour and report criminal activity to the police."

The union instigated a letter of support for journalist Mike Stuchber who was harassed outside his home by Robinson after contributing to the funding of a legal case against him.

Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary, said: "Journalists have a duty to scrutinise the claims and activities of those who foment Islamophobia, racial

tension and violence. They should not be facing threats or intimidatory tactics because they are doing their jobs."

The number of incidents where the press and broadcast journalists have been targeted by far-right groups has been on the increase, including Channel 4's team who were set upon by pro-Brexit supporters outside Downing Street. Hayley Barlow, head of communications, tweeted: "Relieved to report that our Channel 4 News crew were unharmed tonight, and while their safety remains our priority, they will not be intimidated or deterred from doing their jobs."

The union has since discussed the challenges created by far-right demonstrators with the Metropolitan Police.

The NUJ had to force an employer in the West Midlands to support a member after they were the target of right-wing extremists. Three members who have received death threats relating to their work, including a journalist working in Belfast, have been backed by the NUJ's legal office.

Similar threats to journalists were recognised by the European Parliament last month when it voted overwhelmingly in favour of a resolution criticising Iran's treatment of human rights defenders and journalists. It said: "The Iranian authorities have systematically targeted journalists, including those working for the BBC Persian service and their families, through the use of criminal investigations, asset freezes, arbitrary arrest, detention, surveillance, harassment, and by spreading false, malicious, and defamatory publicity." It called on the Iranian authorities to stop their persecution of journalists and their families.

Please report any press attacks by the far right to campaigns@nuj.org.uk

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NUJ
NATIONAL UNION
OF
JOURNALISTS

Michelle's Message



Talking to NUJ members in a workplace canteen recently, I was told – not for the first time – how an FoC, in trying to persuade others to get involved on the committee, was promising that the NUJ's brilliant reps' training programme was reason enough to get more active.

He's not wrong there. The range of reps' courses we put on consistently gets excellent feedback – thanks largely, of course, to our wonderful trainer Caroline Holmes – but also in no small part because the reps we bring together have a huge amount to share and learn from each other.

We're constantly looking at ways we can get more members engaged in the work of the union and what training would be helpful for them to gain the confidence to get active in the workplace.

One area we'll be developing is addressing gender and diversity issues in the workplace. The NUJ has put in a huge amount of effort over the past 18 months, tackling the gender pay gap, shining a light on equal pay cases and putting the issue of pay parity squarely on the industrial agenda.

We've had a lot of successes in the process but it's clear there is so much more to be done; and our reps are central to that work and our ability to hold employers to account.

Not least at the BBC, where anger and outrage prompted by the knowledge

Our reps have always been our strength

that our public service broadcaster was not treating its own staff fairly – and where the publication of the high-earners list back in July 2017 demonstrated pay inequity on a massive scale – has motivated many members to organise and champion change in their workplaces.

With a significant volume of equal pay cases for NUJ members still in train – at various stages of the grievance, appeal and even tribunal processes – frustrations still run deep and the BBC has yet to convince many of its staff that it has got a grip on this problem. It's dogged, detailed work. The NUJ has great support from our equality and legal officer Natasha Morris, our lawyer and equal pay specialist Caroline Underhill at Thompsons and, most of all, our BBC reps and secondees on the ground who are putting in the graft and pushing for the outcomes our members deserve.

It's vital that chapels across all sectors and workplaces should put gender pay gaps and equal pay at the top of their agendas. It shouldn't be something that's done by a company-established equality group, which in many cases are set up to take the heat out of the fury that ensues when staff digest just how big their gender pay gap is. The chapel must be directly involved and use it as a recruitment opportunity.

In meetings with the Equality and Human Rights Commission over our work at the BBC, it was interesting to hear that the imposition of the gender pay gap reporting regulations have proven a game-changer in ways they never anticipated. For starters – the focus it's led to on equal pay. They're obviously different issues – a wide gender pay gap doesn't necessarily mean there'll be an equal pay problem, but

it's a trigger for conversations amongst colleagues and draws back the curtains on an issue that is all too often shrouded in secrecy – what our salary is. We need to encourage members to share data and information on salaries and terms and conditions.

Greater transparency is key. It's only ever in a company's interests for pay to be a private deal. Breaking down data into detailed quartiles of men and

“It's vital that chapels and workplaces put gender pay gaps and equal pay at the top of their agendas”

women, and BAME data, is a great way of getting under the bonnet and seeing what horrors lurk. It's also a source of great discomfort for many employers, which is to be exploited.

The gender pay gap regulations are flawed – no compulsion on a company to publish an action plan, or real consequences if they don't comply. With our collective campaigning and pushing, that will change in time. Our experience is some companies are engaging with the NUJ on these issues – they can see the benefits – for them – of being seen to take this issue seriously. It's not a genie that will be shoved back into a bottle.

That provides real opportunities to tackle the actual problems that make gender pay a reality – the layered ways in which women are discriminated against in the workplace. No pay scales. The lack of transparency. Opaque, unfair recruitment processes that lead to managers hiring in their own image. The resistance to flexible working and

meaningful work-life balance. Pregnancy and maternity discrimination that cuts away opportunities from talented women. The cult of presenteeism. The male dominance in senior roles.

The BBC has woken up to these concerns – although there remains a massive issue of loss of faith and trust. The median gap has fallen from 9.3 to 7.6 per cent, with an action plan in place to get to 2020. The mean gap is also down, from 10.7 to 8.4 per cent. While Auntie has become something of a poster girl of pay inequity, the BBC is much better than the rest of the media workforce.

Every newspaper group and broadcaster that has covered and, in some cases revelled in, criticising the BBC on this issue has a worse record in their own back-yard. The corporation is way down the Press Gazette's league table of pay gap offenders, with the Economist Group, Dow Jones, the Telegraph and Mirror Group Newspapers showing the largest median hourly pay gaps.

Of course, we have higher expectations of the BBC; our public service broadcaster should set the standards. But it's a fact that the media industry is – from a position of being woefully inadequate on these issues – now feeling exposed, putting them in the position of taking seriously an issue they have blithely ignored for so long.

So this is very much a work in progress – one for which we need more reps wanting to be involved in this part of the battle. We'll continue to roll out more support and training to reps and get chapel committees to organise around these issues in the workplace.

The NUJ's strength has always been our activists and reps – it's vital they are properly equipped and have the confidence to go out and persuade colleagues to work together to ensure chapels are strong and capable of deploying their collective muscle on the whole range of issues that make a difference to their working lives.

Diary

Workers' beer
High on recognition triumph, the Springer Nature chapel scored another coup as they gathered to celebrate. Company CEO Daniel Ropers astonished activists when he joined their victory party. Indeed, as the bar float ran dry, Ropers suggested a round on him. MoC Michelle Gregory politely declined – management largess was ill-suited to a union bash, she said. No doubt she is planning a more substantial raid on corporate funds once pay talks commence.

Working-class hero
 London Freelance members were astonished to find David Bailey coming along in person to picking up his 40-year Life Membership certificate to add to his CBE received from the Queen. Swinging London's favourite

snapper captured the classless Sixties of Twiggy, Mary Quant and the Beatles, and later moved on to photographing Her

Pennie Quinton

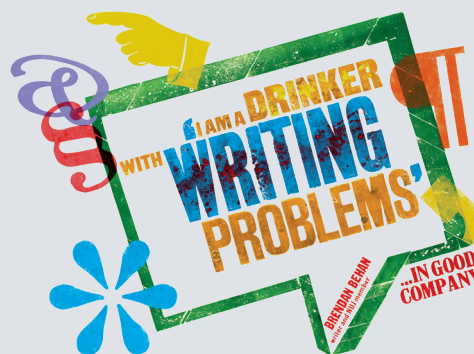


Majesty. His PA banned photos at the event, so LFB chair Pennie Quinton used her skills as an artist to capture his image. As he told her, he was much more into painting than photography these days it seemed appropriate.

Caribbean mum
What will it take for Jeremy Corbyn to enter Number 10? Guardian editor-at-large Gary Young shared an idea with a sell-out

audience at Headland House. "What Corbyn needs is a Caribbean mum to tell him, 'You have to try harder, you have to be better, don't come whining to me'." Of course, acquiring new parents as you turn 70 is beyond even visionary leaders. Accepting that, Young hoped that Diane Abbot might serve as surrogate. "Maybe she can give him a clip round the ear," he said. Gary Young page 7

See you in court
 Billionaire media mogul Denis O'Brien has sued many a media outlet, but recently lost a defamation case against the Sunday Business Post for an article about him being among a large group of big borrowers at the time of the banking collapse in Ireland. The jury dismissed his case, which could leave him with €1m legal costs. He is thought to have been landed with a similar sum last year when his attempt to sue the Oireachtas (parliament) for discussing elements of his finances in their deliberations was thrown out by the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, the FT reports his newspaper group, Independent News & Media, has been approached for a takeover.



News Update

Because nobody will look after Maryport

Manchester's Mechanics Institute is famously where the Trades Union Congress was founded in 1868.

While our 19th century comrades would have puzzled over the terms online trolling and clickbait, the experience of poverty pay and bullying managements would have been very familiar. So, it was a fitting venue for the NUJ's reps' summit, bringing together union activists and officials to share information, network and draw up strategies to meet the challenges of the industry.

Federica Bedendo, the Newsquest group MoC, said she was proud of colleagues in Cumbria who went on strike at Christmas. She described barely-staffed newsrooms, with experienced journalists being replaced



Adam Christie: health and safety laws are vital

with apprentices on a £7,000 salary. Poverty pay is rife at Newsquest, she says, but it's even worse where the union isn't strong. "Despite all, we still do it," she said. "I always think of my 69-year-old colleague Viv who says she does it 'because nobody else will look after Maryport'."

Steve Bird, Financial Times FoC, said his chapel exposed the gender pay gap

and excessive executive pay. He said: "This year's gap was slightly down, possibly because the union forced the chief executive to take a £1 million pay cut." Reps were encouraged to pin up their company's pay gap at the office.

Laura Downes, former MoC at RCNi, the health professionals' publisher, told how a new chief executive's bullying made people's life a misery. Collective action resulted in an independent review of the company which backed the union and led to the departure of the CEO and her sidekicks.

NEC member Adam Christie explained how health and safety legislation was the greatest tool for combating bullying and harassment at work.

The reps took part in practical sessions on making a pay claim, determining employment status while a group of local democracy reporters heard from Phil Morcom, chair of the NUJ's council for communications workers, who said council press officers needed more information about the scheme which pays for council meetings to be reported.

Lunch in your lunchtime

Friday 21 June is the longest day of the year and the NUJ is celebrating by urging all members to organise breaks outside offices and newsrooms and to use social media #longestlunch to draw attention to the importance of taking breaks from work.

Get your your chapel to organise some cakes and pies.

Women photographers

The TUC backed a motion by the NUJ calling for more opportunities for women in photography, mentoring schemes and grants to address gender imbalance.

Research shows that only 15 per cent of photojournalists are women.

The NUJ is holding a conference on Wednesday 19 June to discuss how to combat the barriers female photographers face.

Gender pay

More than a third of UK media companies have had increases in their gender pay gaps, according to a Press Gazette analysis, with the Press Association's median pay gap rising from 0.5 per cent to 4.6 per cent in favour of men.

The Economist Group remains the media company with the highest median

gender pay gap, with women on average paid 29.2 per cent less per hour than men. Wall Street Journal's Dow Jones, the Telegraph and Mirror Group Newspaper were among the worst offenders.

CNN had the biggest median bonus pay gap for the second year, with magazine publisher Hearst going from 3.8 per cent to 50.2 per cent. Companies said their pay gap was down to the fact that more men occupied senior roles.

Vice recognition bid

NUJ members at Vice UK have written to the company seeking union recognition. A staff statement said: "We

are determined to uphold the progressive values that Vice embodies and believe everything that we stand for as a union is in line with these commitments."

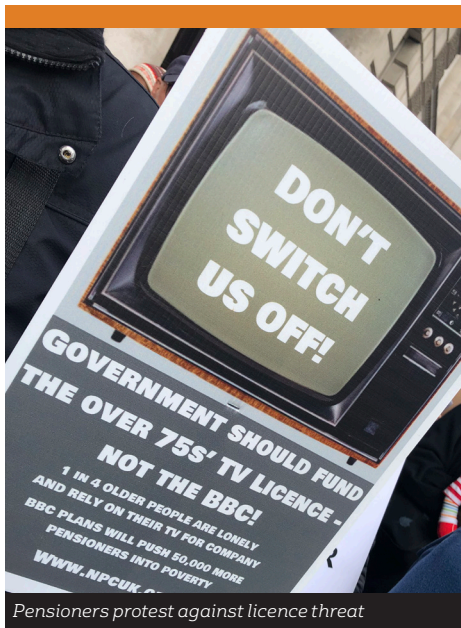
Newsroom diversity

Applications are now open for the bursaries provided by the NUJ's charity, the George Viner Memorial Foundation, to help black and minority ethnic journalism students fund their studies.

Find out more on the NUJ website; the deadline is Friday, 31 May.

<https://www.nuj.org.uk/rights/george-viner-memorial-fund/apply-for-a-bursary/>

BBC investigated by equality watchdog



Pensioners protest against licence threat

MPs back call for a stop to the merger of flagship radio shows and pensioners protest against the threat to free TV licences

A survey of BBC members who have lodged equal pay claims is being carried out by the union after the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) launched an investigation into the broadcaster following complaints from female employees.

The commission has held discussions with the BBC about pay for the past year and said this month it suspected that some women at the organisation had not received equal pay for equal work. NUJ general secretary, Michelle Stanistreet, said it was clear from the NUJ's involvement that this was correct and results of the survey will be sent to the EHRC.

BBC journalists have issued an urgent warning on the planned merger of two of the corporation's most important radio current affairs programmes, the

World Service's Newshour and Radio 4's The World Tonight. They said it would severely damage the news coverage, undermine the distinctive voice of Radio 4's only evening news programme and the World Service radio's flagship, and was unworkable.

Six production jobs would be lost and remaining staff and presenters put under unacceptable pressure. Members called for support – a briefing was sent to the NUJ's cross-party Parliamentary Group and MPs signed an Early Day Motion which called on BBC management to hold meaningful talks with the NUJ to develop a plan to preserve the quality and integrity of both programmes.

The BBC board has also been told to ditch the deal which will require the corporation to fund the free TV licences for over-75s.

A letter signed by the NUJ, Age UK and the National Pensioners Convention said the scheme would cause poverty among the elderly and compromise the quality of the BBC's output so the government must take back responsibility for the benefit.

Members of the NUJ's 60+ Council joined a demonstration outside the office of the Department of Digital, Culture Media & Sport to make the same points. The Daily Mirror's Paul Routledge said Margaret Thatcher had been the milk snatcher and her heirs were the licence snatchers.

Discussions about the £40m extra cuts in BBC News continue and Michelle Stanistreet met National Audit Office officials last month to discuss the BBC's implementation of changes to pay and terms and conditions. Progress has been slow, and the unions have made an application to the ACAS-chaired Weekend Working Group to impose binding arbitration.

TV News

After a long battle at **ITV** there has been welcome breakthrough and a new car-lease scheme will start this month, but discussions on changes to bank holiday working continue.

ITN members voted to accept a pay offer of 2.5 per cent. At **Alaraby**, the year-long union recognition push resulted in a constructive meeting between Michelle Stanistreet and the company and there are high hopes of a voluntary recognition agreement. As membership increases at **Iran International**, the London-based 24/7 Farsi-language news channel, the union is pressing for recognition talks with its launch company, DMA Media, and discussing problems of victimisation of its staff by the Iranian government.

At RTÉ the union successfully moved members on bogus freelance contracts to full-time jobs but is still pressing to make those rights retrospective.

The BBC has signed a £300m deal to provide natural history shows to a new global streaming service run by the **Discovery Channel** and the streaming rights to hundreds of BBC documentaries; the BBC will receive around £30m per year. The BBC and Discovery have agreed to split the 10 channels run by UKTV, which they jointly own. BBC Studios, the corporation's commercial arm, will take full ownership of seven entertainment channels: Alibi, Dave, Drama, Eden, Gold, Yesterday and W, while Discovery will get Good Food, Home and Really. It cost the BBC £173m, which came from BBC Studios funds and was not licence fee money, the corporation said ... and finally, Michelle Stanistreet paid tribute to **Sue Harris**, national broadcast organiser who has retired. She said she would pass on a big collective thanks from colleagues and the NEC.

News Update

Journalists under fire as gunmen roam free

Since scores of armed officers burst into their homes on 31 August last year, NUJ members Trevor Birney and Barry McCaffery have been clear on one thing, the police action was designed to put a chill on investigative journalism.

Seven months on, they remain on police bail, their movement in and out of Northern Ireland is restricted and the police have attempted to prevent them from speaking about the case.

Both worked on Oscar-winning director Alex Gibney's No Stone Unturned documentary feature, released in November 2017. It investigates the Lochinisland massacre of 1994 in which Ulster Volunteer Force gunmen sprayed a country pub with automatic rifle fire, killing six and wounding five.

The film named the chief suspects and laid bare the Royal Ulster Constabulary's apparently wilful failure to bring convictions in the case. "Once the film was released, Northern Ireland's chief constable, George Hamilton, had a choice," said Barry McCaffery. "He could launch a proper investigation to bring the killers to justice, or he could pursue the journalists who had shown up the force; sadly, he chose the latter."

Their original arrests were made on the pretext that they had stolen documents from the Police Ombudsman - that body has since made it clear that it has made no complaint about theft.

In March, the authorities attempted to amend the existing bail conditions to prevent the journalists from talking publicly about the police investigation. This was successfully opposed by the journalists' lawyers, and the NUJ condemned this extraordinary attempt to restrict the journalists' freedom of speech. "This attempt to gag us shows the lengths that police will go to hide

Amnesty International



Barry McCaffery and Trevor Birney

the facts," said Barry. The men are feeling the pressure. "We go through a whole range of emotions of anger, guilt, resignation," he said.

They have been granted leave by the High Court to seek a judicial review, expected in May, to challenge the legality of the search warrants and the NUJ continues to campaign for the case to be dropped

At a meeting of MPs in Westminster, pledges of assistance came from cross-party politicians including Tony Lloyd, the shadow secretary of state for Northern Ireland, John McDonnell, Tom Watson, David Davis and Liz Saville Roberts.

During their stay in London, the two attended the Amnesty International media awards.

Michelle Stanistreet said: "This case is the biggest specific threat to press freedom in UK at present and should be a major concern to all journalists."

Screenings of the film with Trevor and Barry present will take place in Glasgow on Sunday 14 April and in Edinburgh on Monday 15 April.

New law on copyright welcomed

The NUJ has welcomed the Copyright Directive in the Digital Single Market passed by the European Parliament.

The union worked with the International and European Federations of Journalists to get in place this important and long-awaited piece of legislation which aims to give artists, musicians and publishers a better chance of being paid when their work appears on the internet.

Under article 13, platforms such as Google and YouTube will be required to filter or remove copyrighted material from their websites. Memes and GIFs which are parodies or pastiches will be exempted. Article 13 says content-sharing services must license copyright-protected material from the rights holders.

Under article 11, Google's news platform will need to take out licences with publishers such as newspapers for showing content that is less than two years old on its news feed. The EU member states have two years to transpose it into their own laws.

Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary, said: "The European Parliament's adoption of the Copyright Directive is the culmination of years of campaigning and collective effort by trade unionists and campaigners around the world, including the NUJ and our sister unions. That work has been motivated by a shared determination to ensure that journalists and other creatives are properly rewarded for the work they create, and that their rights and livelihoods are not trampled on or ignored by the major global entities that dominate the media industry."

News Update

Road trip and chat boost NUJ charities

Almost £1,150 was raised for the NUJ's charities by two entertaining evening talks by The Guardian's Gary Younge and freelance writer, Eugene Costello.

NUJ Extra is the union's hardship fund which assists members and their families who need temporary financial help. The George Viner Memorial Fund (GVMF) was set up to address the lack of diversity in the British and Irish media by giving black and ethnic minority students financial help with their journalism studies.

Gary was the Guardian's US correspondent for 12 years and his latest book, *Another Day in the Death of America*, centres on 23 November 2013, when 10 people were killed by guns. He spent 18 months unearthing the stories that lay behind these young lives and their premature deaths.

Fittingly, his interviewer for the In



Gary Younge and Saadeya Shamsuddin

Conversation With... evening was Saadeya Shamsuddin, a former George Viner scholar and now a trustee of GVMF who produces Eddie Nestor's *Drivetime* on BBC Radio London.

In a wide-ranging discussion, Gary talked about journalists' failure to predict events such as Trump's election and the result of the EU referendum, black journalists being forced to write

about "black stuff" by their editors and the Home Secretary's decision to strip Shamima Begum, the Isis bride, of her citizenship. "Sajid Javid is a year younger than me and grew up with our immigration laws and sus laws [stop and search laws used by the police predominantly on young black men], but that's what Tory Home Secretaries do."

Eugene Costello described his madcap road trip to Timbuktu. The freelance journalist had been forced to turn to NUJ Extra and the kindness of friends following a heart attack and stroke which meant he couldn't work.

He detailed with his characteristic sense of humour the 5,000-mile trip which ended at a bougainvillea-clad nirvana in Mali, but also entailed flea-pit hotels, broken axles, "navigational cock-ups", hot deserts, hot tempers, and the rapidly deteriorating relationship with his travelling companion, travel writer Nick Redmayne.

So far he has made £1,700 each for NUJ Extra and The British Heart Foundation on his fundraising website <https://uk.gofundme.com/uk-to-timbuktu-by-road-challenge>.

Students' exposé of secret society defended by NUJ

The NUJ has defended a university newspaper which recorded the activities of the all-male Knights of the Campanile society and reported on groaning, gagging and retching sounds emerging from an apartment where an initiation ceremony was taking place.

The organisation, established in 1926, is known for its "mysterious entry procedures and a reputation for alcohol-fuelled high-jinks", according to the Irish Times.

The Trinity College Dublin's University Times article reported members of the

society being taunted, jeered at and instructed to bend over and get in the shower as part of a "hazing" or initiation process. Members were told to "open your fucking mouth" and asked, "Why aren't you on your knees".

The report made national news, the student journalists were accused of breaching ethics standards by the editor of the university's rival student newspaper and the students' union called for a referendum to starve the publication of funds.

Commenting on the society, Irish Times writer, John McManus, said,

"Think Dan Brown's *Illuminati* meets David Cameron's Bullingdon Club" and high-profile members denied the hazing allegations, with senator David Norris, an honorary member of the club since 1990, saying: "When I joined, they simply dipped my tie into a pint of stout."

Riding to the rookie reporters' rescue came Professor Chris Frost, chair of the NUJ's ethics council, who described the editorial staff's investigative techniques as "beyond reproach and consistent with the highest professional standards of public interest, investigative journalism".

It was acceptable to use a tape recorder to record conversations that can be heard in a corridor when in the public interest, he added.

Spotlight

“Hey Alexa, what’s the news?”

Matt Kenyon



With non-stop news popping up on our digital devices, Frances Rafferty asks how journalists can play a role in helping people make sense of it all

Hey Alexa, are your stories second-sourced, the data confirmed by the Office of National Statistics and are you following the NUJ code of practice?

Hey Alexa, is my news coming from a neo-liberal media mogul, Saudi Arabian prince, Ofcom-regulated broadcaster, left-leaning Trust or Keith's mum?

Half the people who own voice-activated digital appliances use them for news and information. Because the ways people receive their news proliferate, with Facebook, Instagram, Google, iTunes,

podcasts, WhatsApp, Snapchat, YouTube and the smart speaker in your sitting room all competing with the TV, radio and newspapers, greater sophistication in media literacy is needed.

For the journalist the story is about the who, why, what, where and when. For the reader it has always been: “Why are they telling me this?” But, increasingly, it is also “Who is telling me this?” as the constant bombardment and buzz of information from our mobile devices makes it hard to track where the news without mastheads is coming from.

For young people, many of whom learned to use their iPad in the pram, it can be a minefield. They are constantly targeted by a range of vloggers and “influencers” paid by advertisers to promote their wares among the make-up tips and whacky videos.

Digital marketing company, Exposure Ninja, claims on its website: “A whopping 81 per cent of the population trusts the advice they get from bloggers, making them very powerful advocates for any brand online.”

On the first Monday of Media Literacy Week (18 to 22 March), the NUJ brought together a panel of media experts who work on projects to promote better understanding of the news process, particularly for young people.

Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary, said the union had a long tradition of supporting ethical journalism, promoting a diverse media industry and regularly works with journalism colleges. “Boosting our critical capacity to weed out what’s been fact-checked from what has not is the challenge we all face and a skill we need to help our children acquire from the earliest possible age,” she said.

“Trust in journalism underpins all this work – as does having a media which reflects the world it depicts.”

Kate Morris, a former journalist and convenor of the BA in Journalism at Goldsmiths, University of London, said the Edelman Trust Barometer 2019 found that 55 per cent of British people believe the media does not represent

their views, however, since the Brexit referendum, a third said they had read more political news.

Part of this lack of trust, she said, was due to poor media plurality in the UK. Just three companies (News UK, Daily Mail Group and Reach) dominated 83 per cent of the national newspaper market.

Five local news groups covered 80 per cent of the market and two companies owned nearly half of all commercial analogue radio stations, she said, quoting new figures from the Media Reform Coalition show.

The other cause was the lack of investment in journalism and the cut in numbers of journalists. She cited figures from the media consultancy, Mediatique, which in its report for the Cairncross review into the press, estimated the number of front-line journalists had fallen from 23,000 in 2007, to 17,000 today. "This leads to less fact-checking, less in-depth investigative reporting and more so-called churnalism," said Kate Morris.

Journalists had a role to play in rebuilding the trust in our news and in helping young people how to spot quality news that can be trusted and to understand why it is vital to a functioning democracy, she added.

Even journalism students found it difficult to distinguish from news and advertising copy: "Pressure on newspapers, caused by the loss of online advertising revenue to Google and Facebook, has led to some resorting to clickbait copy to generate clicks for advertisers, and the blurring of advertorials and rise of native advertising is skewing good journalism."

The Guardian Foundation's NewsWise helps 9- to 11-year-olds recognise disinformation, bias, opinion, rumour and media-driven hoaxes such as the Momo Challenge. The foundation, funded by Google and working in partnership with the PSHE (Physical, Social, Health and Economic) Association and National Literacy Fund, found that only 2 per cent of children had the critical literacy skills they needed to tell whether a news story was real or fake.

The three-second challenge

Lucie Spicer (pictured) is education co-ordinator of Shout Out UK which promotes political engagement among young people.

The project teaches them to think critically about the information they consume. Media Minded, a series of



events held in Birmingham, Belfast and Newcastle last year, gave tips to avoid "being fooled by the media" which included asking them to analyse their emotional response to a story, to be aware of their own biases and to look further into a story's source. They were shown how images can be easily be manipulated. "Most young people will only read the Metro if there is no Wi-Fi," said Lucie. "Instagram and Snapchat are the main sources of their news. They prefer YouTube to TV. They need to learn how to work out how to access news that is accurate and can be trusted. My challenge is to get them in the habit of counting to three while they think about a story or link before sharing it on social media."

Angie Pitt, NewsWise project director, said: "If we want to build trust, we can't be a closed shop, we have to open our doors.

"There is a classroom at The Guardian and we also go out to schools all over the UK. We create teams of sub-editors and editors with an editor-in-chief (who has a visor) to show them how to produce news stories and fact-check and we run training

sessions for teachers to develop critical literacy skills."

They also learn about the role of journalists in holding power to account. A recent lesson discussing the Windrush scandal proved popular.

"They enjoyed discussing the issue and having their say on an 'adult' subject; they had a clear view on how unfair it had been," said Angie Pitt.

The BBC's Young Reporter scheme plays a similar role for 11- to 18-year-olds, working in partnership with schools, colleges, youth organisations and charities, and the young people get to meet BBC journalists and presenters, such as Huw Edwards and the Newsbeat team. Like NewsWise, it creates resources for schools and colleges.

NUJ members are involved in other schemes, such as Press Pass, a week-long initiative set up in 2012 between the Irish press industry and schools which is held every November.

Pupils learn about the writing, analysis, preparation and photography involved in putting a newspaper together.

Online Media Law, run by Holly Powell-Jones, educates social media users about media law and ethics in the UK - including in schools.

Catherine Deveney is a journalist and author working on the NUJ Media Skills for Schools project in the Highlands. It teaches teachers and pupils how to produce newspapers and radio shows with high journalistic and ethical standards. It nurtures young talent and offers pathways, such as apprenticeships, to young people interested in media careers.

The biggest challenge is the funding, Catherine Deveney says: "The project is the perfect vehicle for several government strategies, but funding is piecemeal and there is a lack of cohesion and coherence.

"This is common among many of these projects and it is too important to have a hit and run approach to such an important issue - it needs to be sustainable and embedded knowledge."

Any ideas Alexa?

Spotlight

Has Brexit blocked press reform?

Mark Thomas



Ian Burrell says the Cairncross review of news has some good ideas, but are ministers listening?

Fifteen years ago Dame Frances Cairncross swapped journalism for an eminent role in academia, just as a geeky student was hatching an enterprise in a Harvard dormitory that now dominates global media.

Today, as Mark Zuckerberg's Facebook and its Silicon Valley sibling, Google, threaten to engulf advertiser-funded UK news, Dame Frances, who had long careers at The Economist and The Guardian before becoming rector of Exeter College, Oxford, was sought out to bail out her old

trade. Her government-backed Cairncross Review of the future of British quality journalism is central to a concerted, multi-agency pushback against the dominance of the digital duopoly which, as she noted in her final report, sucked up 54 per cent of the UK's digital advertising in 2017. Research firm eMarketer predicts that share will reach 65 per cent by 2021.

The key Cairncross recommendation is to ensure that an "unbalanced relationship" between online platforms and news outlets "does not jeopardise the financial viability of news publishers". It calls for new codes of conduct between the two parties, overseen by a new regulator.

Attacks on the duopoly are now coming from all angles.

Within days of Cairncross being published in February, Parliament's Digital, Culture, Media & Sport select committee reported on its 18-month investigation into fake news, accusing

Facebook of behaving like "digital gangsters". Zuckerberg, the MPs said, had "shown contempt" towards them for refusing to give evidence in person. The committee called for an independent regulator to oversee a new compulsory code of ethics for tech companies.

In the wake of Cairncross, the duopoly finds itself at the centre of probes by the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) which, at the behest of the Chancellor, Philip Hammond, is investigating the fairness of the digital advertising market, and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, which is reviewing how that market is regulated.

"These things are not happening randomly," says Polly Curtis, a former editor-in-chief of HuffPost UK and a member of the Cairncross advisory panel. "Watching how they are landing in sequence, I think there is a concerted effort to actually do something meaningful about this."

Mimi Turner, consulting chief marketing officer to News UK's Wireless Group and an adviser to Cairncross, says big tech is no longer seen as an "Alice Through the Looking Glass world" that is beyond regulation. "What feels very apparent is that governments and regulators all around the world are looking at Google and Facebook with a level of scrutiny that regulation didn't try to address previously," she said.

But Cairncross was about more than protecting news from big tech's impact on the ad market. Its mission was also to assess how journalism was reporting on public bodies, nationally and locally.

The 156-page final report is a sobering snapshot of the UK news industry in 2019.

It highlights how the number of "full-time frontline" journalists working in the UK has fallen from 23,000 in 2007 to 17,000 today. In that period, newspaper annual advertising spend dropped by 69 per cent (£3.2 billion) and annual circulation revenue declined by 23 per cent (£500 million).

Cairncross concludes that quality journalism in the UK is in such a parlous

state that a new Institute for Public News is needed, and tax relief should be given to those engaged in public interest journalism. Culture Secretary, Jeremy Wright, has promised to discuss this proposal with Treasury colleagues and to examine with the Charity Commission whether public interest investigative journalism could benefit from charitable status.

That drastic measures are needed was made clear in March with publication of The Media Reform Coalition's *Who Owns The UK Media* report, which suggests that the disruption caused by the digital duopoly has done nothing to improve plurality of UK media ownership.

It found that more than half of national print daily sales are of The Sun or Daily Mail, and that the publishers of those titles have 60 per cent of the weekly print market and 49.85 per cent of national newspaper revenues.

The MRC reports that 83 per cent of the national newspaper market is held by three publishers (Rupert Murdoch's News UK, the Daily Mail group, and Reach, which owns the Mirror and Express titles).

These publishers, along with the Guardian and Telegraph stables, have 80 per cent of online market share. Digital native sites, such as The Canary, Westmonster and Novara Media, are tiny in comparison. "It is clear that smaller and newer UK-based digital journalism sites... find it difficult to compete for digital audiences with legacy news outlets," the report concludes.

When it comes to local news, five companies own 80 per cent of the 1,068 titles, with the remainder shared among 57 small publishers. Media plurality "is getting worse", says the MRC, which conducted a similar study in 2015. Concentration of ownership is at "endemic levels", it suggests.

Days after Cairncross was published, BBC Director-General, Tony Hall, announced the formation of a charitable Local Democracy Foundation (LDF) to "bring about a sea change in local public interest journalism" through a fund to

What the NUJ said

When the review was announced the NUJ was critical that there was no voice for journalists on its advisory body; the union believed it had a right to a seat at the table.

Michelle Stanistreet was invited to meet Dame Frances and gave her a picture of what the local newspaper sector means for those working in it: no investment in journalism, poor pay and never-ending cuts. Michelle said the market was broken and, if funding was made available for public-interest journalism, giving it to the established news groups would do nothing to improve sustainable, quality journalism. The union sent a comprehensive written submission to

support reporting of courts and councils.

The scheme is a response to criticisms that the BBC's ambitions - like those of Facebook and Google - have distorted the online market, particularly for local news media. Cairncross suggests the BBC "should do more to share its technical and digital expertise" with local publishers.

In yet another review, Ofcom is now "considering the role" of the BBC in the news market.

The LDF builds on an existing BBC local democracy reporters' scheme which costs the broadcaster £8m a year and pays for 144 journalists nationwide. The scheme has been criticised because nearly all the reporters are placed with three major publishers: Reach, Gannett UK/Newsquest and JPI Media.

Natalie Fenton, professor of media and communications at Goldsmiths, University of London and Media Research Centre chair, said: "What you have to do is insist that money goes into not-for-profit journalism, so it's not going into shareholders' pockets at major organisations."

In a speech in March, Reach CEO and former HMV boss, Simon Fox, compared

the inquiry. The NUJ's initial response to Dame Frances's report was that she had let the tech giants off the hook. They had for too long had a free ride by raiding content supplied by the press without contributing to the industry. It was time to pay up. It is now the job of the DCMS to take on the report's recommendations and Michelle met officials to discuss the next steps. She said the report had been wrong to make the BBC the villain and to expect licence fee payers to fund the failings of the commercial sector.

If an Institute for Public Interest News was set up, any funding must be linked to public-interest journalism and increasing the diversity of the industry by class and ethnicity.

the BBC's impact on online news to the damage caused to the music industry by digital piracy.

But Cairncross panelist Polly Curtis insists the BBC is not the villain. "There's not been enough innovation in local news and that's part of why they are in such dire straits," she says.

"I think it's absolutely the role of the public broadcaster to fill those gaps. It's not about subsidising news companies, but ensuring we have a healthy democracy."

The Welsh government is also trying to plug holes in public interest journalism and has created a new £200,000 funding pot to be shared by hyperlocal news services.

The clarion call from Cairncross has prompted pledges of action in Westminster but whether they will be seen through is far from certain.

After years of decline, the UK news industry may be celebrating a watershed moment - if only its timing hadn't coincided with Brexit.

"Sadly, there currently isn't a focus on anything other than one thing in government," reflects one of the Cairncross team.

Recruitment Update

Why the NUJ could be the next bestseller

Poor pay and lack of diversity make the books sector ripe for recruitment

The London Book Fair was buzzing. With more than 25,000 visitors over the three days and 1,500-plus exhibitors, the industry was networking, making six-figure deals, showcasing new authors, promoting already-famous ones and discussing trends in publishing and its workforce.

Catherine Brereton, NEC member for books, and Fiona Swarbrick, national organiser, were flying the NUJ flag, putting forward the union's case during seminars on age discrimination in publishing and the need for greater diversity. Setting up shop in one of the cafes at the Olympia venue in London, they welcomed anyone who wanted to find out more about the union.

The digital revolution has not had the same devastating effect on the book trade as it has in the newspaper industry; the e-book has not killed the printed book star.

Benedicte Page, deputy editor of *The Bookseller*, said the publishing sector was relatively stable, while not showing much growth. "E-books are well-established, but readers still love the printed book. Publishers are making the printed book a beautiful object, with lovely jacket designs and gorgeous production. So the balance has settled between the two formats, each with its own strengths. In academic publishing, businesses are having to adapt to the digital transformation under way in scholarly communications.

"Although a few big publishers dominate the publishing scene, particularly since the merger of Penguin with Random House five years ago, the independent publishing sector is really vibrant. Indies feature strongly on the literary prize shortlists and there are lots



of start-ups doing interesting things, plus a flourishing trade in regional publishing outside London."

Publishing was ripe for NUJ recruitment and pay was proving a huge issue for editorial staff, said Catherine Brereton. "For many, pay is poor and there is a real problem with the gender pay gap.

"It is an industry dominated by women, but with mainly men at the top. It is also an industry where unpaid internships have been rife and getting a step on the ladder, say with work experience, has been the preserve of the rich and well-connected," she said.

"I went to a seminar about the need

for more diversity in the characters portrayed in books, but until you have a more diverse workforce, with people from a much wider range of backgrounds commissioning authors, this will not happen."

Last year, when companies with more than 250 employees were forced to published data on their gender gaps in pay and bonuses, there was nowhere to hide for the publishing industry. Hachette reported a 30 per cent pay gap (mean) between men and women and Elsevier Ltd 29 per cent; whereas for Penguin Books Ltd it was 6 per cent.

"There have since been moves to tackle this issue," said Catherine, "and it hasn't all been a box-ticking exercise. But there is great room for improvement and the union can play an important role by working with managements to put in place policies promoting more women to top management roles. It is bewildering to see so many very talented women who don't get to the next level."

Fiona Swarbrick believes lack of unionisation has been a factor in the poor pay.

She said: "There is not the same union culture in publishing that there has been in newspapers. But where the union is strong, say at Penguin Random House, Faber and Usborne, the conditions are much better. We now need to boost our profile in the books industry - we'll be back at the Book Fair next year and plan to speak at a seminar on the future of the publishing workforce."

Bread & Roses chapel bar news

The NUJ has a new partnership with the Workers Beer Company, which is running the bar on the ground floor of

the NUJ's London HQ with a range of pop-up kitchens providing a variety of food.

It's a great place to meet contacts and network. The Chapel Playhouse, in the basement, is London's newest fringe theatre,

putting on stand-up comedy, play, cabaret and quiz nights. There is a discount for NUJ members on food, drink and tickets.

For details, see What's On: <http://www.chapelplayhouse.co.uk/whats-on.html>