

The Media



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Introduction

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1. The importance of the national press

- Newspaper publication is dominated by the **national press** (with the exception of Scotland)
 - nearly 80% of all households buy a copy
- more than 80 local and regional daily papers
- National papers: morning
- Non-national papers: evening
 - do not compete with national papers
- **Morning newspaper:** British household institution, a very important one, although newspaper circulation **has declined by a third.**

Sunday papers

- Until 1990s: newsagents only shops allowed to open on Sundays
- **Sunday papers**: only sold on Sunday
 - sister of a daily: same company, employing separate editors and journalists
 - thicker (200 pages)
 - Sunday papers sell more copies than national dailies
 - Morning 'paper round': newspaper delivered by a teenager that wants to earn pocket money

Sunday papers



2. The two types of national newspapers

Tabloids: 'popular papers'

Sell to a much larger readership

- *The Star*
- *The Daily Mirror*
- *The Sun*

Mid-market

- *The Daily Mail*
- *The Daily Express*

Broadsheets: 'quality papers'

Cater for the better educated readers

- *The Daily Telegraph*
- *The Guardian*
- *The Independent*
- *The Times*
- *The Financial Times*

Tabloids & broadsheets



In the past...



Differences

TABLOIDS

- Considered 'popular' press
- Contain less print and far more pictures.
- Uses larger headlines (bold layout)
- Write in a simpler style of English (shorter articles)
- Concentrate on 'human interest' stories, revolving around sex and scandal
- Equal amounts of attention to sport
- Different approaches and subjects

BROADSHEETS

- Considered 'quality' press
- Contain more print and less pictures
- Uses normal headlines (plainer layout)
- Write in a much higher level of English (longer articles)
- Devote much space to politics and other 'serious' news
- Equal amount of attention to sport
- Different approaches and subjects
- Twice as large

Magazines

- Women's interest magazines
- Tv and radio programmes (*Radio Times*)



The 2 most popular magazines:

- *The Economist*
- *Private Eye*



3. The characteristics of the national press: politics

- Different papers: different political outlooks
however, **none of the large newspapers is an organ of a political party**
- Business: only thing that counts for publishers
- Primary concern: to make money selling as many copies, and attract advertising





LEFT

CENTRE



RIGHT

TABLOIDS

The Daily Mirror

The Sun

The Daily Mail

The Daily Express

The Star

BROADSHEETS

The Guardian

The Daily Telegraph

The Independent

The Times

The Financial Times

The Press and EU

- Mid market and the Populars are anti EU
- *The Times*, *Telegraph* and *The Observer* express some skepticism over loss of sovereignty but are not as one-sided as the Populars and mid-market which are EU sceptics
- *The Guardian* and *Independent* are more balanced in their view.

Yes, Prime Minister



<https://vimeo.com/110662596>

Yes, Prime Minister

Hacker: I know exactly who reads the papers. *The Daily Mirror* is read by people who think they run the country. *The Guardian* is read by people who think they ought to run the country. *The Times* is read by people who actually do run the country. *The Daily Mail* is read by the wives of the people who run the country. *The Financial Times* is read by people who own the country. *The Morning Star* is read by people who think the country ought to be run by another country. *The Daily Telegraph* is read by people who think it is.

Sir Humphrey: Prime Minister; what about people who read *The Sun*?

Bernard: *Sun* readers don't care who runs the country as long as she's got big tits.

The British press is controlled by large **multinational companies**; two consequences:

1 **Absolute freedom from interference** from government influence; the press is often referred to as **the 'fourth estate'** (or 'fourth pillar of Government') and freedom of speech is a basic constitutional right;

2 **'Shallowness'** of the press (decline of journalistic standards): even broadsheets can look rather 'popular' when compared to 'quality' papers in other European countries.

4. The characteristics of the national press: sex and scandal

- Result of the commercial interests: shallowness
- Tabloids have given up even the pretence of dealing with serious matters
- Stories: private lives of famous people
 - lots of pictures
 - sometimes naked woman (page 3 of *The Sun* in the 80s)
- Desire to attract more readers
 - even the broadsheets

BREAKING NEWS

SEX, LIES & THE MURDOCH SUCCESSION

SUNDAY Mirror SEPTEMBER 26, 2010
FREE INSIDE
16-page pullout on state of our health service
SOS
love split



TORY MINISTER QUILTS OVER SEX PHOTO

EXCLUSIVE: Cameron's women's champion sent explicit picture

By Vincent Hoyle and Matthew Beard
A SENIOR Tory quit as a minister last night after sending an explicit picture of himself to an undercover reporter.



THE Sun BRITAIN'S MOST POPULAR PAPER
SUMMER HOLS
£15



WORLD EXCLUSIVE

ROLF HARRIS SEX ABUSE ARREST

TV legend, 83 quizzed over assault claim



- Emphasis on revealing details led to discussion on the need to restrict the freedom of the press
- Press in conflict with 'the right to privacy' (a basic British principle)
- PPC (Press Complaints Commission) (Organization of newspaper editors and journalists)
- Press regulates itself
- The public's 'rights to know' vs the individual 'right to privacy'

The British Press: Trends

- Fear of decline
 - The electronic media – the Internet
 - Decline in circulation and advertising revenues
 - Concentration of ownership reduces the diversity of views and limits political debate (conservative orientation)
 - Decline of journalistic standards and a tendency toward a more tabloid orientation of the qualities to gain readers
 - Increased owner pressure on the journalists – especially in Murdoch owned newspapers

5. The BBC

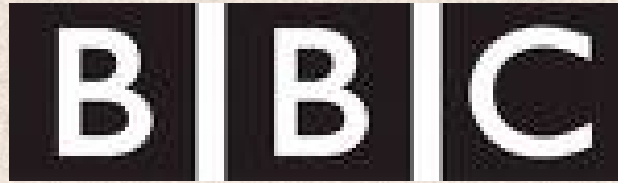
British Broadcasting Corporation

- ‘Mother’ of information services
- Its reputation for impartiality and objectivity is largely justified
- Complaints are evenly balanced (The BBC is proud to get complaints)
- Independence is the result of habit and common agreement.

The BBC

- Six national stations (1992)
- Broadcasts: BBC 1, 2, 4, BBC News 24, BBC Choice, BBC Parliament.
- Radio Channels.
- No advertising.
- Worldwide television services (BBC World, BBC Prime)





- Doesn't depend on advertising nor government but on **the licence fee** (about £130 a year)
- Government:
 - decides how much this fee is going to be
 - appoints the BBC's board of governors and its director general
 - has the right to veto any BBC programme
 - has the right to take away the BBC licence to broadcast

The history of BBC

- Began to establish effective independence and reputation for impartiality from its start
- **1932**: the BBC World Service was set up (with licence to broadcast first to the empire, then to other parts of the world)
- During WWII it became identified with principles of democracy and free speech
- BBC's fame became international



- Today the BBC World Service broadcasts around the globe
(in English and several other languages)
- 5 national **radio stations** inside Britain and several local ones:
 - **Radio 1**: pop music (1967)
 - **Radio 2**: Britain's most popular radio station (pop music but less contemporary)
 - **Radio 3**: classical music
 - **Radio 4**: plays, comedy shows, consumer advice programmes
 - **Radio 5**: sports and news

British Television



6. Television: organization

- Long since take over from radio: television viewing is Britain's most popular pastime. The average Briton spends **more than three and a half hours per day** watching television
- BBC independence: largely a matter of tacit agreement
- Occasions: BBC was persuaded not to show something
- Many occasions: BBC refused to bow to government pressure
- **Non-commercial TV: no advertising on the BBC (1936)**



- 1954: ITV (Independent Television) was set up; commercial television (it gets its money from advertising)



- ITV news programmes are not made by individual television companies, as ITN is owned by all of them
- For this and other reasons it is protected from commercial influence.
- No significant difference between ITV and BBC

Satellite and cable television

- Same fears expressed with the start of ITV
- Fears are justified:
 - Companies that run satellite and cable television are in a similar commercial and legal position to those which own the big newspapers.
- 1/3 of households use satellite and/or cable television
 - Not significantly reduced the viewing figures

7. Television: style

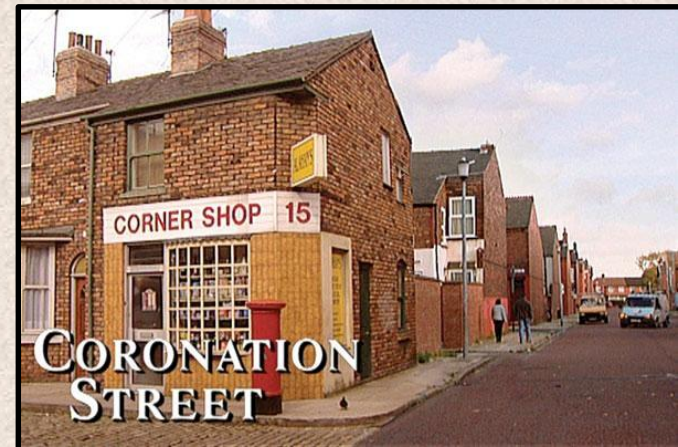
- ITV caused change in style and content
- The amount of money depends on expected number of viewers
- Therefore: pressure on ITV to make its output popular
- Early years: ITV captured $\frac{3}{4}$ of the BBC's audience
- BBC's response: own programmes to a mass audience



- Since then: small difference between BBC and commercial television
- BBC1 (1936) and ITV: wide variety of programmes
- Constant competition
- They don't try to show a more popular type of programme than the other but try to be the same type of programme 'better'

British soap operas

- 2 most popular and long-running of soap operas:
 - ITV's *Coronation Street*: working-class area near Manchester
 - BBC1's *East Enders*: working-class area near London
- not an idealized picture of life
- not very sensational or dramatic

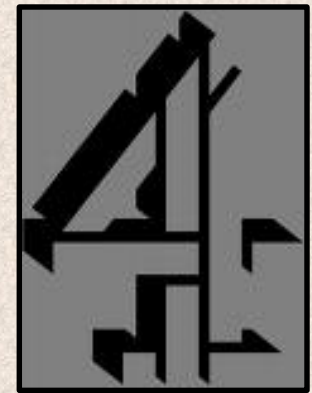


- Why British soap operas are so popular?
 - Viewers see themselves and other people they know
- The British prefer this kind of **pseudo-realism**

1990s: BBC spent a lot of money in filming a new soap: *Eldorado* (complete failure!)

Why?

- Too complicated
- The Spanish accents were too difficult
- No situations where people could see themselves in
- Too glamorous



- 1960s: popularity of soap operas and light entertainment shows reduces room for the original educational programmes
- 1982: 2 new channels **BBC2** and **Channel 4** main promoters of learning and 'culture'
- Both have been successful

- **BBC2**: famous for:
 - Highly acclaimed dramatizations
 - Certain documentary series
(the art history series *Civilisation* and the natural history series *Life On Earth*)
- **Channel 4**: wide variety of programmes catering to minority interests (documentaries and public affairs programmes)

To sum up: the main TV channels

- **BBC 1** – since 1936, general interest programmes
- **BBC 2** – minority and specialist interests
- **ITV** – (Channel 3 since 1955) is approximately 33% informative and 66% light entertainment.
- **Channel 4** – since 1982, hybrid public service, 15% educational programmes, encourages innovation and experiment
- **Channel 5** – since 1997, commercial channel

Since 2012 all television broadcasts are in a digital format.

Dumbing Down?

- What is the impact of a free market system?
 - The more choice, the harder it is for more challenging programmes to survive
 - Recent developments – Americanization?
 - “Big Brother” and voyeurism

