FREE Press

No 190 November–December 2012 Journal of the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom

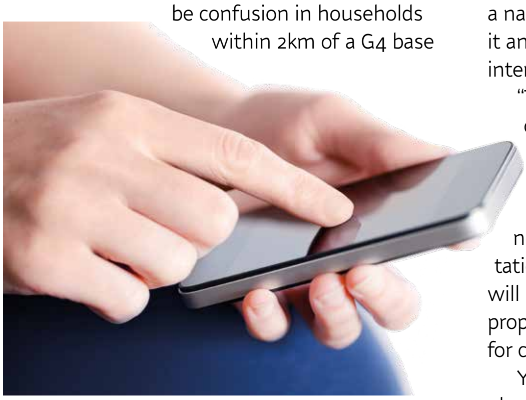
PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Who cares about the viewers?

MILLIONS OF viewers of free-to-air TV could face blank screens as the government rushes through the sale of broadband mobile services. They could even be forced to fork out for commercial alternatives on cable or satellite.

The first 4G (4th generation) mobile service opens at the end of October, and when three more follow in the spring there could be chaos for 2.3 million households watching digital terrestrial television (DTT) with Freeview. The 800 Mhz spectrum, used by analogue TV until the big switchover to digital was completed in October and now allocated for 4G use, is dangerously close to Freeview's 700 Mhz bandwidth and likely to interfere seriously with reception.

The government knows this and is putting remedial measures in place, but campaigners say they are not enough, and there is certain to be confusion in households within 2km of a G4 base station – more than 10 per cent of the 20 million DTT viewing households.



The four 4G companies – EE (a consortium of T-Mobile and Orange, who launch on October 30 on a different frequency), and 02, Three and Vodaphone (who will introduce 800Mhz services next year) – have formed a joint company, Digital Mobile Spectrum Limited (MitCo), to supply, but not fit, special filters for just one TV set in homes they think likely to be affected.

Only disabled people and those over 75 will get the filter installation paid for. There will be no filters for extra sets in any home. And if the filters don't work, Mitco will encourage householders to subscribe to cable or satellite platforms, at their own expense.

The government has set aside £180 for this programme and stated that any extra cost must be borne by householders.

TV industry bodies and campaigners are warning that this is not enough. Ilse Howling, Managing Director of Freeview, said: "The rollout of 4G services will cause consumers significant inconvenience; we do not think they should foot the bill."

Professor Sylvia Harvey of the Voice of the Listener & Viewer said the government was for the first time breaching the principle of free and universal access to public broadcasting: "DTT is a national asset. Government should safeguard it and ensure adequate funding to mitigate interference.

"There should be a guarantee of continuity of service for DTT viewers. This should be a priority for mobile network operators and anything less is manifestly unfair."

Earlier this year Ofcom stated: "We do not consider that there is a legitimate expectation that a coverage level of 98.5% for DTT will be maintained ... we do not consider that our proposals give rise to any right to compensation for consumers."

Yet Ofcom also boasts on its website of its plan to "extend 4G coverage to at least 98 per cent of the UK population."

The priority is clear: government is more concerned to secure the provision of fast internet on mobile phones than of free-to-air public television, and is happy to risk the service to millions of people for the sake of its profit from the sale of the analogue spectrum.

It had hoped for a huge windfall from the sale, after the £22 billion raised for G3 licences, but analysts expect it now to raise only £2-3 billion.

2 WHERE ARE THE WOMEN? Not on the front pages

4 NEW MEDIA MASTERS Internet firms now on top

6 STEEL TOWN BLUES New local paper online

7 MARKET CAN'T BE TRUSTED Look what it's done to TV

For all the latest on the campaign go to www.cpbf.org.uk

DISCRIMINATION

Women don't make the front page — except in pictures

WOMEN ARE still sidelined and stereotyped on the front pages of Britain's newspapers, according to research published by Women in Journalism (WiJ).

Male journalists wrote 78 per cent of all front-page articles and men accounted for 84 per cent of those mentioned or quoted in them, according to WiJ's analysis of nine national papers over four weeks earlier this year.

Predictable as the general results may seem, the research did produce some surprises, with the worst gender ratios on what many would consider the most progressive papers.

The most male-dominated title was the *Independent*, with 91 per cent of its 70 front-page articles written by men. At the *Telegraph* the proportion was 89 per cent, at *The Times* 82 per cent, and 78 per cent at *The Guardian*.

But the *Express* had a 50/50 share, and at the best quality paper, the *Financial Times*, the figure was 66 per cent.

Across all the titles, of people named in lead articles, 84 per cent of those quoted or mentioned were men, most in a professional capacity. The 16 per cent of women were disproportionately likely to be quoted as celebrities, or as victims.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, there were higher proportions of photos of women – though most were celebrities. The study found not a single female politician or leader in the top 10 images used during the month in question.

And where powerful women were featured, the images were often unflattering. Home secretary Theresa May, appeared as the main picture four times during the month, but three of those were the same image of her pulling an unfortunate face.

The German chancellor, Angela Merkel, was pictured three times, but twice the shot was of her with her hands thrown up in the air, puffing her cheeks out. There were few pictures in which women looked powerful and serious.

EUROPEAN INITIATIVE FOR MEDIA PLURALISM

THE MEDIA WE WANT, ACROSS THE CONTINENT

THE RACE is on to gather a million names to back the call for greater media diversity in Europe.

A grand continent-wide petition, entitled the European Initiative for Media Pluralism (last issue), went online in October. If a million people sign it over the next 12 months the Commission must consider its demand. The text is:

> We demand amendments to the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (or the adoption of new directive to the Audiovisual Media Services Directive) aiming at a partial harmonisation of national rules on media ownership and transparency, and setting EU standards for the sufficient independence of the media supervisory bodies, also as necessary steps towards the correct functioning of the internal market. Such legislation, in accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, will also promote a more intense protection of fundamental rights and the public interest objectives of maintaining the pluralism and the independence of the media, a democratic, open public discourse, and the free exchange of ideas and information in the European Union.

To sign it, go to www.mediainitiative.eu/sign-up/

There is further information on the site, and details will be posted at www.cpbf.org.uk. The campaign in the UK is being co-ordinated by CPBF activist Granville Williams and is supported by the TUC and media unions.

LOOK US UP ONLINE

DO YOU do your holiday reading with a Kindle on the beach? No? Then you may not be up to speed on developments in publishing.

Free Press is making the effort. This is the second issue available online in three formats: PDF, ePub and as a full-colour "page-turning" file.

The PDF is a familiar but unwieldy way of distributing information with its roots in the rapidly receding world of ink on paper.

Page-turners are still PDFs, but easier and more attractive to read on a large screen.

EPubs are ideal for small screens like those of Kindles, tablets and smartphones.

All three make it easy to distribute *Free Press* from San

These are the masters now — page 4

Franciso to the Faroe Islands.

EPubs are taking off rapidly. At the last count, in August this year, Amazon in the UK was selling 114 ebooks to every 100 printed ones and the Kindle reading tablet was the best-selling product on the company's website.

The technology that has enabled this rapid adoption of a new way of reading books means someone with minimal technical knowledge, a computer, an internet connection and a bank account can offer their publication to the world.

It works by converting files from programs like Microsoft Word into a simple "ePub" format that can be read by most tablet readers like the Kindle or by tablet computers like Apple's iPad.

With a simple Kindle costing about a quarter as much as an iPad, all publishers can see the benefits of a relatively cheap and cheerful means of electronic distribution.

Publishers are not forced to use Amazon to distribute their work as there are alternatives, including simply emailing a file to someone, or using smaller specialist ePub sellers.

To check *Free Press* in ePub format, visit www.cpbf.org.uk/fpdownload

Alan Slingsby

The recurring shame of James Murdoch

Slated by the regulator

1 JAMES MURDOCH, son of Rupert and one-time boss of BskyB and has been subjected to a scathing judgement by the regulator Ofcom.

In a report on whether the Murdoch shareholding should bar BSkyB from being allowed to hold its broadcasting licence Ofcom slammed the former chairman and chief executive for irresponsibility and incompetence.

The report, the outcome of a probe launched as a result of the phone hacking scandal (Free Press 187), concluded that BSKYB was a "fit and proper" company, with its wider spread of ownership beyond the Murdoch and a good record of compliance with Ofcom regulation.

But Ofcom went out of its way to lambast James Murdoch in unprecedented terms. Referring to his handling of the News of the World scandal it said he "repeatedly fell short of the exercise of responsibility to be expected of him ... His failure to initiate action on his own account on a number of occasions [was] both difficult to comprehend and ill-judged.

There were "questions regarding [his] competence in the handling of these matters, and his attitude towards the possibility of wrongdoing in the companies for which he was responsible".

James Murdoch resigned from his executive role earlier this year and was shipped out to New York by his father to concentrate on his function as number three in the News Corp empire.

The Ofcom judgement rules out the possibility that News Corp might be required to reduce or sell its 39.1 per cent stake in BskyB, but it does not advance the possibility of the group making another bid to buy out the rest of the stock.

Ofcom also warned that it would reopen its investigations into BskyB "should further evidence become available".

Slated by his sister

2 THERE WAS further public humiliation for James Murdoch when his sister and fellow News Corp executive Elisabeth landed a series of blows on his approach to broadcasting management.

Elisabeth Murdoch was delivering the keynote address to the annual Edinburgh Television Festival that her brother had given in 2009. He had declared then that "the only reliable, durable, and perpetual guarantor of [media] independence is profit", and that the "too dominant state-sponsored BBC" was "spear-heading a land-grab that must be resisted. The scale and scope of its current activities and future ambitions is chilling."

Three years later Elisabeth firmly rejected both assertions. She said that "independence from regulation is only democratically viable when we accept that we have a responsibility to each other and not just to our bottom line.

"Profit without purpose – or a moral language – is a recipe for disaster." She went on to praise the BBC and added: "The BBC needs ITV and Sky to thrive so that they can [all] maintain a position of equality rather than dominance." She supported the "universal licence fee" but said BBC must "demonstrate how efficiently that funding is being spent on actual content on behalf of the licence fee payers".

For good measure she threw in an oblique remark on the News of the World scandal, saying the "exposure of the sometimes self-serving relationships between great pillars of society such as police, politics, media and banking served as a reminder that with great power comes responsibility".

Saved by the block vote

3 THE MURDOCH family had to fall back on News Corp's rigged voting system to defend their entrenched position at the group's AGM in New York in October.

A majority of shareholders voted to appoint an independent chairman to replace Rupert Murdoch who is both chairman and chief executive, splitting the role into two.

There was a two-thirds majority support for the proposal, but it was lost because the family's 12 per cent of the stock carries 40 per cent of the votes.

The same happened with a second proposal to change to a more equitable share structure.

Rupert Murdoch said: "There are plenty of media stocks to buy if they don't like this one. If you don't like it, don't buy the stock."

Julie Tanner of the Christian Brothers Investment Services led the call for an independent chairman. "While Mr Murdoch claims that the interests of his family are in line with those of all shareholders, this vote proves that most independent shareholders would disagree," she said.

Murdoch family members were re-elected to the board but the figures had not been released as *Free Press* went to press.

Rupert Murdoch also said there could be another bid to buy out BskyB. "Never say never," he said.

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JOURNALISTS had been arrested by October 15 in the various police probes into corrupt practices at News International, according to a list published in the *Press Gazette*. The Metropolitan Police are due to give an update to the Leveson Inquiry before it reports in November.

The trial of the most prominent defendants, Rebekah Brooks and Andy Coulson, will take place in September 2013, it has been announced. It has also emerged that Rebekah Brooks, former editor of the News of the World and the Sun and chief executive of News International, received a £7 million pay-off when she resigned last year.

Rupert Murdoch also said there could be another bid to buy out BskyB. 'Never say never,' he said

AS THE PRINTED PRESS IS CONVERGED

These are masters n

The declining newspaper empire of the Murdoch family is being brought low not just by its own actions but by tectonic movements in the media that threaten all print publishing. No longer are the press barons on the top of the media pile.

So who is? **GARY HERMAN** explains the changes and turns the spotlight onto the big internet corporations.

OF ALL the media, print publishing has been the hardest hit by the digital revolution. Publishers – particularly in the news business and particularly in the UK – have had to embrace the change in a way that broadcasters and film-makers covering similar content have not, or not yet.

"Web first" and "digital first" – producing material to go first online and filling up the paper or magazine afterwards – have become watchwords in editorial practice as journalists and media workers queue for their redundancy payments and local dailies go weekly or close down completely.

But the impact of this "convergence" of different media is not evenly spread. Publishing has long been the weakest area – the most heavily dependent on advertising, the most affected by demographic change, and the most susceptible to its content migrating to digital platforms such as computers, tablets and smartphones.

For years, the response of publishers in the UK has been consolidation; mergers and acquisitions were designed primarily to support core activities by concentrating ownership, not by extending corporate reach, and the motor was always a desire to cut costs and realise economies of scale.

As long ago as 1978, an academic report on media ownership, produced for the UN cultural agency UNESCO, observed that "the causes of concentration are only partially competition with other media ... Much more important is rising costs and the structure of profits in the industry".

In the face of precipitous declines in newspaper and magazine ad revenues and circulations, getting rid of print and distribution bills seems to be a no-brainer, particular for the Ashley Highfields of the newspaper world, who seem to think of their readers as so many consuming units.

If you think Google is a search engine you should think again. Google is an advertising agency

Ashley Highfield is the former BBC digital chief who now heads the Johnston Press regional newspaper chain, which he is converting to a chain of consumerist commercial local websites. Last year Johnston Press dumped 412 employees, one in 12 of the workforce.

But while cost-cutting may be the long-term motive, current trends in advertising are probably more influential. Last year, online advertising gained the highest share of the UK's spending on adverts at 28 per cent. According to the Internet Advertising Bureau and WARC – the World Advertising Research Centre – UK advertising spend as a whole grew by 2.7 per cent in 2011, while online advertising grew by a startling 16.8 per cent.

Expenditure on display and classified advertising in the press shrank by 5.9 percent and 13.5 per cent respectively. Similar figures are common throughout Europe and North America.

These trends have one cause: the success of a single company called Google.

Readers who think Google is a search engine should think again. Google is an advertising agency, today's version of Mad Men's Sterling Cooper Draper Pryce, and the face of the internet for practically everyone who has ever used it.

Google has grown rich on the supply of advertising and marketing services through its AdWords and AdSense products. After a shaky start, advertising has become one of the two reliable ways to make large amounts of money on the internet.

The other way is to sell stuff in a global market – typically stuff that doesn't involve significant manufacturing and distribution costs. This stuff is classed as "information goods" by US economist Hal Varian, which includes anything that could, in principle, be digitised. Today Hal Varian is Google's chief economist, which tells you a lot about that company's strategy.

Other big sellers of information goods on the internet include Apple and Amazon. Like Google, these companies are increasingly becoming "content aggregators". Put simply, the market strategy of content aggregators is to "digitise everything", collect it together in the vast server-farms that we dreamily call "the cloud", and sell it to us or rent it to us, and rake in the revenues accruing from advertising.

Today, Google, Apple and Amazon have climbed right to the top of the global media

TO DEATH

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Content has become an undifferentiated mass in which quality may be found as an accidental phenomenon

ladder. Figures from the current FT500 list of global companies show Apple, Google and Amazon are, respectively, first, third and fourth in the ranking of companies with a significant involvement in the media (see table).

None of the top four companies in this list is actually classified as a media company in the FT rankings. Apple is classified under Technology hardware & equipment, Google under Software & computer services and Amazon under General retailers, yet all of them are increasingly known for their activities in the media – whether as publishers, distributors of recorded music or broadcasters of a kind. Think Kindle, iTunes and YouTube and you are thinking of Amazon, Apple and Google.

There is a real possibility, if still somewhat remote, that Amazon, Apple and Google will effectively monopolise publishing, the music business, broadcasting and the movie industry. It is probable that they, or companies like them, will destroy established mass media players.

Ofcom figures show that 40 per cent of the British population already use mobile devices to access the internet, and it is the protean nature of the internet that underlies the growth of content aggregators and their expansion into the business of providing digital media content.

Mobile devices – tablet computers, ebook readers and smartphones – will undoubtedly become the dominant platforms for the consumption of media. Other formats will probably cater for minorities.

The economics of the digital market favour mass consumption and low (even zero – free content!) prices. Cheap content and advertising cash characterise the digital media. In journalism, this extends the tendency towards what journalist Nick Davies has called "churnalism"

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WHERE THEY STAND

Top media companies head the world rankings

Rank	Company	Country	Mkt. value *	Turnover *	Net inc. *	Assets *	Employees
1	Apple	US	559,002.1	108,598.0	25,922.0	116,371.0	63,300
4	Microsoft	US	270,644.1	69,950.0	23,150.0	108,704.0	90,000
25	Google	US	165,414.5	37,862.0	9,737.0	72,574.0	32,467
60	Amazon.com	US	92,155.8	48,077.0	631.0	25,250.0	56,200
71	Comcast	US	81,264.5	55,842.0	4,160.0	157,818.0	126,000
74	Walt Disney	US	78,469.5	40,893.0	4,807.0	72,124.0	156,000
141	News Corp	US	48,971.4	33,405.0	2,739.0	61,830.0	51,000
145	eBay	US	47,604.8	11,677.5	3,229.4	27,320.2	27,770
211	Time Warner	US	36,458.5	28,974.0	2,871.0	67,801.0	34,000
236	DirecTV	US	33,383.9	27,226.0	2,609.0	18,213.0	16,200
333	Viacom	US	25,890.0	14,914.0	2,136.0	22,801.0	10,580
334	Time Warner Cable	US	25,598.0	19,675.0	1,654.0	48,276.0	48,500
363	Thomson Reuters	Can/UK	23,894.2	13,807.0	-1,390.0	32,426.0	60,500
380	Naspers	S.Africa	23,121.6	4,885.7	776.7	10,194.8	15,932
385	Vivendi	France	22,854.1	37,322.6	3,472.8	70,334.4	58,400
403	CBS	US	22,025.6	14,245.0	1,305.0	26,197.0	26,425
415	Nintendo	Japan	21,449.6	12,202.6	933.8	19,239.3	4,712
431	Sony	Japan	20,802.0	86,477.1	-3,122.8	152,605.4	168,200
447	Reed Elsevier	Neth/UK	20,029.5	9,325.9	1,180.9	17,873.3	30,500
466	Yahoo Japan	Japan	18,933.6	3,517.9	1,108.9	5,594.9	4,748
483	Yahoo	US	18,473.3	4,984.2	1,048.8	14,740.4	14,100
484	BSkyB	UK	18,460.8	10,589.1	1,300.2	8,483.2	16,006

*Top Media Companies by global corporate ranking (Source: FT Global 500, 2012, * figures in $m) . The table excludes private companies like Bertelsmann and public enterprises like the BBC.*

'ENTIRELY IMMORAL' AND ENTIRELY LEGAL

AS A PROPER multi-national mega-corp Google has been caught out minimising its tax liabilities. Last year it paid just £6 million in tax on its UK turnover of £395 million.

MPs on the Commons Treasury Select Committee are to call the company to appear before them as part of a wider investigation into tax avoidance.

Labour MP John Mann said: "It is entirely immoral, this is a company avoiding its obligations and we are letting them get away with it."

Google's tax avoidance scheme — which is entirely legal — involves using its UK company as an agent to sell products on behalf of its Ireland division. The proceeds go to Ireland, minus a commission of around 10 per cent remains in the UK, taxable after the deduction of costs. Google Ireland pays much of the cash to Google Bermuda, based in the Atlantic tax haven.

The company said: "We comply with all the tax rules in the UK. We make a big contribution to the UK economy by employing over a thousand people and investing millions supporting new tech businesses in East London."

Google has always made a big deal of being an ethical corporation, with its famous slogan "Don't be evil". Its company manifesto says: "We believe strongly that in the long term, we will be better served — as shareholders and in all other ways — by a company that does good things for the world even if we forgo some short term gains."

These are the masters now

→ from previous page

– the constant regurgitation of the same increasingly meaningless information.

In all media, old professional skills such as sub-editing and copy-editing fall into disuse. A recent survey of self-publishing, for example, found that only 29 per cent of ebook authors engaged copy editors to check their texts. But while the mass market migrates to digital formats, there will always be those prepared to pay a premium for quality, professionalism or individuality.

Digitisation has been accompanied by the fragmentation and de-skilling of many of the processes and jobs traditionally associated with the media. This can be seen in a number of well-known phenomena:

- the growth of blogging and citizen journalism
- "small screen film-making" using cheap video cameras, cheap editing software and "display channels" such as YouTube and Vimeo
- home music and audio production using cheap sound recording equipment and editing software and the growing number of online music stores and audio distribution networks
- podcasting and other forms of narrowcast audio distribution such as internet radio
- ebook writing and self-publishing
- smartphone app development and publishing

Much of this is, in the best sense of the word, amateur. According to a recent survey, the average ebook author earned $10,000 (£6,375) in 2011, while the median income for ebook authors was less than $500. Little money is to be made from these activities individually, but the content aggregators can access a global (or near-global) market.

Content, as the familiar motto has it, may be king, but it is increasingly content as an undifferentiated mass in which quality may occasionally be found, like a gold nugget, but only as an accidental phenomenon. We are witnessing the final triumph of the mass media.

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The Passion as enacted in Port Talbot last year with the MagNet journalists in support

LOCAL JOURNALISM

An answer to the steel town blues

As newspapers die off, new ways are being tried of providing local news online. Problems for independent ventures include money and advertising, and a group of journalists in South Wales have set up a co-op to try and solve them. **KEN SMITH** reports.

JUST OVER three years ago, in September 2009, a group of NUJ members in South West Wales met to discuss new ways to create work for journalists in the area. A few months of discussion and thinking led to the creation of a journalists' cooperative, Local News South Wales, at the end of 2009.

Two years later and the offspring of that decision is producing daily news output online and is looking to launch a monthly magazine in spring 2013.

At the same time as the project was launched, the Trinity Mirror group closed the Port Talbot Guardian and Neath Guardian weekly newspapers.

This left two major south Wales towns with a population of nearly 140,000 without any of its own weeklies. A clear opportunity was offering itself to combine journalists looking for news to report with a town that needed a news provider.

Autumn 2010 saw the launch of the online hyperlocal site www.lnpt.org (Local News Port Talbot) that became host to the Port Talbot MagNet in spring 2011. The website's name reflects both the steel-making traditions of the area and the idea that it is a magazine on the internet.

A lot of voluntary work was and still is necessary to keep the news operation running. But a big breakthrough for the co-op was in becoming a community partner with National Theatre Wales and Michael Sheen in their production of the Passion at Easter 2011.

Journalists from the co-op, along with media students and volunteers ran a newsroom in Port Talbot reporting in real time the amazing live theatre played out on the streets of the town that weekend. Much of the coverage is still online and can be viewed at www.lnpt.org/about-us/passion/.

Since then a determined team of members and volunteers, with the occasional paid contribution, has ensured that the online news service provides daily updates for the population of Port Talbot.

The site gets about 8,000 page views and 4,000 unique hits a month. There are nearly 1,200 followers on Facebook, with the community providing lots of unique news via social media channels.

However, the advertising cash from an online site hasn't been there to fulfil some of the early objectives of the coop – providing paid work, training and mentoring young journalists, and finding new ways of community engagement with the news gathering process.

With most of the journalists coming from a print background, there has been recognition that we could realise more advertising revenue by adding the monthly magazine. Plans are afoot to launch it in the spring.

TV PRODUCTION

Leave it to the market, and look what happens!

A new Communications Bill, to be launched by the government early next year, is expected to relax even further the regulatory regime on broadcasting. It's just another business, they say. The market will sort out what's good and bad.

But **DES FREEDMAN**, who has studied the broadcasting industry for years, says that's not so: the market is skewing investment from the quality popular programming to the profitable.

"OPEN AND COMPETITIVE markets support growth and further the interests of citizens and consumers."

So stated the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in the opening line of a paper produced for one of its invite-only media industry seminars in the summer.

The second paragraph of the paper opens with the proposition that "as with markets more generally, media markets need to have a stable, robust and clear competition regime".

In other words, broadcasting should be subject to a regime like that of telecoms, which prioritises infrastructure over how best to protect the pluralism and diversity of ownership and the quality of content.

A recent ruling by the Competition Commission on the operation of the Pay-TV market (dominated by BSkyB of course) did conclude that "competition was not effective", because of "the very high and stable level of concentration, the low level of switching between suppliers, the difficulty of large-scale entry/expansion as a traditional pay-TV retailer and the absence of countervailing buyer power in pay TV".

But the CC went on to note that this fact "did not of itself lead to the conclusion that there was an adverse effect on competition".

In truth the market has done just that in the allocation of resources inside broadcasting. Pay-TV subscription has increased as a source of all TV revenue from 34 per cent in 2004 to 41 per cent in 2010, well above that of advertising (29 per cent) and licence fee income (22 per cent). Nearly half of total revenue now goes to support the 27 per cent of audience share commanded by pay-TV.

While it is true that more is now being invested in TV content, that increase is systematically skewed into particular genres. Spending on film and sport channels is up by a third since 2007, compared with a 22 per cent decrease for BBC1 since 2006, a 14 per cent drop for BBC2, a 21 per cent decline for ITV1 and an 18 per cent decline for Channel 4, according to in Ofcom's latest PSB Annual Report.

As for spending on original programming, this too has been distorted: down by 17 per cent on BBC1 since 2006, 13 per cent on BBC2, 22 per cent on ITV1 and 18 per cent on Channel 4. In particular, news budgets down by 15 per cent, arts by a huge 39 per cent, education 38 per cent, children's 22 per cent, and "factual" by 17 per cent (despite a significant increase in the number of hours devoted to dirt-cheap "reality" and lifestyle output). The only genre to see increased spending is feature films.

Spending is being directed towards those genres that are likely to be most profitable and away from those with little obvious commercial viability.

Spending is being directed towards the most profitable genres and away from those with less commercial viability

BSkyB's market power is determining demand. According to evidence from Ofcom, 59 per cent of regular sports viewers see Premier League football as "must-have" content, yet they are forced to pay premium prices for it. Likewise consumers have to pay top dollar for other genres "enclosed" by BskyB.

Sky has signed an exclusive deal with HBO of around £150 million over five years to have exclusive access to its high-quality drama programmes. Mad Men, for example, has moved from BBC2 with its 7 per cent audience share to Sky Atlantic, which has 0.3 per cent. Even more intriguingly, Sky has promised to spend £600 million in original UK material by 2014 to go on channels such as Sky One, with a 0.7 per cent audience share and the arts channels, of which Sky Arts 1 registers 0.1 per cent and Sky Arts 2 a share too small to count.

STEFANO CAGNONI

Des Freedman: BSkyB market power determines demand

While we should welcome investment in original programming, it is worrying if such output is channelled into gated communities aimed at a minority of people who happen to get the channels because they are, by and large, sports or film fans.

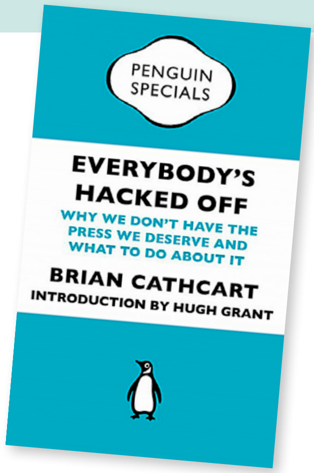
Public money aimed at mass audiences is being replaced by private money aimed at high-spending subscription audiences.

This is not a market operating in an open and competitive fashion. Far from the government abandoning sector-specific regulation, there is a case for making it more robust and effective, as the only way to maintain diverse and accountable media.

Des Freedman is a Reader in Communications and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths College in London and a member of the CPBF National Council.

REVIEW

Enough words. Let's see some action



Everybody's Hacked Off: Why we don't have the press we deserve and what to do about it
Brian Cathcart, Penguin £1.99

THE HACKED Off! campaign has had some spectacular achievements. Its high-profile campaigning made a significant contribution to the events which led to the setting up of the Leveson Inquiry into the "culture, practices and ethics of the press".

Abuses by the tabloid press which a great number of people had known about and campaigned against for years, were, at last, pushed to the top of the agenda.

Reform of the press is long overdue, but Brian Cathcart, Hacked Off!'s founder and the author this pithy account, is all too aware of the weight of the opposition. The public agenda is normally defined by what he refers to as the "press megaphone": the very newspapers which stand accused.

He gives a useful run-down on past Royal Commissions and public enquiries. Each followed a major scandal. Newspapers were repeatedly warned that there would be no second chances. They were "drinking in the last chance saloon", as Tory minister David Mellor said in 1991, and if they didn't change their ways, Parliament would step in.

In each case nothing happened. Media owners dragged their feet, made promises and partial concessions. The issues became less urgent, elections were coming up and the parties needed the support of the press.

David Mellor was soon hounded out of office by the press he had so feebly threatened, as pliant governments granted them another "last chance".

With Leveson now not reporting until just before the Xmas break, could this happen again? Brian Cathcart confidently asserts that this time it's different. It is different because of the degree of law-breaking exposed and the very public nature of the Leveson Inquiry.

> **Phone hacking, targeting celebrities and the monstering of unfortunate individuals are only part of the problem**

Hacked Off! helped publicise numerous examples of appalling behaviour by the tabloids – illegal phone hacking, targeting of celebrities and those associated with them, the monstering of unfortunate individuals – but, however shocking, this is only part of the problem.

There is a danger that the high profile given to victims of abuse will overshadow the political role played by media owners, especially (but not only) by Rupert Murdoch.

The globalisation and concentration of media ownership is part of a shift of effective power away from national governments.

The cosy relationships between successive Prime Ministers and the Murdochs were only one aspect of this.

If the problem is only seen in terms of the bad behaviour of some newspapers (which can be solved by shutting them down, as with the News of the World) there is a danger that Leveson – or more likely the government, in response to his report – may merely rap the press over the knuckles and politely ask it to behave better.

So much easier than addressing the more embarrassing (and challenging) political and structural questions.

Patricia Holland

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 Free Press is edited by Tim Gopsill on behalf of the National Council. This issue went to press on October 23.
Send letters, comments, articles and ideas to freepress@cpbf.org.uk
Printed by Printciples, www.printciples.co.uk