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(no eval)

## The Relationship between Public Life and the Media #2545

The Prime Minister's eighth and final Our Nation's Future lecture on public life and the relationship between politics and the media in the 21st Century.

E H O



Arises from  
9/1

### What is the state of the relationship? #2556

What is the state of the relationship between public life and the media?

H O



Responds to  
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### The relationship is in need of repair #2558

The relationship between public life and media is damaged and in need of repair.

H O



Arises from  
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### How has the damage arisen? #2561

How has the damage between Public Life and the Media arisen?

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Responds to  
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### Context of communication is changing #2562

The objective circumstances in which the world of communications operate have radically altered; altering in turn the relationship between public life and media. It's not the people who have changed; it is the context within which they work.

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Is part of  
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### Media competition is intensifying #2577

The media are facing a hugely more intense form of competition than anything they have ever experienced before.

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Supports  
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### Newspapers face new competition on-line #2578

Newspapers are fighting for a share of a shrinking market. Many are now read on-line, not the next day. News is becoming increasingly a free good, provided online without charge.

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Supports  
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### Proliferation of TV channels #2565

In 1982, 3 TV stations broadcast in the UK. Today there are hundreds, including rolling 24 hour news programmes covering events as they unfold. The main BBC and ITN bulletins once had audiences of 8, even 10 million. Today the average is half that.

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Is part of  
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### Technology transforming the media #2564

The media world is becoming more fragmented, more diverse and transformed by technology – and the changes will only intensify.

H < > O



Supports  
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### Boundaries between media blurring #2567

The forms of communication are merging and interchanging. The BBC website is crucial to the modern BBC. Papers have Podcasts and written material on the web.

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Supports  
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### Growing influence of the internet #2566

Internet advertising has overtaken newspaper ads. There are roughly 70 million blogs in existence, with around 120,000 being created every day.

H O



Is part of  
9/1

### The relationship is damaged #2598

The relationship between public life and the media is damaged.

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Is part of  
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### Media increasingly driven by impact #2579

Media that increasingly and to a dangerous degree is driven by "impact". Impact is what matters. It is all that can distinguish, can rise above the clamour, can get noticed. Impact gives competitive edge.



Is part of  
9/1

### Pursuit of impact driving down standards #2580

The media's devotion to impact is unravelling standards, driving them down, making the diversity of the media not the strength it should be but an impulsion towards sensation above all else.



Supports  
9/1

### Fear of missing out leads to hunting in packs #2586

The fear of missing out means today's media, more than ever before, hunts in a pack. In these modes it is like a feral beast, just tearing people and reputations to bits. But no-one dares miss out.



Supports  
8/1

### Scandal and controversy favoured #2584

Scandal or controversy beats ordinary reporting hands down. News is rarely news unless it generates heat as much as or more than light.



Supports  
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### Emotion and sensation favoured over reason #2583

Something that is interesting is less powerful than something that makes you angry or shocked.



Supports  
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### Motives attacked to gain impact #2585

Attacking motive is far more potent than attacking judgement. It is not enough for someone to make an error. It has to be venal.



Supports  
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### Opinion and fact are routinely elided #2590

A large part of the media today not merely elides opinion and fact but does so now as a matter of course. In other words, this is not exceptional. It is routine.



Supports  
7/1

### Commentary favoured over reporting #2587

Rather than just report news, even if sensational or controversial, the new technique is commentary on the news being as, if not more important than the news itself.



Supports  
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### Example of the Independent newspaper #2592

The Independent newspaper is the metaphor for this genre of modern journalism.



Supports  
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### The Independent has become a viewspaper #2594

The Independent started as an antidote to the idea of journalism as views not news. That was why it was called the Independent. Today it is avowedly a viewspaper not merely a newspaper.



Opposes  
-/-

### Independent entitled to do what it does #2593

The Independent is a well-edited lively paper and is absolutely entitled to print what it wants, how it wants.



Opposes  
-/-

### Nothing wrong with commentary per se #2589

Comment is a perfectly respectable part of journalism



**Interpretation favoured over reporting** #2588  
There will often be as much interpretation of what a politician is saying as there is coverage of them actually saying it. In the interpretation, what matters is not what they mean, but what they could be taken to mean.

**Realistic balance is rare in media** #2595  
Things, people, issues, stories, are all unrealistically black and white. "Some good, some bad is a concept alien to today's reporting. It's a triumph or a disaster. A problem is "a crisis". A criticism, "a savage attack".

**Few forms of media immune** #2581  
Few forms of media are immune to the need for, and pursuit of, impact.

**Broadsheets and broadcasters are not immune** #2616  
Broadsheets face the same pressures as tabloids, and broadcasters increasingly the same pressures as broadsheets.

**The damage matters** #2599  
The damaged relationship between public life and the media matters.

**Hinders our ability to take right decisions** #2560  
The damaged relationship between politics and the media reduces our capacity to take the right decisions, in the right spirit for our future.

**Media hyperactivity can be overwhelming** #2573  
A vast aspect of our jobs today – outside of the really major decisions, as big as anything else – is coping with the media, its sheer scale, weight and constant hyperactivity. At points, it literally overwhelms.

**Insatiable demand for the next story** #2568  
The news schedule is now 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It moves in real time, and outstanding speed, creating an insatiable demand for the next story and an instantaneous response to events.

**Clamour for instant response distorts process** #2570  
In the 1960s the government would sometimes, on a serious issue, have a Cabinet lasting two days. It would be laughable to think you could do that now without the heavens falling in before lunch on the first day.

**Valuable time for reflection lost** #2571  
Frequently, in responding to stories in real time, the problem is as much assembling the facts as giving them; with the need for an instantaneous response increasing the risk of mistakes being made.

**Mistakes fuel the drama** #2572  
Mistakes may, in turn, fuel the story and quickly transfer a drama into crisis.

Supports

**Single issue of the day no longer enough** #2569

During 1997 election – just ten years ago – we took an issue a day. In 2005, we had to have one for the morning, another for the afternoon and by the evening the agenda had already moved on.

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**Compels others to respond in kind** #2600

The media appetite for impact and sensation compels others to respond in kind. NGOs and pundits know that unless they are prepared to go over the top, they shouldn't venture out at all.

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Is part of 8/1

**Institutions undermined by resulting cynicism** #2559

The interaction between politics and media breeds a cynicism about politics and public life that undermines the country's institutions.

H O



Is part of 8/1

**MPs favour press releases over speeches** #2576

Backbench MPs today learn to give a press release first and a good Parliamentary speech second.

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Supports -/

**Public trust in politicians and journalists is low** #2602

Politicians and the media are both being dragged down by the way media and public life interact. Trust in journalists is not much above that in politicians.

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Supports -/

**Reporting of Parliament suggests importance in decline** #2574

Current media coverage of Parliament conveys the impression that the importance of Parliament is in decline.

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Supports -/

**Non-controversial speeches ignored** #2575

No matter how excellent, attention tends only to be given to maiden speeches, second reading speeches or committee speeches when they generate major controversy.

H O



Supports -/

**Lack of balanced coverage demoralising** #2601

Talk to any public service leader – especially in the NHS or the field of law and order – and they will tell you not that they mind the criticism, but they become totally demoralised by the completely unbalanced nature of it.

H O



Is part of 8/1

**Public need to be informed accurately** #2563

The public need to be properly and accurately informed, and this need is not well served by the current state of the relationship between politics and the media.

H O



Is part of 7/1

**Waste energy rebutting misleading interpretation** #2591

A large amount of energy in public life is expended rebutting claims about the significance of things said, that bears little or no relation to what was intended.

H O



Is part of 8/1

**How can the relationship be improved?** #2555

How can we improve the relationship between public life and the media?

H O



Arises from 8/1

**Reassert distinction between news and comment** #2603

The media should re-assert their own selling point: the distinction between news and comment.

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Responds to 9/1

**Market opportunity in serious balanced news** #2605  
There is a market opportunity in providing serious, balanced news.

Supports  
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**Public desire for impartiality** #2606  
There is a desire for impartiality. The way that people get their news may be changing; but the thirst for the news being real news is not.

Supports  
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**Desire not reflected in consumption choices** #2615  
Public consumption choices appear to favour impact and sensation over impartiality.

Opposes  
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**Retreat from impact will reduce sales** #2604  
Any retreat from impact by the media will result in diminishing sales.

Opposes  
-/-

**Revise the media regulatory framework** #2607  
Revision of the media regulatory framework could help to repair the damaged relationship between public life and the media.

Responds to  
8/1

**Rationalise accountability structures across media** #2608  
The structure of the regulatory framework should recognise and reflect the convergence of previously distinct media sectors.

Is part of  
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**Current accountability system becoming obsolete** #2609  
As the technology blurs the distinction between papers and television, it becomes increasingly irrational to have different systems of accountability – the PCC and OFCOM – based on technology that no longer can be differentiated in the old way.

Supports  
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**Consumer choice holds media accountable** #2610  
Media is accountable daily through the choice of readers and viewers.

Opposes  
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**Consumers lack objective yardstick** #2611  
Viewers or readers have no objective yardstick to measure what they are being told.

Opposes  
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**New forms of media may offer different approach** #2612  
New forms of media and communication may provide new outlets to by-pass the increasingly shrill tenor of the traditional media.

Responds to  
-/-

**New forms of media can be worse** #2613  
New forms can be even more pernicious, less balanced, more intent on the latest conspiracy theory.

Opposes  
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