

Results from The Thinking Tank debate on the Murdoch Effect 21.07.2011

Rank Statement

How do you feel about recent events with Rupert Murdoch and the interactions between police, media and government?

**** Well I am less scandalised because I fell the facts are not new- I suspect it was commonly know or suspected that these things happened. But I am encouraged that society has found the moral stance to react and to corner a big power which was out of balance
 **** Good to see him get what was coming to him. He got away with it long enough and that creates a culture where others feel they can do the same. A time of reckoning is good to redress the balance

**** Is it just a UK problem? I think it is probably more widespread
 **** I agree it is impossible to close all loopholes. But still important to demonstrate they will not be tolerated
 **** Elaborates on: the question is , will we ever be able this from happening again, quite probably not !

**** **The power of the media corrupts**

It's a messy ugly business but it feels like a hopeful event to me. After the pain of dealing with it we will be in a better place
 Aside from the eventual economic fallout this says very poor things about the country and its bodies.
 where was Wikileaks this time?

It's another example of the rotten society we live in in which money and powers rules over anything
 This shows one more that how little people working in such areas can be trusted.

the question is , will we ever be able this from happening again, quite probably not !
 quite surprised actually that the British police would be that easy to "buy"!

Sadly there is no reason to believe things will change

Elaborates on: It's a messy ugly business but it feels like a hopeful event to me. After the pain of dealing with it we will be in a better place
 well it was a journalist that started the debate and sharing of info.. I still trust journalist ;;; just not all of them

Elaborates on: This shows one more that how little people working in such areas can be trusted.

Whist this is true the UK held itself above all others when obviously it is not so the fall is much greater

Elaborates on: Don't feel bad it is the same sad story all a round the world not just in the UK

Elaborates on: Aside from the eventual economic fallout this says very poor things about the country and its bodies.

UK becoming surprisingly more and more like Berlusconi's I Italy...

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People in any area of life can be trusted or not. We have to be thoughtful with our trust. No longer automatically given to doctors, bankers, politicians, business...

Elaborates on: This shows one more that how little people working in such areas can be trusted.

I think the whole event just showed that country and its bodies are still challenged and corrective forces are there - and the systems are in place to support and control. Unfortunately it took a while before they started acting.. the balance of power must have left too much power in Murdoch's hands

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What impact will it have?

**** **Similar to Enron etc because of the corruption by power**

Well Berlusconi owns the media.. and abuses that bluntly.. it is still a significant degree worse

**** Elaborates on: **UK becoming surprisingly more and more like Berlusconi's Italy...**

**** **In Latin America we also see a similar phenomenon with the media companies and their power**

**** **It goes beyond the UK, Definitely in the US this is similar, and I am sure in other European countries**

**** I am glad it has now reached this watershed and we can all get back to realising ethics are important to us all
Yes. Very encouraging that it broke the surface and could not be repressed by The System.

**** Elaborates on: I am glad it has now reached this watershed and we can all get back to realising ethics are important to us all
Not to mention more repressive regimes where there is no free press

**** Elaborates on: It goes beyond the UK, Definitely in the US this is similar, and I am sure in other European countries
the power of Internet , social networks, etc will make it easier to exert a counter-power

Elaborates on: I agree we should only trust institutions that are controlled by other powers.. and as long as the balance is right and not incestuous there is control and reason to trust

**** Elaborates on: Maybe we should start by trusting NO institutions. Some have already been exposed as corrupt and others are just better at hiding it.

Wikileaks is not a force of control.. it was still the old fashion journalism that did it

*** Elaborates on: where was Wikileaks this time

*** this is also about politics and exchanging favours ... a number those who have been elected want to become re-elected. Journalists are "using" them and they are using the press

*** we should only trust institutions that are controlled by other powers.. and as long as the balance is right and not incestuous there is control and reason to trust

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it wont be a real long term impact, today it's a big story, tomorrow it will be forgotten

But the issue of those with power acting unethically is the same

Elaborates on: Sorry I think this is very different, different circumstances and different 'criminality'

Elaborates on: Similar to what happened at Enron and other similar cases

The odd thing is we have all been told so many times to not believe a word, yet we are still 'shocked'.

and campaigning too. Avaaz.org did a lot of awareness raising

I think that the tabloid culture is very much a UK culture.. (although that each country has one form or other of tabloid- they seem less populist)

I also think it is more evidence of the problem when money becomes THE value system and therefore everything is judged by money. Police, politicians, everyone becomes distracted and disoriented and tries to get more of it...through one method or another
well Rupert Murdoch has an American (or Australian) passport and cannot be elected in the UK

I've heard from friends in the US that he is considered evil simply because of his influence on corporate & politicians,

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Enforced Transparency! Nowhere to hide. Definitely a force for good.

Elaborates on: the power of Internet , social networks, etc will make it easier to exert a counter-power

I think this is indeed the core: how can balance of power or controls be reinforced.. or how can morality be revamped and take a higher stand than the commercial value of headlines and sales figures)

Elaborates on: the question is , will we ever be able this from happening again, quite probably not !

More control over media conglomerates

. Not sure I agree though

remember the scandal about MP's expenses ...

Elaborates on: it wont be a real long term impact, today it's a big story, tomorrow it will be forgotten

Wanted to believe that maybe, but the truth has always been this reality

Elaborates on: still one might have thought that standards were somewhat higher in the UK

I think in some countries it is the same people - or at least the same families - that own eg media, telecoms and have people in political power. That must be even harder to control

Elaborates on: In Latin America we also see a similar phenomenon with the media companies and their power

still one might have thought that standards were somewhat higher here...

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Maybe we should start by trusting NO institutions. Some have already been exposed as corrupt and others are just better at hiding it.

This is very true and indeed one could name many including, as mentioned, Berlusconi. The problem, hence the global impact, is that the UK set itself up to be so much better than anyone else. How the mighty have fallen!!

Elaborates on: It goes beyond the UK, Definitely in the US this is similar, and I am sure in other European countries

I never felt the UK to be morally superior.. speaking as an outsider

Indeed. But people still watch Fox News

Elaborates on: The odd thing is we have all been told so many times to not believe a word, yet we are still 'shocked'.

What was the role of mobile phone services operators in all this. did not they notice that 000's were being spied upon???

Elaborates on: The odd thing is we have all been told so many times to not believe a word, yet we are still 'shocked'.

What lessons can be learned?

Personally I thought that anyway so I am glad that it has been exposed like this. There are many honourable police officers but also systemic corruption that needs to be rooted out.

Elaborates on: for me one of the more nastier parts is that the police force was corrupted.. that needs very strong internal controls and audits to be put in place and significant re-beef of morale

Lesson learned: just because somebody has power does not mean they deserve power. It can be more constructive to challenge them than let them carry on believing they can operate however they like

this is also very much true in France

Elaborates on: Stop recruiting everybody from the same schools / universities - too much cronyism and in crowd versus outsiders

agree: there is too much incest.. and hence always a favour culture- which prevent independence of mind and critical attitudes

Elaborates on: Stop recruiting everybody from the same schools / universities - too much cronyism and in crowd versus outsiders

France and everywhere else

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Important also to teach our young people to have the courage of their convictions. To dare to speak up. In all these institutions there are many who

are aware of the problems and collaborate though silence

celebrities usually have quite an incestuous relationship with the press, hence I do not pity them. For the "commoners"; this is an entirely different

story

Elaborates on: but don't you think we weren't interested until it was Milly Dowler who was a total innocent. We weren't interested in the issues

around Hugh Grant and celebrities and Gordon Brown, we saw them as fair game. We have become hardened to people...it was only MD that

people reacted to

And Ireland, especially Ireland, and Italy and well most of Africa and pretty well everywhere I'd suggest.

Elaborates on: this is also very much true in France

Elaborates on: Stop recruiting everybody from the same schools / universities - too much cronyism and in crowd versus outsiders

That silenced us! Tough question

I think we were interested before MD but this was the last straw, the case that clearly bore absolutely no argument whatsoever

Schools and charities have governors and trustees from the outside world. That increases transparency. Police will need to open up their castle gates which will be hard for some but necessary

Elaborates on: who's should control the police - the "state", is there another other way to also make them answerable to other democratic bodies?

for me one of the more nastier parts is that the police force was corrupted.. that needs very strong internal controls and audits to be put in place and significant re-beef of morale

I am not so pessimistic: for me the lesson learned is to support different thinking, to ensure there is room for dissenting voices, for independent or inquisitive minds, bodies..

Elaborates on: Sadly that no one, ie those supposedly above us not individuals or friends, can be trusted. Having said that it then effectively leaves nothing so nowhere to go.

Money and power rules, the "lords" might fall from time to time but it still will be business as usual

that power is a privilege and that it is a great responsibility. that living by the sword and dying by the sword is an eternal truth and to not be seduced so easily...if something is getting out of control and going extreme or hyper - it's time to cool things down

Don't allow any one entity to dominate

there should systematically be mechanisms in place to enable to check those in power (eg. limited terms, fully publicly transparent information re. all government's dealings, etc...)

Yes a very tough one given the state of all.

Elaborates on: That silenced us! Tough question

something to be said for society focusing rather more on doing and being rather than only representing, seeming, holding sway via image

But unfortunately government of some sort is needed.

Elaborates on: Don't allow any one entity to dominate

who's should control the police - the "state", is there another other way to also make them answerable to other democratic bodies?

I think this has shown that it all pretty much works - the checks and balances are there, it just takes time to get them to work. this has been a wake up call to people in the public life... and to owners of businesses no matter how big. I also want to say that Murdoch employs 32000 people. So it's important to not forget the context of this as well

Stop recruiting everybody from the same schools / universities - too much cronyism and in crowd versus outsiders

Police corruption is also a world wide phenomenon

no I do not think so coming from a country with eternal coalitions;; to many parties were doing each other favours and hence they all have something nasty or smelly and decide as a rule to cover up for each other

Elaborates on: Is this a pro-coalition argument???

but are they not under the control of parliament? maybe that procedure should allow for a better "ringing the bell procedure"

Elaborates on: Schools and charities have governors and trustees from the outside world. That increases transparency. Police will need to open up their castle gates which will be hard for some but necessary

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lots still to be said about transparency in some of the charities... it is not unusual to have non-execs nominated as they are part of the same cocktail trail as the directors

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main lesson learned : balance of power.. break down to strong powers as we do in business (abuse of power is to easy). never heard about anti monopoly law being applied in media- but I am not the expert

Sadly that no one, ie those supposedly above us not individuals or friends, can be trusted. Having said that it then effectively leaves nothing so nowhere to go.

lesson learned for politicians- be more careful- audit better who you take into your cabinet

but don't you think we weren't interested until it was Milly Dowler who was a total innocent. We weren't interested in the issues around Hugh Grant and celebrities and Gordon Brown, we saw them as fair game. We have become hardened to people...it was only MD that people reacted to

Is this a pro-coalition argument???

Elaborates on: But unfortunately government of some sort is needed.

Elaborates on: Don't allow any one entity to dominate

How will your media consumption be affected??

We need to get our information from different sources , always to balance and weigh up whatever comes our way

no real affect - I think the papers will go up a notch now and good journos will begin to fight back and stand up for ethics - I'd like to hear

a few of them speak up

I think it is a bit of a dual society we are in.. and significant part of the population likes the juicy part so much that they are financing this power through subscriptions, advertisement budgets.. Etc

I think the only value of TV news is straight info eg earthquake in Japan. I don't think it provides any analytical value and wouldn't trust it anyway

Elaborates on: If you mean newspapers by this then no as don't read then; if you mean TV news/factual then not sure if need to be more selective or not.

I am glad to see Rupert Murdoch is a role model for others to see how easily you can be felled. For business women more evidence that the ballbreaker reputation is flawed

We are probably spied upon in so many ways today.. imagine what Google could do with all the info it has...not sure how we can protect ourselves.

Elaborates on: reassured that thirds came up but also worried that that "normal" people can be so easily spied upon ...

Media consumption or information needs ? it's not the same

possibly moving even more "online": alternative and more diversified sources of news

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Inspiring for them to be the hero for a change!

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I was going to give up my Sky subscription if Murdoch got control of BSkyB. So it's more a case of media consumption NOT affected the difference (so far) is that Google does not target individual people as such but "segments" . The case we discussed was quite different!

Elaborates on: We are probably spied upon in so many ways today.. imagine what Google could do with all the info it has...not sure how we can protect ourselves.

How will your behaviour at work be affected?

**** I guess I'll stop bribing policemen...

You may be right but I think by viewing a variety of different channels/providers each day one can at least cover a spectrum. Getting different view-points though maybe it is always the same people, who knows?!?!)

Elaborates on: I think the only value of TV news is straight info eg earthquake in Japan. I don't think it provides any analytical value and wouldn't trust it anyway

**** I think people will be more able to use this as an example of where cultures become toxic and it will be easier to speak out

My own behaviour: I think this has echoes of our Thinking Tank on ethics and looking the other way. I would rather be the person who exposes the rot than the rotter.

yes but Google could easily do it.. who is going to control that ? 'see the abuse of info cases from facebook and its unclear privacy rules)

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That is pretty narrow interpretation of a major ethical issue

Elaborates on: I am not a journalist

agree to some extent. Re facebook it was also misuse by others users, not only by the "company"

Elaborates on: yes but Google could easily do it.. who is going to control that ? 'see the abuse of info cases from facebook and its unclear privacy rules)

well I already looked at all the apps on my smartphone.. too many have tracking software and I started deleting some of them

Google might not be doing it for now, but wait till they see the money value of it

How about a member of society?

Elaborates on: nor a politician, nor a policeman/woman

or just some people in Google have some interest or different moral stance

Elaborates on: Google might not be doing it for now, but wait till they see the money value of it

You should have never started doing it

Elaborates on: I guess I'll stop bribing policemen...

good point, but remember that changing a culture takes time...

Elaborates on: I think people will be more able to use this as an example of where cultures become toxic and it will be easier to speak out

I am not a journalist

who's next; the BBC?

nor a politician, nor a policeman/woman

How will these events affect your behaviour?

Good reminder that we all make many choices each day. Sometimes the choice is to do what's convenient or to do what is right.. If we go with convenient we are each part of the problem.

most impact is to be aware of abuse of power of media and political and media corruption risk and hence stay very CRITICAL,.. check other sources, question what is been written or said

I feel proud to be a Guardian reader :)

not quite sure about , their readers are still around licking their mouth for some spicy piece of news... and when there is a market...

Elaborates on: I hope to see better journalism and less of an appetite for gutter-press. We have not got that Sunday paper now so there is an awful lot of gossip and rubbish that won't get printed. Other papers will be more careful about what they are doing for a while

I hope to see better journalism and less of an appetite for gutter-press. We have not got that Sunday paper now so there is an awful lot of gossip and rubbish that won't get printed. Other papers will be more careful about what they are doing for a while

So we have another reason to have integrity. IT used to be for fear of the devil and now it's for fear of being in the papers

Elaborates on: reassured that thirds came up but also worried that that "normal" people can be so easily spied upon ...

I'm not sure there is a personal to me relevance at the moment. However, once the economic impact arrives then possibly.

I feel conscious of wanting to pay attention to real stuff around me more - issues and people

On a personal level it does not affect

reassured that thirds came up but also worried that that "normal" people can be so easily spied upon ...

Looking back, what for you are the most important points?

Fundamentally it all about morality and the capacity of society to control too dominant forces that to easily can abuse it

My over-riding feeling is we live every day with moral hazard. We should trust humanity but we must also have our own moral compass and be prepared to live by it. Complacency is a coward's option.

it's true that at the time the public seemed more shocked by the revelations on adultery etc than about the means used to garner them

thanks everybody.. was good to discuss

Courage mes braves

Thanks all and especially you the moderator. Have a great break.

the sense of hope that even if things are not completely cleaned up a certain spell has been broken

agree all media jumped on it.. but I feel every persons feels that the abuse - with the life of a young girl at stake was way over the top and not acceptable for anybody

Elaborates on: How engaged everyone seems to be in all this/what has been going on if we can agree those putting in comments here are a reasonably representative sample.

There is definitely incest at the BBC but also more journalism-as-a-mission people I believe

Elaborates on: who's next; the BBC?

How engaged everyone seems to be in all this/what has been going on if we can agree those putting in comments here are a reasonably representative sample.

Why ? just money and power as always

Elaborates on: I have to agree, it is seriously depressing and yes, how many more and who. Also why????

Elaborates on: Well what I take out of this is just the depressing though that there goes one rotten one but how many are still out there .. .

Increasingly more (sources of) information available, more confusion, evolution of journalism, but also fortunately counter-powers another paper owned by Rupert??? same editor?

Elaborates on: was there not the entire private conversation between Charles and Camilla made public.. and all tel messages on Diana's answering machine were all over in the newspaper.. sounds very similar

I suppose not enough people felt the need to defend them

Elaborates on: was there not the entire private conversation between Charles and Camilla made public.. and all tel messages on Diana's answering machine were all over in the newspaper.. sounds very similar

Well what I take out of this is just the depressing thought that there goes one rotten one but how many are still out there ..

I take out that as society we are able to rejuvenate, be critical, attack some of the biggest powers around.. so rather optimistic

Elaborates on: Well what I take out of this is just the depressing though that there goes one rotten one but how many are still out there ..

Combinazione!

Elaborates on: Courage mes braves

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l'histoire se répète...

Elaborates on: I suppose not enough people felt the need to defend them

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the scandal is the same abuse of tapping into phones ... I do not see that difference

Elaborates on: again they are "public figures" unlike us "commoners" (speaking for myself obviously)

I still wonder why this is a scandal now and why eg the Camilla tapes were not?

What were the Camilla tapes ?

Elaborates on: I still wonder why this is a scandal now and why eg the Camilla tapes were not?

I have to agree, it is seriously depressing and yes, how many more and who. Also why????

Elaborates on: Well what I take out of this is just the depressing though that there goes one rotten one but how many are still out there .. as far as I recall yes

Elaborates on: I suppose not enough people felt the need to defend them

again they are "public figures" unlike us "commoners" (speaking for myself obviously)

Agree this is unacceptable; but there is a degree of give and take between them and the press!

Elaborates on: the scandal is the same abuse of tapping into phones ... I do not see that difference

well is this not this dual morality ?.. anyway my point is that there were apparently not enough lessons learned

Elaborates on: Agree this is unacceptable; but there is a degree of give and take between them and the press!