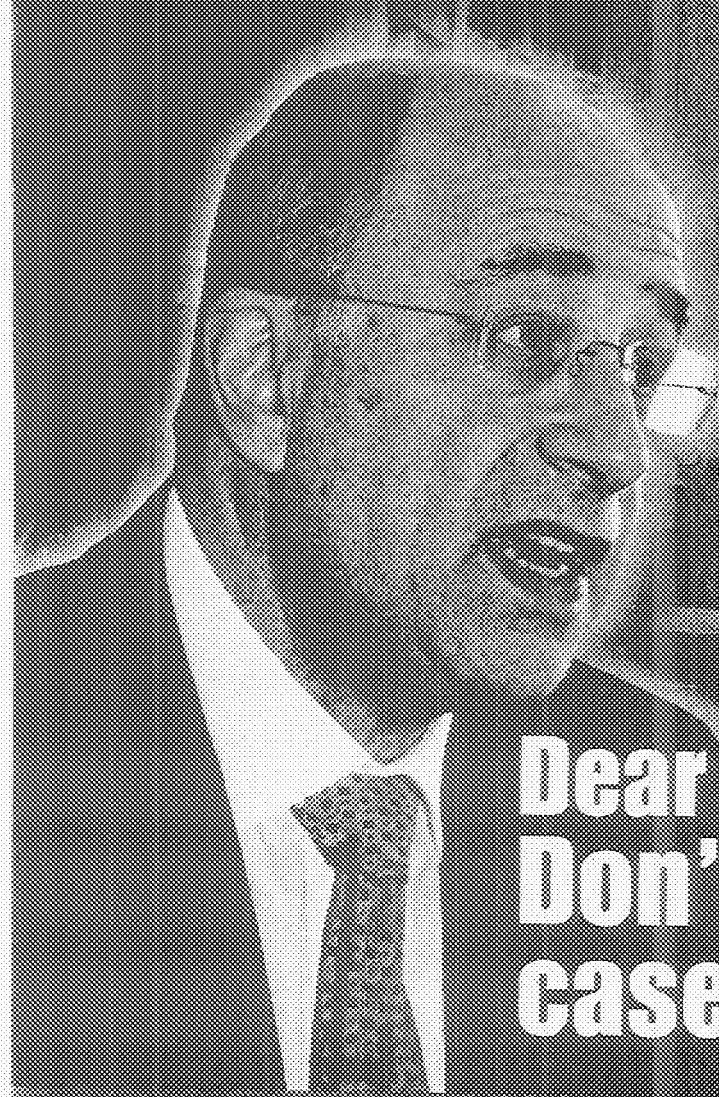


# PressGazette

JOURNALISM TODAY

[www.pressgazette.co.uk](http://www.pressgazette.co.uk) January 2012

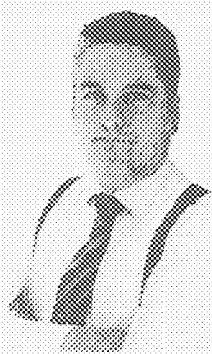


**Dear Lord Leveson,  
Don't forget the  
case for the defence**

**Beyond hacking: Why British journalism**



# Editor's letter



It looks like Lord Justice Leveson is beginning to form a pretty low opinion of the press – and with good reason from some of the evidence he has heard.

The low point so far may be the questioning of former News of the World editor Colin Myler about an incident which came to light during the Max Mosley trial. One of the sex-workers who took part in the now infamous basement party was repeatedly threatened with exposure in the paper unless she co-operated on a week-two follow-up (see pages 28-30).

Myler, who it must be said only found out after the event, told Leveson: "It was unnecessary to have written in those terms."

Leveson: "You said it was unnecessary . . . quite frankly it was outrageous wasn't it?"

Former NoW sports reporter Matt Driscoll told of another incident where the newsdesk allegedly blagged Sir Alex Ferguson's medical records and then used the information to get more stories out of him.

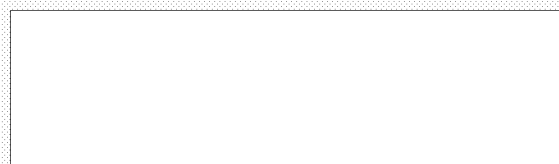
All journalists have to persuade sometimes unwilling interviewees to talk to them. But the NoW was, it now seems, a paper where it was not unknown for journalists to resort to blackmail.

As Leveson himself noted, after questions were raised about the original Guardian story exposing the hacking of Milly Dowler's phone, "if anybody had any doubt" about why the inquiry was necessary "I anticipate that the last month has dispelled that doubt".

Not to downplay the seriousness of wrongdoing by a small minority of bent and twisted journalists – Press Gazette is keen that Lord Leveson is also given an impression of the good and honest work done by the vast majority of us.

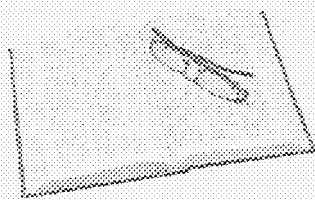
Pages 14 to 26 form the first part of a dossier which Press Gazette will be presenting to the inquiry. It feels like British journalism is currently in the dock at Leveson and it is not doing a very good job of defending itself.

Hopefully Press Gazette can, in a small way, redress the balance.



## Stylebook...

**Journalism:** The profession or practice of reporting, editing or photographing news for the mass media. Not blackmailing, not reporting unproven allegations as fact, not breaking the law and not overly sensationalising. Perhaps 2012 is a year when a chastened journalism trade should get back to basics.



## Quote of the month

*Unless the industry really does come together and unite and engage with courts, with the judiciary, with politicians and agree that things do have to change, from both sides and all sides, not just on ours, I think it's a pretty gloomy and grim future*

Colin Myler, former editor of the News of the World at Leveson

## Heroes

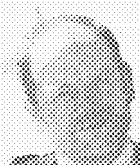
...The Guardian's **Charles Arthur**, for being named journalist most likely to tell PRs to sling their hook for a second year running (see Axegrinder, page 63).



**Stuart Hoare**, the brother of deceased News of the World whistleblower Sean, who told the Leveson inquiry: "It is my duty and my promise to my younger brother to uphold his name and finally prove that everything he said was the truth."

## Villains

... BBC director general **Mack Thompson** for suggesting that the Mirror's excellent front page story about Frozen Planet fakery was in some way revenge for the corporation's coverage of Leveson.



**Lord Bell** for a second case of shooting the messenger after the Bureau of Investigative Journalism's lobbying expose against Crime Communications: "an attempt by unethical deception to manufacture a story," he said.

IN DEPTH &gt; HAPPY NEW YEAR

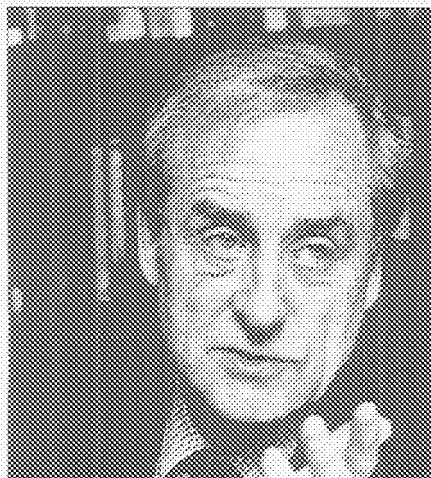
# Plenty of reasons

2012 has dawned with the press, mainly national so far, undergoing intimate and painful examination by Lord Justice Leveson – and that's in the face of falling ad revenues and declining sales. But there is still room to be cheerful and celebrate our trade

## SIR HAROLD EVANS

Bad journalism has been getting bad press and deserves it. Good journalism has been threatened by the pressures on profits in newspapers, aggravated by myopic managements who think you can offer less and sell more.

So there's something of a pall over journalism. It's certainly hard to think there's much of a future when you've been canned. But if I were 16 again, and knowing what I know now, I'd certainly write the letters I did asking for newspaper work, and jump at any chance to be a journalist.



There's never been more need to explore, explain and expose. You have a licence to ask questions that affect the wellbeing of hundreds, thousands, maybe millions. Hand on heart, I assert it is as fulfilling to work for the public good as it is degrading to hack phones.

With better journalism, we might have had an early warning of the scams behind the financial meltdown, or the paucity of evidence of weapons of mass destruction that got us into the Iraq War. As a career, journalism is not a dead end. Print is troubled, but the skills acquired by trying to record what is happening in plain view, or strenuously concealed, are transferable to all forms of communication – on the web, in television, in politics and advertising, and, dare I say, in public relations.

By the way, it's fun, too, and, as they say, you

meet some interesting people.

Sir Harold Evans was editor of *The Sunday Times* from 1967-1981, editor of *The Times* from 1981-82 and editorial director of *US News and World Report* 1984-86. In 1966 he was the founding editor of *Condé Nast Traveler*. He was appointed president and publisher of *Random House* from 1990-1997 and editorial director and vice chairman of *US News and World Report*, the *New York Daily News*, and *The Atlantic Monthly* from 1997 to January 2000. He is currently editor-at-large at *Reuters*.

## CHRIS BLACKHURST

As we enter 2012, the world has never been more uncertain – with financial crisis, political upheaval in the Middle East, ever-present climate change, threat of terrorism and elections due in several major powers. At home, we're governed by a strained coalition, struggling to keep the national finances in check while striving to grow the economy. In the middle of this, the globe comes to the UK for the London Olympics.



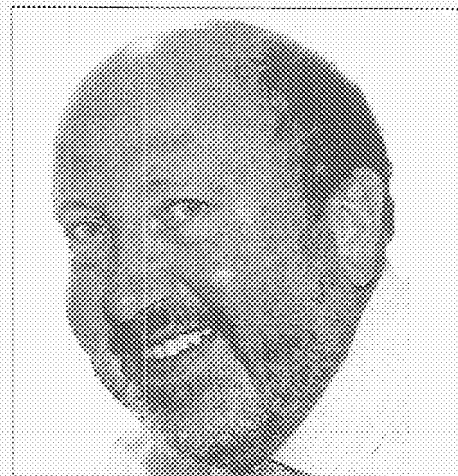
Of course there are clouds hanging over the media, notably declining print sales and the fallout from hacking. But while demand for paper wanes, the hunger for news content remains insatiable. Journalism will continue to adapt in 2012, pushing more and more resources towards digital platforms and technological innovation. The Leveson inquiry will probe and hurry but there's a growing acceptance by the

public that those at the centre of the judicial investigations constitute a small minority – people still turn to journalists for information and comment they can trust. In 2012, that needs is greater than ever.

Chris Blackhurst is editor of *The Independent*

## PETER SANDS

Despite the 'old media' tag, I still encounter hundreds of intelligent, dedicated and committed youngsters who want to work for,



and believe in, newspapers. Most of them are multi-skilled, flexible, optimistic, sociable and funny – and they make my work a joy.

Peter Sands is consultant editor at *Press Association Training* and former editor of the *Northern Echo*

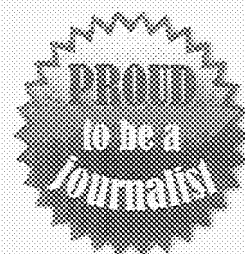
## PETER KIRWAN

Online display advertising is growing at a healthy pace. Publishers are starting to comprehend the power of audience data.

iPad & Kindle adoption is going through the roof. Long-term, this will benefit publishers.

Social journalism, data journalism, digital journalism: the tools are everywhere you look, and we're only just getting started...

The post-hacking debate is painful for some. But only good can come of it. To a greater extent than previously, the people of this country will get the press they deserve.



# for optimism



This year, I've been struck by the grit and determination of independent local news publishers, editors and journalists around the country. Their efforts to reinvent an entire media sector from the ground up constitute a major reason to be cheerful.

Peter Kirwan is a journalist and consultant

## MARTIN TRIPP

Content is becoming increasingly important for corporate and e-commerce sites. In the US, there is growing recognition that such sites need strong editorial teams, with a content chief at the helm.



This model is already crossing the Atlantic. While this won't be everybody's idea of journalism, it is certainly recognisable to new media stalwarts or those who have worked in contract publishing. A silver lining of sorts. Martin Tripp is an editorial headhunter

## What a great time to be an 'information age' journo

### DOMINIC PONSFORD

The economy may be tanking, and advertising may be illusive, but as sure as the 19th century was the steam age and the 20th century was the oil age, the 21st century is the information age.

And journalists who can become masters of, not just telling stories, but marshalling and controlling information in the digital world have a great future ahead of them. Print may be a fading force but as experts in giving



Hot off the press: Richard Desmond

people trusted and accurate information, all journalists have their feet firmly planted in the currency of the future.

Richard Desmond has just invested £100m on state-of-the-art colour printing presses for the Express and Star titles.

The 25-year investment in new technology suggests that some smart money at least doesn't think newspapers are going away any time soon.

When asked why he was making this investment at a time when print circulations

are under unprecedented pressure - Desmond snorted that people said the same thing the last time West Ferry printers made such a big investment 25 years ago. And Desmond is not a man who spends money lightly.

Both Lords Leveson and Hunt appear to be sympathetic to the plight of ordinary journalists and the need for them to have stronger protection from pressure to act unethically. Lord Hunt told Press Gazette: "I want to explore the extent to which journalists who come under pressure to break the rules are protected".

The outcome of the Leveson Inquiry could be the dawn of a new era for ethical journalism in the public interest.

And as our Proud to be a journalist features on pages 14 to 26 suggest - that's the sort of work that the vast majority of us want to do.

The Leveson Inquiry is also set to get very interesting this year, as a succession of high-profile editors - from the Daily Mail's Paul Dacre downwards - take the stand.

2012 is set to be an exhilarating one for news, as our news diary on pages 10 and 11 suggests. London is set for another entertaining mayoral face-off between Boris and Ken, the Olympics is a once-in-a-generation event which will be covered far beyond the sports pages and Britain has the Queen celebrating a diamond jubilee (we haven't had one of those since Victoria). Just looking at the things which are in the diary, 2012 is set to be a corker.

Writing about the French revolution William Wordsworth said: "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive. But to be young was very heaven."

For those who can survive both the digital revolution, and Lord Leveson's Robespierre-like reign of terror against corrupt tabloid practices, there really couldn't be a more fascinating time to practice our trade.

Dominic Ponsford is editor of the print and online edition of the Press Gazette

IN DEPTH > PROUD TO BE A JOURNALIST CAMPAIGN

# We asked and hundreds

Lord Justice Leveson has been given a pretty shabby impression of what constitutes British journalism so far during his inquiry into press standards.

In a bid to redress the balance, Press Gazette invited journalists to post Twitter messages about what makes them #proudtobeajournalist.

The result was hundreds of examples of the many ways journalists of all descriptions change the world for the better in their working lives. It is just a tiny snapshot of the good work British journalists do -- but a revealing one.

On the following four pages some of the respondents (not all journalists) expand their messages and we give a selection of the Tweets we received

## MARTIN CROWSON Leicester Mercury

### How we helped Manu stay in the UK

MANU TUILAGI was in line to follow his five older brothers into the Leicester Tigers' first team when a problem with his visa meant he faced deportation back to his birthplace in Samoa.



The then 19-year-old had spent the last six years growing up in Leicestershire and had played for England at junior levels. But he had arrived on just a six-month holiday visa and stayed on here.

In June 2010, the Leicester Mercury took up Tuilagi's case and, with the club passionately behind his appeal to remain in the country, a groundswell of public opinion quickly built up in the county after his plight was revealed in a front page story.

Thousands signed a petition, a Facebook page was set up in support and even local politicians threw their weight behind an appeal driven by the Mercury.

Just a month later, the Home Office announced a spectacular u-turn and Tuilagi was granted indefinite leave to stay in the country to the delight of the club, its fans and Tuilagi himself.

Tigers' executive director Peter Wheeler said: "We would like to thank the Leicester Mercury and its readers who helped to stimulate such great public support." Since then, Tuilagi and gone on to make 30

appearances for his club, has been capped seven times by England.

He was widely hailed as his country's best player at the recent World Cup in New Zealand.

## DENNIS RICE Leicester Mercury

### Tabloid journalists can be a force for good too

SAYING YOU were a tabloid journalist in 2011 was a bit like the moment when the conversation suddenly dies at a party after someone says that he or she is a tax inspector.

I have been a tabloid journalist for more than 20 years and there have undeniably been moments when my work has upset and distressed someone out there. So am I filled with shame? No, not a bit. Tabloid journalists can be a force for good too.

For example, I was working for a Sunday ragtop when I was the first journalist to reveal that Lily Savage had a secret daughter he barely knew after splitting with her mother decades earlier. The upshot of the story was that they were reunited and he gave her away at her wedding two years later. Would Paul O'Grady have made contact had the newspaper not revealed this? I doubt it.

On another occasion I landed an exclusive interview with the first woman in the world to have a face transplant despite the express wishes of the doctor who was treating her.

I learned later that the surgeon had been embarrassed five years earlier by the same paper I was working for -- when it revealed that he had used the limbs of a convicted killer to perform the world's first double-hand

## Your Tweets

**@AlanParmer**, Daily Mirror  
Working with Barnardo's to get WY Police then ACPO to treat 14 yr old prostitutes as victims not criminals

**@AndrewGregory**, staff reporter  
Revealing miscarriages of justice, shaming corporations, holding the powerful to account

**@AngelaCarless**, journalist  
specialising in real life stories for newspapers and women's mags  
Helping people abandoned at birth find their families and writing tales which sometimes make a difference

**@Sammieshaw**, Daily Express  
Helping people to sort out their finances, get ripped-off money back and work alongside others who do the same

**@AnthonyBowick**, Evening Standard reporter  
Holding to account the powers that be by exposing their wrongdoing, expense accounts and ridiculous salary levels

**@AntoniaHoyle**, journalist  
Today a woman I interviewed said the finished feature helped her come to terms with her illness

**@AudreyGillan**, Scottish writer living in London  
Exposing a 13-year-old girl who had been *abducted* and turned into

marriage in Pakistan back home to school in Glasgow

**@BernardGinns**, business editor  
Yorkshire Post  
Because it is simply the best job in the world, bar none. Long live newspapers

**@brianwheelerhack**, Brian Wheeler, former newspaper reporter now an editor for Yahoo  
Getting Sacramento Ireland shot down made me #proudtobeajournalist

**@CardFive**, crime reporter Plymouth Herald  
Forced a huge water company to reward an *obscene* bill on a pensioner after arguing their water pipes were broken  
Piece I wrote for a blog is now being

used to train police and headteachers to help child victims of domestic abuse

**@caryshepworth**, Bridgend reporter, Wales Online  
Exposing those who abuse power, and giving a platform to those who have none

**@CatrinShi**, reporter, Worthing Herald  
Getting a 102-year-old man's £50,000 in owed benefits back for him.

**@Schuttunge**, Angela Newsletter, journalist/writer  
Years of battling to get "whistle" stories into the media knowing that once in a while makes a *customer's* life better  
**@CryptoburninEd**, Matthew

# told us



transplant. The woman, who had agreed to the interview in return for 3000 Euros, was considerably richer and said she had no objection to having her story told.

And one of my last stories as a staff journalist on a middle market Sunday tabloid was to reveal how BP's chief executive Lord Browne had perjured himself in the High Court to try to stop a former lover he had dumped from telling his story.

Scores of high-minded intellectuals joined a petition in support of the pair – not one expressed a scrap of sympathy for the former partner he had left high and dry. At my suggestion the paper I was working for, quietly and without fuss, paid for this man to embark on a drug rehabilitation programme.

These stories – one led me to Portugal, another to France, and the last to Canada – might never have seen the light of day had there been in place a privacy law which many are now advocating.

Since resigning from my highly-paid staff job I have worked as a freelance and seen life on the outside. Among the many ways I have tried to diversify is in setting up websites – [www.moneyforyourstory.com](http://www.moneyforyourstory.com) and [www.moneyforyourpicture.com](http://www.moneyforyourpicture.com) – which help the public sell their stories to newspapers.

Although the sites are unashamedly commercial they also seem to attract people who have turned to the media after all other doors have closed on them – those living between the cracks of society I suppose.

One such couple, let's call them Mr

and Mrs B, had the daughter they loved taken away 18 months earlier by council social workers. Their 'crime' had been to be breeding dogs in the same house as the little girl.

This sort of story is not what I would term a money spinner but I agreed to represent them for nothing because, as they said, they had no-one else to turn to. They went to the Appeal Court. I managed to get virtually every national newspaper down there in expectation of writing stories about how Mr and Mrs B had won back their child. A few were even willing to pay the couple for an exclusive in-depth interview once they were reunited with the little girl.

Incredibly the judge rejected their application, and they were inconsolable. The papers who had queued to publish their story vanished and did not write an inch on their plight.

Then 24 hours later I received a call from the Daily Mail – yes the same much-maligned newspaper which is supposed to be uncaring and to some an example of everything which is wrong with the industry – saying they still wanted to speak to the couple.

The result of which was a double-page spread on the scandal of what happens when a man and a woman don't fit a local authority's idea of what parents should be like, who love their daughter with every fibre of their being. And if you want me to apologise as a tabloid journalist for being part of that you can forget it.

**Dennis Rice**: formerly investigations editor for the Mail on Sunday, chief reporter on Daily Express, Sunday Mirror, News of the World.



**MARJANNE GLOUGH**  
National PS manager  
Christians Against Poverty

## Thank you for helping save those in debt

This is a big thank you to reporters. You have every right to feel #proudtobeajournalist! Our debt counselling organisation helps people combat their spiralling finances through a network of church-based centres across the UK.

Sadly, more than a third of our clients are considering suicide as a way out when they first call us, according to a recent survey we made of 1,000 clients. Debts are not just about money. They are wound up with issues like job loss, wrecked relationships, feelings of being an inadequate parent and repossession of the family home. When creditors add pressure on top, it can be very destructive.

As with many charities, we don't have much of an advertising budget. Ok, none. So, we continually work with the media to get the message out: there is a hope and a solution.

The vast majority of our referrals are through word of mouth, GPs, housing officers, social workers etc. But this year, directly from seeing Christians Against Poverty in the media, 178 people rang us.

continued on page 18 ►

**Knowles**, assistant editor, Croydon and Sutton Guardian newspapers. Never knowing what's round the next corner but knowing we will do a good job covering it for our readers.

**@shutbloom1**, Dan Bloom, Medway Messenger. Callers saying your obit captured their relative so perfectly, they're sending it to the whole family.

**@diodesign**, Chris Williams, do: uh editor, theregister.co.uk. Sharing news and interesting info every day and ruining the afternoons of the corrupt and dishonest.

**@DJRjournalist**, David Roberts, north East journalist of the year based in Darlington.

Helped with successful campaign to introduce e-safety in schools following murder of Ashleigh Hall.

**@Gareth\_Davies00**, journalist, Croydon Advertiser. Not sure about anyone else but I'm #proudtobeajournalist because it's a brilliant job. 3.5 years and I've not looked at the clock once.

**@shannahfeartn**, social policy journalist and writer, editor of the Guardian's housing and local government networks. I'm #proudtobeajournalist because we help government to understand the real impact of its own social policy.

**@JadeWright**, Liverpool Echo. The hours are long and unglorious, but

when you can give someone a voice or highlight their cause it's a privilege.

**@jane\_bradley**, investigations producer, BBC London TV. Because we can be found running towards the trouble most people are running from. And exposing injustice along the way.

**@jamie\_lewis**. It's something you are, not something you do.

**@JoeyBriscoe**, journalism/documentary-maker. Getting footage of armed guards and snipers in Libya out of Tibet.

**@HayleyP\_11**, Hayley Paterson. Demos and reporter and Sky sports

com. Helped little blind girl get into a special needs school after she struggled in mainstream education.

**@joeyclose**, journalism graduate. Wrote a PPI insurance guide, woman emailed me who reclaimed £80k's and could keep her house after her husband died.

**@KaneSLP**, reporter, South London Press. Telling the good and the bad stories & giving a voice to people who have an important story to tell.

**@KasiaLit**, director of Residence: Ue, Clark University. Ending a stream of threatening gas bill letters wrongly being sent to a

IN DEPTH > PROUD TO BE A JOURNALIST CAMPAIGN

◀ continued from page 17

That's potentially around 59 people's lives saved.

A massive cheer to the unsung heroes of journalism! You don't see the legacy of your work but we do and it is much appreciated.

**JANE O'NEILL**  
Senior reporter, Sunderland Echo

**I'm a hack not a hacker and make a difference**

I was contacted by a group of elderly people who live in a tower block opposite my office.

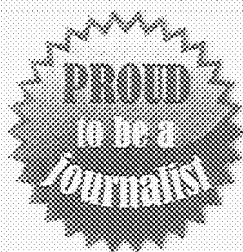


I went out to see them and this was the result was the 12 December story: 'Parking madness for'

Sunderland tower block residents'. This revealed that over-zealous traffic wardens were ticketing doctors and funeral vehicles.

After the story ran I received several calls from pensioners living in the block, including one man who said that nobody had listened to them until we printed the story and I didn't know how much it meant to them.

As the city centre and court reporter, I could bore you for hours with similar tales of how the Echo has made a difference to people's lives, usually for the better! People don't always realise that I might be writing a story about someone one day, then standing behind them in the post office the next. Although I don't shy away from holding people and organisations to account, I'm a hack, not a hacker.



35-year-old woman, with just one phone call

@LawrenceShaw, NUJ  
I'm #proudtobeajournalist because I'm not a banker, hedge fund manager or venture capitalist

@laurekatracher, Laura Archer, editorial assistant  
Meeting interesting people, never knowing what to expect, and experiencing some amazing opportunities

**JAMES ANDREWS**  
Local Radio, Bournemouth

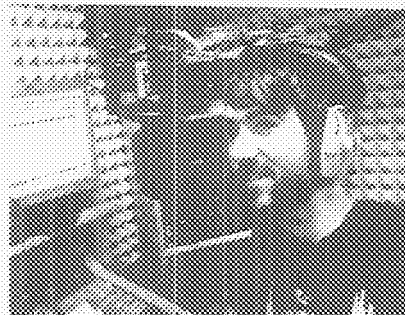
**Spreading the word about deserving causes**

I FEEL proud to be a journalist when able to spread the word about a deserving local cause, which might not otherwise be able to do so on its own.

A recent example was a charity which provides support and weekends away for bereaved children. It was appealing for £10,000 this Christmas.

They contacted our newsdesk, and I got their director into the studio for an interview, and included her reflections of the great work they do. The story ran throughout our drivetime news.

Within a week of airing a similar story,



about a local children's hospice with a £250,000 shortfall which meant parts of their service would have to be reduced by more than 50 days this year - they got £7,000 worth of donations.

It feels really good to know that a positive difference can be made, by having the privilege of a radio voice and an audience that listens.

**NANAKHA GOHARTNEY-SMITH**  
Journalist at the Press Agency

**We've helped so many raise important issues**

Spend a day in the Talk to the Press office and you'll see how many ordinary people actively seek out journalists to help them tell their story.



We've helped mums raise awareness of abducted children and celebrate the return of an abducted child.

We've helped widowed wives of war heroes pay tribute to their lost husbands, and charities raise the profile of their work (and money too).

We've helped dozens of individuals who are asking headlines unravel the bewildering experience of press attention, and we've helped others raise awareness

of issues including post-natal depression, suicide, abuse, adoption, eating disorders and addiction.

After doing her story with us, Iddi Amin's daughter said: "Now people can judge me for whom I am, not who my father was." And Samira Hussain, who recently shared her story about bullying with The Sun, said "After my story went in I received emails from readers. That means my message is being heard. That is what I wanted to achieve."

If you listen to the Leveson Inquiry, you might end up believing that every story in a newspaper has been produced without permission, through dubious and duplicitous means. But across the UK, working freelance, at agencies and on staff, are thousands of journalists who believe, as we do, in co-operative journalism.

We work with individuals who want to make their stories public, to give a voice and platform to those who otherwise wouldn't be heard. And being the person now

@LovelysVintage, Lynnette Peck Bateman, beauty director Saga magazine  
Donating bags and bags of beauty products every year to charities to help them continue their individual campaigns

@jeonline, the Lancashire Evening Post  
Helping raise £10,000 for (successful) cancer treatment for reader after the NHS refused to fund it  
Encouraging 1,200 people to enquire about becoming a foster parent thanks to a series on fostering  
Finding 161 young people work as part of our 100 jobs in 100 days campaign

@LesleyaDobson, Lesley Dobson, freelance health journalist  
Helping people take better care of their health and their money and not being fobbed off with \*\*\*\*

@madgicalone, Hannah Collisson, journalist  
A lovely lady told me yesterday that she really likes journalists, with no sarcasm intended!

@Martin\_Crowson, Leicester Mercury's Chief Rugby Correspondent  
Helping overturn deportation threat to Leicester Tigers' Manu Tuilagi. Now he is England's star player

@mr\_mayf, Nathan Chadwick  
A story I want the extra mile on meant a foreign veterinary student could get donations so he could finish his degree

@mschappers, Sarah Chapman, journalism lecturer  
Convincing a judge to name a teenage killer before sentencing (the first time it had been done)

@newsbrooke, Weather Brooke, reporter/author  
Exposing public officials' misuse of public money, aka the MPs' expenses scandal.

responsible for telling someone else's story, is a huge honour.

So many of us do not recognise what we hear at Leveson, despite it supposedly being an illustration of the industry we work in. We do all we can to ensure our storyteller goes away happy with the result, do our work with integrity and pride.

**ANNIE SHAW**  
Freelance, Daily Express

**I help people find a way through the financial maze**

As a journalist I have the knack of writing about complicated subjects that people need to know about in ways that they can understand. I help ordinary people to find their way through the maze that is the financial services industry, and I help people who have been cheated to get their money back. I am proud to be a journalist.



**ROB MCGIBBON**  
Freelance, Daily Mail

**My first effort at fearless campaigning journalism**

To fulfil this exercise, I have just unearthed my first story as a professional journalist: 'Stage can beat your stammer' screams the headline from the Wimbledon News on 20 August 1985. It's a nine-pur piece of fearless campaigning journalism aimed at helping a group of (stammer-hungry) stammerers find a theatre to help them cure their condition by acting. Amazing to think that even back then my work had a natural

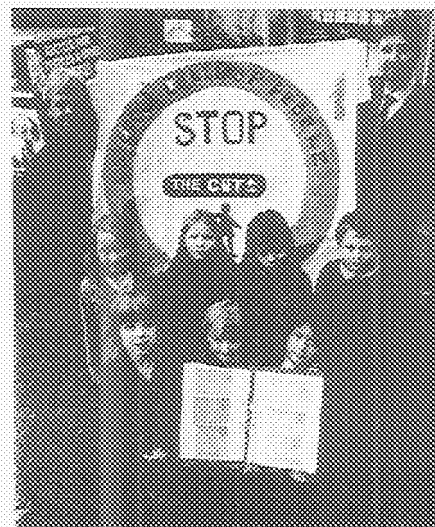


showbiz slant and shamelessly allowed people to plug their wares in exchange for their sorrowful story.

Plus ça change, as they say at Le Gavroche. Rob McGibbon writes The Definite Article in the Daily Mail's Weekend magazine

**DEBORAH LINTON**  
Freelance Business Writer

**Save Our Crossings campaign ended in victory**



Having reported in great detail on spending cuts at Manchester council throughout 2011 we were used to dramatic announcements on cost reduction but when it was suggested that there would be an 80 per cent cut in the school crossings' budget we felt it was a cut too far.

This was the cut that provoked most reaction among the public and concerned parents in particular and it was right for the MEN to launch the Save Our Crossings campaign.

Our campaign called upon the town hall to safeguard funding for all medium and high risk crossings in the city. We collected almost 2,000 signatures within a fortnight. The reaction was fantastic with parents, school

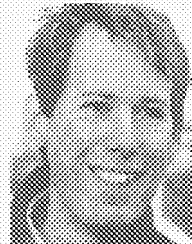
staff and kullipop patrol workers lending us support. As a result of the tide of popular opinion channelled through our campaign the council did a U-turn and have issued a guarantee that all but a handful of crossings will continue to be funded next year.

This was a victory for people power, a victory for common sense and a victory for a newspaper at the very heart of its community.

**MARTIN GEORGE**  
Reporter, Surrey Comet

**We raised £3000 in 8 weeks to restore war memorial**

When a church warned it might have to cancel its annual Remembrance Service after vandals toppled its war memorial, the Surrey Comet decided to rally the community. Our Honour the Fallen campaign only had eight weeks to raise £5,000 to restore the monument at St John the Baptist Church, Old Malden, and I knew the campaign was a risk for a paper.



Time was tight and it was a lot of money to ask for in difficult times, but when the first cheque, for £10, came in the following Monday, I felt we were in with a chance. Soon every day's post brought more donations large and small from readers across the borough.

Our four reporters carried placards around the town centre to raise awareness, went door-to-door asking businesses for support, and even completed the 8m Kingston run. Even when we had the money, it was touch and go whether the job could be done in time, but the monument was finally restored on the afternoon of 10 November.

Standing in the church yard three days later as 300 residents gathered around it for the Last Post was one of my most moving moments in journalism.

@NikkiJeffery1, Nikki Jeffery, chief reporter, West Sussex County Times in Horsham  
When a reader phones to say what a wonderful job you are doing giving the residents a voice about development plans.

@Packet\_Dave, David Thomas, news editor, Falmouth Packet  
Despite what people think, doing a job where I can hold my head up high at the end of every day.

@PollyVernon, Daily Mirror  
In my exp, journalists are good people. Fun, interested, good company, charming, smart. I'm proud to be one.

@RealCrossley, Lucy Crossley  
Helped family of Marine killed in Afghanistan get his name on hometown war memorial. Still one of my proudest moments.

@rhysdgriffiths, Rhys Griffiths, web journalist, Northcliffe  
Because despite all the knocks this is still the most fun you can have 'working'.

@RobMcGibbon, author, journalist, founder of Access Interviews.com  
Helping Military Wives 'Wherever You Are' best % Factor to No.1 by featuring Garath Malone in TIA in @weekendmagazine

@rosegeorge3, Rose George  
Exposing stuff learning stuff, encountering astonishing people who tell me things with great generosity.

@scarletweald, Scarlet Jones, reporter, K&S Courier  
I've tried to ensure people in the towns & villages I cover are heard for what they have done, need or deserve.

@shrupliffe\_ed, Jane Haynes, editor of Shropshire Life magazine  
Campaigning to put deffibrillators all over Nottingham to save heart attack victims.

@Sophie\_Maden, Sophie Louise Maden  
Supporting the community, reporting cover-ups and crime, telling the public what others won't.

@shrupcollins, Tim Collins, journalist, British Express  
Seeing the people of Ashford filling empty shelves at homeless charity with food as a result of our appeal.





IN DEPTH &gt; PHOTOGRAPHY

# 'We're news photographers don't call us the paparazzi'

Freelance paparazzi photographers have received some of the harshest criticism during the Leveson Inquiry with actor Hugh Grant alleging that one freelance photographer tried to run over his baby daughter's grandmother. Freelance photographer Nick Stern reveals why ethical considerations forced him to quit his job working for a showbiz news agency

I've been a news photographer for nearly 20 years and during that time I've covered hundreds if not thousands of stories that have appeared in tabloid newspapers and magazines around the world. I'm British and have been living and working in Los Angeles for the past four and a half years.

Like many news photographers my work consists of a healthy mix of celebrities (I recently covered Prince Harry's trip to the US) and showbiz stories like the Beckhams and the death of Michael Jackson, with harder news work including covering the earthquakes in Haiti and Japan.

My career sprang from an equal passion for photography and news. When I quit the security of a steady job as an electronics sales engineer back in the early 1990s and handed back the company car, tie and pension, I knew I was following the right path for me. It was more of a calling than a job.

It didn't take for me long to realise which photographs would pay the highest bounty. A front page for The Times or Telegraph would pay about £500 if I was lucky, whereas a front page and a double page spread inside a red top tabloid or a glossy showbiz magazine would pay 10 times that amount. It doesn't take a business genius to realise which photos I should be chasing.

I quickly became a regular shifter at many of the national daily and Sunday papers, including the Daily Mail, the News of the World and The Sun.

In 2000 I set up an agency, First News, where I had a number of photographers working for me. As a photographer or agency boss you have to balance your output between work you are passionate about and work that pays the bills.

Catching James Boffey from Liverpool, a banned driver getting back behind the wheel of his car after killing a cyclist, made the front page of the Daily Mail and gave me great satisfaction but hardly paid a fortune. I once spent £2,000 of my own money investigating



and photographing victims of people trafficking in Romania – a feature that no one bought.

I'd worked on a number of stories in the United States and always felt I'd like to live there. In 2007 I got my visa and moved to Los

*I felt uneasy about the constant and reckless pursuit of Britney Spears . . . it could end in her death. There was no story, the paparazzi's pursuit of Spears became the story*

Angeles where I joined a celebrity news agency.

In early 2008 some news organisations focused their attention on me. While working for the agency I took the decision to quit my job as I felt uneasy about the constant and reckless pursuit of the singer Britney Spears.

At the time Spears appeared to be going through some kind of mental breakdown, shaking her head, driving at high speed late at night through the Hollywood Hills, hotly pursued by the paparazzi. I felt it could end in her death. There was no story, the paparazzi's pursuit of Spears became the story.

The competition for the latest set of photos of Ms Spears was very hot, and with hundreds of thousand of dollars being paid for a grain exclusive the pops were ruthless. It wasn't unknown for them to drive on the wrong side of

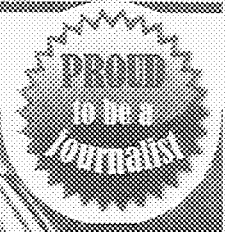
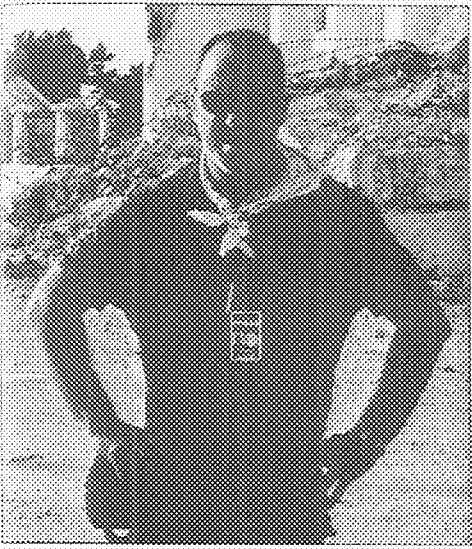


Photo: Eric Street/istockphoto.com



Nick Stern: above, and left, in Haiti after the earthquake; right, catching James Beffey in Liverpool and bottom right, investigating people trafficking in Romania



the street and jump red lights. Stories of paps having their tyres slashed and cars attacked were not uncommon.

I stepped away from this madness because like most news photographers, whether working for a tabloid or a broadsheet, and like any sane person I looked at the actions of the paps and felt this clearly was not news photography. Somebody was going to die.

Don't get me wrong, I still cover celebrity news stories and photograph them on a regular basis, but there are ways of doing things. I don't hound them with a short zoom lens 12 inches from their nose, I don't chase them, jumping red lights and driving on the wrong side of the road like a hound hunting a fox.

The public have a huge appetite for celebrity news and photographs. This will never change. Just look at any newsstand to see the vast number of glossies fighting for readers, not to mention the thousands of celebrity websites trying to justify their existence.

I've watched with interest the Leveson inquiry, and the blanket condemnation of all tabloid news photographers. The news photographers have had no opportunity to reply to the allegations.

Like many genuine news photographers out there I've been offended by many of the allegations levelled at us during the inquiry, often by people who fight for every column inch they can get.

In the world of news photography there are a small element who take unreasonable steps to obtain a sellable photograph. Sometimes attempting to incite a reaction in their subject, other times pursuing the subject relentlessly without a news agenda, just in the hope of getting a saleable frame and earn some money from that day's snapping. There are, of course, a number of agencies that encourage this, their



only concern being to get a photograph that sells.

A clear distinction must be made between this group and the large majority of news photographers. We do not spit on subjects, bang on their cars, approach their children, jump red lights, chase at high speed or manipulate photographs. We are there as impartial observers to observe and record in a dignified manner and in a way that no reasonable celebrity or member of the public could have an issue with.

What is equally worrying is how the industry itself doesn't differentiate between the good, the bad and the ugly. How many times do we see TV images of 'the paparazzi', as they always

call us, chasing a celebrity? Let's not forget that the reason we are seeing those TV images is because the TV camera was positioned alongside us. To see a broadsheet this week use a photograph of what is clearly a designated press pen and refer to the photographers inside it as 'paparazzi', would suggest we need to enlighten even our own picture desks as to what a real 'paparazzo' is.

The work of the ruthless paparazzi and the agencies that encourage their behaviour in order to maximize their income must be condemned. And the work of the many hundreds of responsible news photographers must be recognized as being far removed from that of the small minority. ♦

# Where real journali



**John Dale** visited the newsroom of 2010 Regional Press Awards

weekly newspaper of the year, the Northcliffe-owned Essex Chronicle, to find a picture of journalism which is a world away from the sharp practices currently being exposed by the Leveson Inquiry

Tanya's at the night shelter, Georgina's with the murder squad and Faye is interviewing at the bar of the Welcome Inn, a diet coke at her elbow. Down a backstreet Sophia is sniffing for rats, rodent rather than inbred.

They're jumping in cars and jumping out again, dashing here and rushing there, scribbling in their notepads, asking questions and taking snaps, then hurtling back with a desperate desire to shout, 'Hold the front page!'

When they've finished tapping out news hot enough to melt their keyboards, they look up and say: 'What's the next story, boss...?'

And they're off out the door again.

These are proper reporters, not your lying scum. These are the ones Lord Leveson needs to hear about as well.

If you listen to the Leveson Inquiry for long, you start to lose hope. Are we really all in the gutter?

I needed a break from the Royal Courts of Justice.

So I wended my way out of the smoke, lungs choking on unfamiliar fresh country air, seeking a rainbow to illuminate the dark.

Hello Chelmsford!

It was there I met Al's Angels.

I love the smell of untried ideas, of unattached stories, of unwritten copy, of unpolished headlines, of unprinted paper. So I loved the Essex Chronicle newsroom from the moment the editor-in-chief Alan Geere invited me to meet his young team.

You sense the pride with which they wear the badge, reporter. I only hope that their experience is being duplicated by youngsters across Britain.

Lord Leveson, please pay attention, as I



describe a breed of journalist different from the ones you are investigating. Please, please, take them into account.

Tanya Braun, 23, turns to me and says: 'I'm going down to the night shelter. Do you want to come?'

'Definitely,' I reply.

We speed off in the car and soon her nausmising charm is drawing out information from a man showing her boxes of newly-donated Christmas presents destined for the homeless.

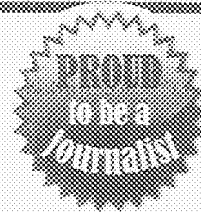
'It's been frantic,' she tells me afterwards, explaining how she's just scooped the nationals and TV over some 'bridge bombing' attacks on the motorway.

'It was the polioe press conference,' she says. 'Everyone was there but I wanted something different. I knelt down next to the women victims and said I'm from the local paper and want the local angle and next thing she's telling me her personal story. Strong stuff. No one else got that.'

Back in the newsroom we sit with her colleagues - Georgina Canon, 24, and Sophia Chirambaribus, 22, and Faye McBride, 25. What stories have they been doing?

Georgina has just finished a murder trial.

She says: 'A man got 30 years for stabbing



# ism flourishes

Photo: Sam Dale



Al's Angels: from left, Faye McBride, Georgina Cotton, Sophie Charalambous, Tanya Braun - reporters on the Essex Chronicle for less than a year

a woman 50 times. I've interviewed the DCI in depth, to get the police officer's personal story - 'how we caught our killer' - what it felt like when he arrived at the most gruesome murder scene he'd ever seen."

Sophia has been door-knocking to ask people about the council's new food waste bins.

"Everyone's worried about the rats and the cuts getting in them," she says. "It's causing a lot more luff than it's worth."

As for Faye, she's running a campaign for older people called "Surviving Winter". But it's not the only story she's working on.

"In what other job would you go from helping old people keep warm to a pub landlady drinking 20 pints a day who's been hypnotised into thinking she's had a gastric band so she doesn't like beer anymore. That's why, on a good day, this is the best job in the world."

*Is it the best job in the world?*

They look at me as if I am mad.

Tanya: "I love it. Every day is different. You

come in thinking you know what your day will be and it completely changes. You meet so many people. You learn so many things. It's an absolutely amazing job."

Georgina: "Yes, it really is fantastic."

*What score out of 10?*

They're unanimous: 10 out of 10.

Faye: "Well, that's on a good day. On a bad day, it can be the worst job..."

Georgina (laughs): "Then we'd give it two."

They all laugh but you know they don't mean it.

*What about the Leveson revelations?*

Tanya: "We're all getting tarred. I went into a charity shop to introduce myself and the woman said, 'Oh, you're not one of them...' I said I'm the local reporter and we don't do things like that but I had to leave."

Georgina: "This morning I phoned a councillor and she just wouldn't say a word. I got an email ending, 'You're not part of the Murdoch club, are you?'"

Tanya: "Yes, they think we're all like the News of the World."

*Would they phone-back?*

Faye, talking about the NoW: "Obviously you're not going to condone tucking into a missing child's phone but if the paper came out without an interesting story, you can understand why people are driven to those measures. It must be quite pressured to have to fill those pages."

One of the girls then says: "So-and-so said to me, 'if you were asked, would you do it?' and I said, 'At the level I'm at, I would do it, yeah.'"

I raise an eyebrow: She's being honest, they all are.

She is talking hypothetically, as if she were working on a national and too weak to disobey. They all nod, aware that as people just starting out, they are vulnerable and have to trust their bosses. The Chronicle helps put ethics into Essex in that it is well-run by an experienced old

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IN DEPTH > LOCAL PRESS

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hand. A harsher world lies outside and their sympathies lie with young reporters who are being misled.

Tanya: "It's awful, isn't it, like Nazism or something, peer pressure."

Faye: "You're so driven to get a story on a national paper, so you do silly things under pressure. You can see how it happens."

Georgina: "Here, it stops with Alan the editor. If they asked us to do something, and there were consequences, then they wouldn't pretend they didn't know what was going on."

We're approaching deadline and now the office is buzzing.

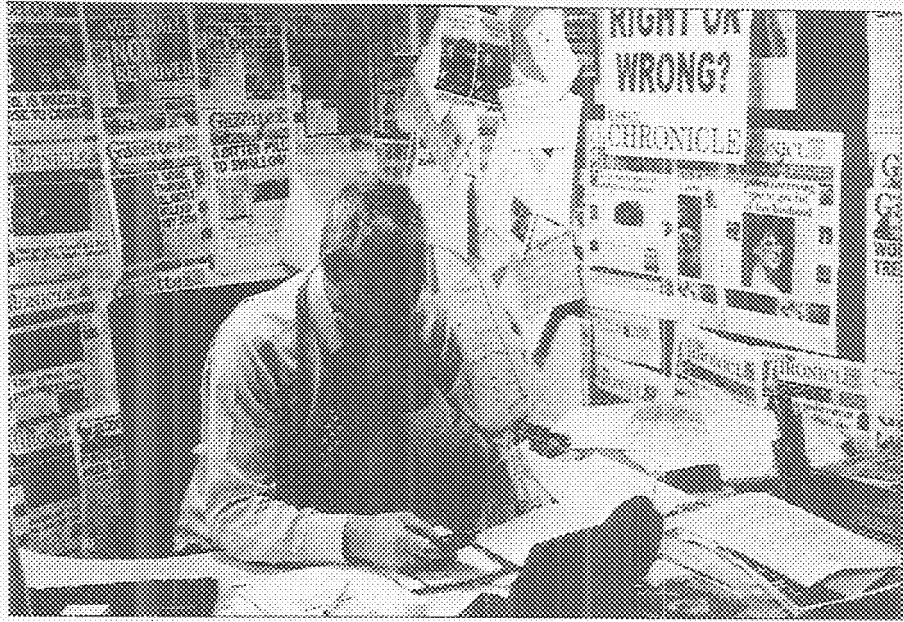
*It's not just the Dacres and Rusbridgers who have to make tricky decisions. Hundreds of journalists do the same every hour all over Britain*

As we speak another reporter, Martin Green, is writing up an interview with the diocesan bishop.

And then deputy editor Paul Dent-Jones comes bustling in. He's glowing. He thinks he's got the splash, a victim of the A12 attacks missed by everyone else. There are pictures of the woman in hospital, bruised and bloodied. She's okayed it. But they're still stored on her husband's phone and he wants to check with the police that they can release them.

A shirt-sleeved Geere is excited. In his head he can see the front page already.

Then... the police tell the victim's husband to withhold the pictures because they are evidence and could jeopardise the case.



The buck stops here: Alan Geere, Essex Chronicle editor-in-chief, will take the flak over editorial decisions

Paul rings the press office, saying: "Why are you doing this? The family want us to use them. We have 100,000 readers who will see this story and it may help catch the culprits."

Deadlock. Now it's down to Alan Geere. Could The Chron compromise a prosecution? It's hard to see how. He makes a decision. If they can, they'll use them, whether the police like it or not. He'll take the flak.

Next morning, deadline day, it gets worse. The police switch tactics and say they've taken their own pictures and are going to release them to everyone. It will wreck The Chron's exclusive.

Geere mutters choice expletives.

But the husband phones the police and tells them to let The Chron have the pictures first. At last the cops start to see sense.

Tick-tick-tick.

In the newsroom, everyone waits as the pictures are downloaded. Will they be worth

the stress, arguments and effort? As they appear on screen, Geere and other staff gather round. They recoil. The poor woman's face is almost unrecognisable. That's the front page.

Print.

Thirty-five miles away the presses roll, ink falls onto paper and next morning, taking it for granted, people buy a newspaper full of genuine news, carrying the picture the police don't want. Nothing fake. Just authentic material - informing, entertaining, campaigning - put together by the local scoop factory.

It's not just the Dacres and Rusbridgers who have to make tricky decisions. Hundreds of journalists do the same every hour all over Britain.

I thought back to Levenson and compared The Chron with one national tabloid which is bound to draw his attention: the Daily Star Sunday. Their splash was the news that an X-Factor contestant's father had been convicted of murder after a street fight and that this was later overturned on appeal and reduced to a fine. It happened in 1986, five years before the birth of the X-Factor girl. He didn't even raise her. Is that a story? As for privacy, don't let's even start. In design, the Daily Star Sunday is a News of the World mini-me.

For reassurance, I looked again at the Essex Chronicle and it struck me that this fine, decent, energetic local newspaper was a much worthier inheritor of the NoW's 1950s slogan: *All Human Life Is There.* \*

The Essex Chronicle was named weekly newspaper of the year (above 20,000 sales) in the 2010 Regional Press Awards. It had an audited sale of 27,945 a week in the first six months of 2011 (down 3 per cent year on year) - a sales performance well above the national average



Newsrooms of the ready: The busy newsroom at the Essex Chronicle as the paper prepares to go to print