

Breaking the glass ceiling or neoliberal window dressing?

Challenges experienced by diversity initiatives and their limited impact on social mobility in the UK journalism industry

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Declaration of authenticity

I confirm that this dissertation is all my own work, that all material from other sources has been fully referenced and acknowledged and that none of the essay has been submitted in whole or in part for any previous assessment at this university or elsewhere.

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Abstract

This paper examines the impact of diversity initiatives on social mobility and access in the UK journalism industry by comparing the experiences of four representatives of different diversity schemes. As the value of representation in the media to accurately reflect society is often emphasised to make an argument for increased diversity, the focus has increasingly been on visible traits including gender and race. However, while many recognise the value of diversity in newsrooms, the media industry remains predominantly white, male and privately educated due to structural factors including geographic mobility, the London-centricity of the industry, lack of financial and cultural capital and discrimination experienced by individuals upon entering the industry. By identifying overlaps in the obstacles experienced by diversity initiatives as well as comparing their motivations and strategies, this examination of the opinions and experiences of four experts seeks to explore what is preventing the journalism industry from becoming more equitable for all.

Keywords: Cultural capital, diversity, glass ceiling, inconsistent inclusion, journalism, neoliberalism, social mobility

Introduction

Despite ubiquitous calls for diversity, it is no secret that the journalism industry tends to put white, middle – and upper-class journalists in front of the camera, while anyone deviating from this norm is left out of the frame. Many see it as a democratic, commercial and moral obligation (Childers, 2020) to make the journalism industry more equitable, with Milburn noting that “attracting and developing a diverse workforce at every tier is regarded as essential to ensure that programmes and publications reflect their audiences” (2012: 51). Consequently, the value of representative journalism has become synonymous with representative democracies. It is therefore worrying that the UK journalism industry has become increasingly tied to corporate demands and become ‘remote from the common life and lay population’ (Hartley, 2007: 7) it is meant to represent.

There seems to be a cultural consensus on the value of diversity (Spilsbury, 2017; Thurman et al., 2016), awareness around the class and gender pay gap (Goodall, 2017), and the threat unpaid internships pose to pupils at a financial and geographical disadvantage (Brook et. al, 2018; Milburn, 2012). However, little has changed in the last forty years to improve access into the creative industry overall (Brook et al., 2018), particularly as university degrees have become increasingly more important to secure any chance at upward progression in the journalism industry (Milburn, 2012: 54).

Furthermore, journalism students are more likely to find work six months after graduation if they have a private school education, are white, male, non-disabled, and come from higher and middle socio-economic groups (Spilsbury, 2017: 4, 22). When it comes to race and ethnicity, we even saw a 5.4 per cent decrease in BAME representation

across Britain's creative industries in 2021 despite the UK BAME population growing by over 50 per cent (Creative Access, as cited in Douglas, 2021: 7).

This paper's primary research collects and compares the experiences of diversity initiatives by interviewing four experts: Joseph Harker, Senior Editor for Diversity and Development at *The Guardian* who also runs the publication's *Positive Action Scheme*, Camille Dupont, Content & Programmes Director at *PressPad*, Hilly Janes, Head of Events & Mentoring at *Women in Journalism*, and Carys Nelkon, Head of Programmes at *Arts Emergency*. Interviews are structured to address how their motivations to diversify the industry inform their current strategies, what people from lower-income families struggle with the most when trying to break into the industry, and where diversity initiatives plateau in their support for aspiring journalists.

Interviewees are also asked to respond to some of the theories explored in the literature review, which present barriers to social mobility, including but not limited to the restrictions geographic mobility put upon individuals with low financial support, the London-centricity of the industry and discrimination.

The first two sections of the literature review define some of the key terms used throughout this dissertation as well as providing historical context for how we discuss social mobility, diversity and class within journalism. The last section goes into more depth of existing knowledge about barriers to industry access, which also provided context for all semi-structured expert interviews. The main objective of this enquiry is to pose the question: What is preventing the industry from improving access and social mobility for people struggling to enter it? The findings section summarises some of the

overlapping obstacles, while the conclusion includes this author's analysis of the accounts provided by the expert interviewees and their recommendations on what can be done to improve them.

Literature Review

Diversity and social mobility in journalism

Bernard Barber (1957) described social mobility as the "movement, either upward or downward, between higher and lower social classes; or more precisely, movement between one relatively full-time, functionally significant social role and another that is evaluated as either higher or lower" (Barber, as cited in Westoff et al., 1960: 376). While social mobility is often used to describe the movement of individuals into higher social classes through occupational mobility, critics have pointed out that this only involves one measure of change, namely an individual's profession. Scholars such as Westoff et al. said that "a substantial number of additional dimensions must be examined before it becomes safe to regard social mobility and occupation mobility as even approximately synonymous" (1960: 379). Furthermore, the authors refer to Peter Blau's argument (1956) that "persons upwardly mobile in the occupational hierarchy who continue to associate largely with working class people (. . .) have changed their economic position but not their social affiliation" (1960: 379).

One can therefore risk conflating social mobility with class identity, as Grusky et al. point out that tastes and social capital relating to professions are often passed on intergenerationally (1998: 1205). Although class and social mobility do not always correlate, it could still be revealing to find out whether a potential assimilation by so-

called 'diversity hires' into elitist newsrooms leads to impacts relevant to the object of study, such as the hypothetical perpetuation of existing hierarchies and power structures rather than the attempt to break it with their presence.

Journalists within the industry, such as political correspondent Lewis Goodall, have pointed out the need for a diverse makeup of staff because of its influence on news coverage, writing in an article for Sky News in 2017: "Maybe, just maybe, if we had more kids in journalism who grew up in tower blocks, we'd have been better at shining a light on the living conditions of some of our fellow citizens, like those who lived and died in Grenfell Tower " (Goodall, 2017).

Although news organisations seem to be more willing to have conversations about the diversification of the journalism industry, with almost half of participants from a 2016 survey agreeing that promoting tolerance and diversity is 'very' or 'extremely' important (Thurman et al., 2016: 34), the likelihood of someone from a working-class background finding work in a creative career has remained largely unchanged since 1980 (Brook et al., 2018). Furthermore, while the generation of journalists before us was able to progress from a position at the local paper to a role as a senior journalist without studying the field at university, today journalism has become almost entirely a degree-only profession (Milburn, 2012: 54).

As many as 86% of journalists from a survey conducted by Thurman et al. have at least a bachelor's degree (2016: 11). But even though journalism *students* are more likely to be from publicly funded schools, it is still students from privately funded education that have higher chances of landing work in journalism (Spilsbury, 2017: 22). This supports Milburn's view of elitism found in the industry, as he says it has 'shifted to a greater degree of social exclusivity than any other profession' (2012: 3).

Although there are organisations today such as the *Creative Diversity Network*, *Women in Journalism*, *Arts Emergency*, *Journo Resources*, *PressPad* and the *Sutton Trust*, just to name a few, who are working towards creating opportunities for disadvantaged and marginalised pupils, Milburn (2012) argues that we rarely place staff diversity in the context of socio-economic diversity. Instead, the focus lies increasingly on the ethnicity and gender of those who make up the UK's journalists (2012: 3). Some qualitative accounts of working journalists of colour have also reported that conversations within organisations are more likely to be centred around gender rather than race, unless brought up by journalists of colour themselves (Douglas, 2021: 13).

One of the main arguments for this focus is that newsrooms are supposed to be representative of the UK's population, as outlined in a talk for *Reuters* in 2019 given by then Head of News and Current Affairs at *Channel Four* Dorothy Byrne, who cited the proportion of LGBT and female staff as well as the percentage of their BAME staff, a term which has been criticised for its lack of specificity and failure to account for the different experiences of ethnic minorities (Macaulay, 2020; Abraham, 2022). She did, however, briefly mention in her lecture that only '16% of staff are from working class backgrounds', something that 'needs to improve across the industry' (Byrne, 2019). In her lecture, she concludes:

"It may seem boring that I list all those figures but I am doing so because it is so vital if you are going to produce good news and current affairs to have a representative workforce (...) The UK has some specific issues which make it hard for women and people from minority groups to get on in television" (Byrne, 2019).

Theodore Glasser (1992) argued that we ‘trivialize diversity through its measurement’, when only accounting for women or minorities in our institutions. What this does, he argues, is to ‘reduce diversity to physiographic criteria for admission and employment’, which while having an impact on a few select individuals, ‘hardly qualifies as evidence of diversity in any serious cultural sense’ (Glasser, 1992: 132). While Milburn (2012) argued for increased focus on socio-economic diversity, Friedman et al. have pointed out that a dominant focus on social mobility rates risks being reduced to a ‘one-dimensional measure of occupational *entry* that tells us little about the intra-occupational dimensions of social mobility (2015: 6, emphasis by the author). It is therefore equally as important that we look at the levels of diversity on a staff level as well as examining the progression of historically disadvantaged individuals upon entering the industry.

The influence of the glass ceiling on social mobility

In the 1980s context of newsrooms, the glass ceiling, a term referring to the restricted access into elitist occupations, was used as a concept to describe the invisible barriers women faced when trying to enter higher positions in the workplace with more decision-making power (Steiner, 2012: 213 - 214). Scholars came up with theories in response to the persistence of the glass ceiling, including “institutionalized discrimination and sexism, and the contexts of specific organizations, including how they resist attempts at gender parity” (2012: 214). Following this recognition, concerns around journalism becoming a ‘pink-collar ghetto’ arose, to which female journalists and educators highlighted and criticised the assumption that “women are less demanding than men and more willing to be dumped on... less aggressive and more inclined to sit back and take what is dished out” (Miller, 1985, as cited in Steiner, 2012: 213).

While data used for a National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) report in 2017 suggests that ‘there are only slightly more male than female journalists today (52% compared with 48%)’ (Spilsbury, 2017: 6), the authors note that a *City University* study showed that ‘women remain in junior management roles, whereas men are more likely to progress into senior management’ (2017: 6). The career progression of female journalists seems much more likely to stagnate than that of their male counterparts.

Today, the glass ceiling is also used as a metaphor for a variety of barriers relating to, for example, race, disability and class. Milburn reports that “journalists and broadcasters born in 1958 typically grew up in families with an income of around 5.5% above that of the average family. For those born in 1970, that proportion had risen to 42.4%” (2012: 51). With the addition of slow economic growth since the neoliberal 1980s (Monbiot, 2016), access to the journalism industry has been more difficult than ever before.

While neoliberalism claims that ‘the market’ merely gives people what they deserve by rewarding merit and punishing inefficiency (Monbiot, 2016), it is worth questioning why the proportion of journalists coming from the highest social classes has increased in recent years, with 92 per cent of journalists still coming from white ethnic groups despite the existence of diversity initiatives (Spilsbury, 2021: 2). Authors such as Jo Littler therefore argue that neoliberal meritocracy merely ‘functions as a figleaf for inequality’ (2018: 217), and is thus incompatible with the belief and desire to build a more representative and equitable journalism industry.

Limitations of diversity initiatives in journalism

We are aware of at least four limitations of current diversity strategies, including tokenism and inconsistent inclusion (Douglas, 2021), the class pay gap (Friedman et al.,

2017), unpaid internships (Milburn, 2012), and geographic location and mobility (Milburn et al., 2016).

Little emphasis is put on invisible barriers such as disability and education, which partly explains why ‘the majority of top BBC journalists are still privately educated’ (Goodall, 2017), and only 16 per cent of journalists have a work-limiting health problem or disability according to the 2020 Labour Force survey (Spilsbury, 2021: 2). Furthermore, it is usually only a few people within news organisations who are expected to instigate diversity strategies (Douglas, 2021: 5) rather than it being an industry-wide practice exercised consistently by all members of staff. As Goodall echoes in his piece for Sky News: “Diversity is about more than what you can see” (Goodall, 2017).

‘Inconsistent inclusion’ (Douglas, 2021) covers, among other factors, the fact that despite diversity initiatives trying to include more people of colour, the racism and lack of support they face within the industry not only stagnates their progression, but often results in journalists of colour considering to *leave* the industry again (2021: 7). This limits opportunities for upward mobility for people of colour, particularly if they have low levels of social capital or lack connections within the industry contrary to their more privileged counterparts, who, as Friedman et al. point out, have contacts that ‘span a larger status distance’, ‘are more involved in civic associations’, and ‘have higher levels of social trust’ (2015: 7), meaning they are also more likely to be exposed to opportunities within the industry.

Similarly, when people from lower socio-economic backgrounds manage to get into the journalism industry, they still face a significant class pay gap (Friedman et al., 2017: i).

Friedman et al.'s 2017 analysis of the Labour Force Survey *Social Mobility, the Class Pay Gap and Intergenerational Worklessness* found that even when occupation and level of experience are the same, those from working class backgrounds were still estimated to get paid £2,242 less than their more privileged colleagues. This gap is only exacerbated when applied to upwardly mobile women and ethnic minorities (2017: i). Furthermore, many entering the industry will earn a wage at or even below the living wage. Thurman et al. found that 88% of the journalists in their survey aged 24 or less earned between £0 and £19,200 a year (2016: 16-17).

One of the major problems with inconsistent inclusion is that it allows the journalistic field to 'conceal, legitimise and reinforce social hierarchies', transforming media diversity policies into forms of 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu, 1989, as cited in Douglas, 2021: 4) where diversity strategies allow organisations to, for example, commercially exploit 'racial capital' (Leong, 2013, as cited in Douglas, 2021: 4) without ever addressing structural racism at the organisation.

Douglas points out that tools of inconsistent inclusion can manifest by newsrooms expecting 'black-on-black reporting' (2021: 11), a common issue where black reporters and staff are tokenised and feel they have been hired to write about 'black issues' only, instead of having the same freedom to write about a variety of issues and thereby progress like their white counterparts.

The perpetuation of social hierarchies within the industry is supported by the findings of Friedman et al. as they conclude in their report that:

“Even when the upwardly mobile are successful in entering elite occupations they are not accumulating the same resources of economic, cultural and social capital as those from privileged backgrounds. They have - on average - less savings, less valuable homes, lower status contacts, and are less engaged in legitimate culture” (2015: 28).

What further limits diversity initiatives in their impact on social mobility is the fact that many internships remain unpaid, making opportunities inaccessible for those who cannot work for free in exchange for experience alone. Milburn writes that while we are aware that unpaid internships restrict fair access and social mobility, “interns remain substitutes for what in other sectors would be regarded as functions carried out by mainstream paid employees” (2012: 5). An NCTJ survey confirms this reliance on unpaid work to enter the journalism industry, as 83 per cent of new entrants to journalism had done an internship, of which as high as 92 per cent were unpaid (Milburn et al., 2016: 143).

These barriers are also maintained by limited education and employment opportunities in urban and rural communities, which forces ‘aspirational youngsters to move out in order to get on’ (2016: iv). After all, when comparing findings from the *Labour Force Survey* and *Great British Class Survey*, most journalists live in London, (Friedman et al., 2015: 12), and the “majority of The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers were offering vacancies in London in 2012 but only 44% in the North-east of England and 41% in East Anglia” (Milburn, 2012: 6).

It is clear from the literature that the issue of access and upward mobility in the journalism industry is structural and begins at the way the UK media is run. Fenton and Freedman argue that the *BBC* and the media more generally “is marked by a history of

deference to the state, a lack of geographical and cultural diversity (...) and a paternalistic political agenda intertwined with a legacy of imperial, corporatist, and neoliberal affiliations” (2018: 121). In line with neoliberal market values which Fenton and Freedman say ‘tie public service media to the needs of their commercial rivals’ (2018: 114), they argue the media’s focus has increasingly been to serve the state rather than the public, which arguably poses a risk to the goal of diversifying the industry and improving its equitability, as profit appears before ethics in the hierarchy of industry values.

Methodology

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the challenges and limitations diversity initiatives experience in their impact on diversity and social mobility in the UK journalism industry. Furthermore, it is interested in how their motivations inform current strategies, and how those either advance or limit their impact on upward mobility for those trying to break into the industry.

To gather empirical, professional insight, this paper's primary research is based on semi-structured expert interviews with representatives of some of the most prominent diversity initiatives in the UK journalism industry. Expert interviews are useful in qualitative research because of their opportunities to share observations and impart expert knowledge onto the research objectives (Flick et al., 2003: 2004). As expert interviews might co-construct knowledge between interviewee and interviewer, the former also becomes a research partner who is able to 'express doubts on particular research methods or questions' (Berner-Rodoreda et al., 2018: 297), which could be beneficial in scrutinising the overall research itself.

As gaining insight into the experiences of diversity initiatives requires an exploratory and phenomenological approach, semi-structured interviews were led by some guiding questions (See Annex 1) which were adapted slightly for each interview to offer a level of direction to the interviewees without limiting opportunities for 'probing' and more detailed responses (Gray, 2017: 379). In contrast to written questionnaires, this approach allows for follow-up questions to further inquire into their experiences, and also leaves space for the diversion of interviews in ways that add more levels of depth and

perspectives not previously considered when drafting the research questions (Gray, 382: 2017).

While this allows for a deep level of analysis, the qualitative research method faces limitations regarding the sample size as only a handful of interviewees were able to participate and might therefore not sufficiently represent the experiences of diversity initiatives in the UK. Furthermore, the selection of interviewees does not offer a balanced mixture of differences in location, political bias or affiliation, and other possible factors which might influence the interpretation of their experiences.

However, the organisations were established at different times and in response to various political and social events in the history of the UK's media culture, which likely shaped their approach and motivations to make the journalism industry more equitable in different ways. Their experiences of diversity and social mobility within the industry can likely offer different empirical and anecdotal accounts of industry experience.

Another limitation associated with semi-structured interviews is that the interviewer can risk tailoring responses to confirm their own theoretical assumptions (Flick et al., 255: 2004). Interview questions were therefore crafted to be open enough for interviewees to disagree with the paper's assumptions and background research, and a conscious decision was made to allow conversations to discover findings that relate to the subject area but are tangential enough not to repeat and confirm the individual questions alone.

The sample consists of four experts including Joseph Harker, Senior Editor for Diversity and Development at *The Guardian* who also runs the publication's *Positive Action Scheme*,

Camille Dupont, Content & Programmes Director at *PressPad*, Hilly Janes, Head of Events & Mentoring at *Women in Journalism*, and Carys Nelkon, Head of Programmes at *Arts Emergency*. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes and were conducted through recorded Zoom sessions. Interviewees received informed consent forms to sign (See Annex 2). Anonymity was not offered to evidence the expert status of interviewees.

The study of the qualitative material consists of a thematic analysis to identify overlaps and new findings on the research subject. The preferred research outcome is that the findings will illuminate the obstacles experienced by a variety of diversity initiatives. The final goal is to arrive at a conclusion about how the industry as a whole generally responds to the question of improving social mobility in UK journalism and what areas require change to improve support for disadvantaged communities trying to gain access into our elitist media landscape.

Although social mobility is widely discussed in industry research, it is difficult to estimate the holistic impact of diversity initiatives as strategies usually focus on individual access instead of the uplifting of disadvantaged groups in society, largely because of lack of capacity and funding, and other influences such as industry attitudes and structural inequalities which are not within their means to control.

Furthermore, another limitation is that this paper is looking at diversity and social mobility overall, instead of exclusively concentrating on one particular metric such as race, gender, disability or class, which should be reserved for individual study.

Findings and discussions

Overlapping motivations and strategies

There are overlaps in all interviewees' motivations to diversify the journalism industry, which mirror Childers (2020) and Milburn's (2012) views on representation as a democratising force and for the media to be 'a mirror that reflects back at ourselves as the mirror to society' (Janes, 2021). Furthermore, Janes also recognises the commercial value of diversity in that the media reduces their chances of selling content to a variety of target audiences, while Harker argues for the value of competition leading to a more competent pool of talent, saying that 'the whole point of diversity and about widening the pool means more competition, which means you will get better people' (Harker, 2021).

Although this echoes the aforementioned argument by Fenton and Freedman (2018) about the media's ties to neoliberal market values, with an emphasis on commerciality by the former expert and competition and merit by the latter, one might argue that diversity initiatives feel reliant on arguing for those values to convince decision makers in our neoliberal media landscape of the benefits of diversity.

In regards to representative politics, Janes also points out that 'you can't be who you can't see', arguing that people "particularly from non-white male backgrounds don't progress up the career ladder or don't want to, because they can't see anybody there that looks like them or feels like them", pointing out the need for role models. "If you can't quite see yourself in that role, I think it holds people back" (Janes, 2021).

Another overlapping issue discussed in all qualitative interviews is that access into the industry is limited by financial insecurity, location, identity and lack of cultural capital. Carys Nelkon from *Arts Emergency* recounts the organisation's founding motivation during the David Cameron era: "I think a big part of the thinking when they set the charity up was what do you have [when you go to Eton] that means that you often get into these industries? Or if you have all that privilege, what is that privilege? And of course a lot of it is money, and it's financial backing." This realisation aligns with Camille Dupont's argument about lack of financial security preventing people from taking the risk to step into the industry, and Janes' argument that expensive student loans prevent people from studying media subjects.

While single organisations are unable to make up for structural economic inequality, Nelkon describes how their strategy replaces financial support with the growth of a network for mentees and the development of their cultural and social capital, with the aim of this increasing their invitations into institutions:

"Not being able to get information, and then not having the confidence, a sense of belonging, and the cultural capital and the social capital are probably the things that we have identified that people struggle with, and those are the two things that we're trying to help with. It's that confidence, a sense of belonging, opportunities, and then getting them the right information" (Nelkon, 2021).

The value of cultural capital is also confirmed by Harker as he admits that "if there was a person who applied for the [*Positive Action*] scheme, who [came from] a private school [like] Oxbridge, then the chances are we wouldn't take them on the scheme, because they have enough cultural capital to get into the industry". As previously mentioned, cultural

capital does not always correlate with social mobility or class (Blau, as mentioned in Westoff et al. 1960: 379). However, it appears to be a commonly recognised element that helps people move upward in the industry, as Janes adds:

“They may come from families where people don't really engage with the media, they don't know what journalism is, or they're a bit suspicious of it. They don't wake up in the morning and listen to the *Today Programme* or subscribe to *The Guardian*, or whatever it is. And then again, I think the whole idea of networking and contacts, that can be very difficult for them, they don't come from those kinds of backgrounds” (Janes, 2021).

In regards to location, all interviewees confirm that financial security, which is often needed to enable individuals to attend internships, intersects with the issue of London-centricity of opportunities. Dupont explains:

“What I noticed is the people who've made it in journalism, and all the way through, not necessarily as staff, but through freelancing, were the ones who either could afford to live with their parents for longer, and not necessarily be in London, [but] were near enough London that they weren't being passed out on some opportunities” (Dupont, 2021).

Additionally, they also recognise the London-centricity of diversity schemes themselves. Nelkon explains:

“Because Arts Emergency's mostly funded by our network, who are UK wide and even outside of the UK, our aim is to be able to support young people, not just in London, but all around the UK. What makes it difficult is that so much of the creative industries is in London. And also, there are so many young people living in London” (Nelkon, 2021).

As one of their strategies includes mentorships, they struggle with developing a network of mentors who do not live in London themselves. They do, however, have a wish to

continue developing their support in Manchester, where the organisation has worked for about five years, including a project in Merseyside. The need to cast a wider net to reach different audiences is also reiterated by Harker and Janes, with the former expressing the wish to run a scheme from their Manchester office, and targeting different, underrepresented groups, while the latter points out the need to host networking events and mentoring schemes outside of London.

However, Dupont points out that even though challenging the state of London-centric opportunities is important – which she says the increase in ‘work from home’ arrangements have contributed to – a focus on closer proximity to individuals’ local newsrooms will not necessarily increase access into the industry. She explains: “There's very few local papers who are independent (. . .) and it's actually not that easy to get into. A lot of the offices are centralised with freelance workers. It's actually not as easy as it was before to even get into local journalism” (Dupont, 2021).

PressPad's strategy to counteract the common requirement to live near London is to support mentees with accommodation closer to industry opportunities and the financial support to complete work experience, as individuals who are ‘on a minimum wage (. . .) might be able to pay for food, for transport, and for a bit of [their] rent, but [they] might not be able to pay for all of it’ (Dupont, 2021). This aligns with Milburn’s (2012) previously stated argument that the inability of individuals to participate in often necessary work placements to get access and progress in the industry is a common obstacle in increasing social mobility in journalism.

All interviewees agree that diverse representation in the media and newsrooms serves a democratic value. However, the lack of cultural capital otherwise passed on generationally or among the upper-middle and upper classes presents a real obstacle to those trying to break into journalism. This also includes financial constraints of new entrants who cannot afford to participate in opportunities that would otherwise gain them access into the industry, not to mention travel to London where most work and mentorship opportunities remain.

Structural inequalities and short-term support

All interviewees point out that the lack of funding for both individuals and diversity initiatives, which would enable them to offer people long-term support, presents a real barrier to upward mobility and career progression. Although Janes argues that there is ‘a lot of clamping down’ on nepotism within the industry that leads to a select few individuals receiving opportunities through personal contacts, she points out that ‘the industry has been commercially difficult ... because of online and [free news]’ (Janes, 2021).

Both Nelkon and Harker recognise that mentorships only offer temporary support without making the structural changes necessary to fundamentally transform the system. As previously acknowledged by Milburn (2012), Nelson points to the fact that ‘formal and informal internships are not meant to be allowed, but we know they still go on’. Harker also situates diversity schemes in the context of institutional inequalities and discrimination, which diversity organisations have little influence over:

“While [*the Positive Action Scheme*] is a scheme I’m really proud of having been involved in from the start (. . .) that on its own would never be enough. This is a conversation that we’ve been having since the *MacPherson Inquiry* of 1999 into the death of Stephen Lawrence, which was the first inquiry which defined the term ‘institutional racism’ and made clear that institutions can be racist without individuals actually acting in a racist way, or being racist or wilfully being racist. [But] it’s clear from the [Black Lives Matter] events of last year and these institutional responses to last year, that many organisations had not had that conversation 20 years ago, or had a maybe very brief conversation, and then dropped the ball and forgot about it” (Harker, 2021).

Pointing out the need for institutions to attract people historically excluded from them, Harker argues that change also ‘has to come from the very top’ from senior officials, followed by continuous support after access has been granted. Similarly, Nelkon points out the need for better HR practices and wages which strengthen the support of diversity schemes instead of ‘expecting people to put up with a lot of bad practice’ because they’re deemed ‘lucky to work in the arts’ (Nelkon, 2021).

Furthermore, Harker points out the importance of the *Positive Action Scheme* to offer mentorships alongside broad work experience which allows participants to gain careers advice after they complete their placement, as well as nurturing their relationships with people already working in the industry. This mirrors Dupont’s critique that schemes like the government’s *Kickstart Scheme*, which offers funding to create jobs for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit, do not account for the possibility that people might enter certain jobs without being able to progress or even stay in them. While short-term financial support or cultural capital can help individuals take a first leap into the industry, it seems they only serve as provisional solutions for fairer access and diversity, rather than strategies aimed at structural change.

This also occurs at later stages during people's careers, as Janes confirms Spilsbury's (2017) analysis that women, particularly women of colour, struggle to 'get into those positions of power'. Additionally, when 'they drop out, usually for some kind of caring responsibility' it is difficult to ensure ways for them to re-enter the industry again (Janes, 2021).

Assimilation and inconsistent inclusion

The lack of long-term support to help people continuously move upward, let alone ensure they stay in the industry, relates to the previously discussed issue of inconsistent inclusion (Douglas, 2021). Nelkon recounts that when a young person has achieved entry into the industry but then faces discrimination, 'they usually decide to leave'. In contrast to those with higher cultural capital and industry connections who might also have the financial security to risk conflict, they are less likely to garner advice or support to defend their position at the workplace.

The inconsistent inclusion of individuals entering the media industry is also recognised by Harker, who explains:

"I think that's where probably 90% of our media organisations have a real problem, in that they will take on a scheme, do an internship, someone gets their three months, six months, doesn't like the organisation, maybe they'll even go on staff at a junior level, find it a pretty miserable experience, and leave. And then the editor says at the end of it: 'Well, we tried that diversity thing and it just didn't work. It's too hard, too difficult. Let's leave it'. You can't just mouth platitudes; you have to actually change your thinking" (Harker, 2021).

One way in which some individuals are sometimes able to counteract the inconsistent inclusion in the industry is through assimilation. This means that individuals are prone to adjusting their identity in order to 'fit in' or agree to disproportionately take on work because of their difference, such as the aforementioned 'black-on-black' reporting (Douglas, 2021). For example, Harker explains that many people of colour are often forced to make a choice about assimilating into their work environment and rejecting their identity and history and 'try to be like a posh white person, like all the people in the senior positions here, or give up on their career' (Harker, 2021). This seems to be an experience across various disadvantageous identities, as Nelkon explains:

"I think people feel they have to [assimilate] when they feel they stand out, because it might be that they don't get the opportunity (. . .) They might be the only black person there, or the only working class person there, [which] means that whenever there's a discussion about what we're going to do for *Black History Month*, everyone looks at you. It means that things disproportionately fall on people for those reasons. It makes you feel awkward, and it can make you feel unwelcome as well" (Nelkon, 2021).

However, Dupont argues that while diversity schemes should not encourage individuals to disregard their identity as she agrees those enrich newsrooms, they should teach them the tools to adapt to unfamiliar working environments: "It's less about assimilation and it's more about, 'okay, what do you need to learn to make it work?' [When] I moved to this country, I needed to learn the language of the media industry, so that you can then interact with people more" (Dupont, 2021).

This suggests that while some individuals might experience assimilation as a form of suppression of their identity, others might view it as a necessary adaptation to a professional ideology. It is worth questioning how much current elitist newsroom cultures expect assimilation at the cost of an individual's differences which could otherwise help diversify newsrooms and coverage, and to what degree their professional

ideologies do merely improve the individual's journalistic practice and professional status.

While Dupont points out that becoming accustomed to the etiquettes of the industry and learning to evolve in an environment is an important skill for a journalist, 'so that you don't feel discouraged or you're not being passed out on opportunities', it is equally as important to 'change the culture with interns' (Dupont, 2021). She explains: "You need people who (. . .) contribute and change things. So it is about finding that balance. What do they need to know to feel like they're included and know how it works? And then how will they bring their own selves and their own diverse stories to the media?" (Dupont, 2021).

There seems to be varying attitudes when it comes to the level of assimilation and adaptation expected from individuals who want to break into the industry. While Harker, Nelkon and Dupont point to the need for structural changes and wider tolerance and encouragement of difference in newsrooms, Janes emphasises the expectation of personal responsibility over their development.

This includes attitudes within the industry and mentors that women, or individuals overall, are held back by 'being scared of networking', 'lacking confidence to negotiate a pay rise', 'impostor syndrome', and personal time management (Janes, 2021), instead of barriers that exist irrespective of the resilience or adaptability of the person in question. It seems their focus lies predominantly on empowering women individually by, for example, welcoming them to group activities and events to test and evolve their personal skills. Such attitudes about people struggling to thrive in the industry seem to get

historically repeated, as we saw with Steiner's citation (2012) of the assumption that women are inherently more passive and less forward in their demands.

Women in Journalism's panel events and seminars are well-attended and frequent support strategies employed by the group, meant to offer 'practical ways of empowering women and encouraging them to speak up and be competent', such as how to negotiate a pay rise, and:

"empower women individually to try and make those changes themselves, so they don't lose confidence, they don't drop out. We have a big mentoring scheme as well, which, again, is to help women, whatever stage of their career they're at, to get promoted, to stay there, not to lose their confidence, to get back in if they've dropped out" (Janes, 2021).

This difference in the organisation's approach might be due to the fact that their aim is to provide women with access into the journalism industry overall, without consistent consideration of various structural barriers which include metrics beyond gender.

Janes does point out some structural limitations, such as the impact of care work which disproportionately falls on women and therefore often prevents them from re-entering or moving up in the industry. However, the emphasis on personal development in diversity strategies risks reinforcing the neoliberal assumption that groups who have historically been denied access to the media industry simply do not have the talent, personality or skills to get ahead in a supposedly meritocratic system. As Nelkon explains:

"We know that people who tend to be at the top of organisations are much more likely to believe in meritocracy and the idea that if you work hard enough, you'll make it. And then

those at the bottom . . . have faced more structural difficulties. It's complex. I think there's the money to do the work. But also, there's the attitudes" (Nelkon, 2021).

The belief that the most capable individuals move up in the industry can also lead to the perception that increasing access into the industry means inviting less value into it. Harker recounts that a common response to introducing more diversity into newsrooms is that 'we don't want to lower standards'. However, he explains:

"Their English grammar may not be perfect, but at the same time, the stories they can tell will be stories that no other journalist in the organisation can reach. If you prioritise, and if you decide firmly what your real priorities are, and what actually makes the overall organisation better, then I think you can make those adjustments and encourage people, make them feel valued, make them feel that they truly belong, and get the best out of them" (Harker, 2021).

Conclusion

All interviewees found the democratising value of representation one of the main motivations behind working towards greater diversity in the industry, including the recognition that the industry needs to make amends for the fact that the progress of historically disadvantaged individuals usually stagnates before that of their white, male, private school educated, middle- and upper-class counterparts.

However, it seems that some still favoured neoliberal market values to make an argument for greater access and social mobility, including the value of commercialism and competition. It is understandably tempting to emphasise the merit of individuals who have historically faced prejudice over their abilities based on, for example, their race or gender. However, as Nelkon (2021) pointed out, it tends to be those at the top of organisations who believe in meritocracy while disregarding the fact that access is not always granted based on merit. This confirms Harker's argument that cultural change needs to happen at senior levels, particularly as valuing the framework of neoliberal meritocracy risks prioritising market performance over ethics that are needed to genuinely change the industry.

It is also worth questioning whether the view that people simply do not want to progress further because they 'cannot see anybody that looks like them' (Janes, 2021) puts too much emphasis on the extent to which representation is able to empower individuals enough to enter and thrive in the industry. This therefore begs the question whether our current representation objectives fail to account for obstacles put in front of historically

disadvantaged groups that go beyond and are more complex than the discrimination they face based on visible traits such as gender, race and visible disability.

While most interviewees recognised that they have a low impact on structural changes that uplift demographics with lower social and financial capital, more organising and work to lobby against unpaid internships, discrimination which stagnates the progression of individuals, and the expectation of people to move from rural areas into the city, particularly London to find work, were recommended by interviewees to help diversity strategies tackle some of the core issues at a structural level.

The surprisingly frequent mention of cultural and social capital as vehicles to upward mobility might indicate an intuitive understanding of intersectional barriers to access into the journalism industry including socio-economic factors, which challenges Milburn's (2012) point that we usually omit placing staff diversity in the context of socio-economic diversity.

The lack of financial security which could otherwise enable an individual to take the opportunities and education needed to enter the industry, as well as the lack of familiarity and contacts within the field, were all recognised by the participants as combining factors that limit access into the industry, reaffirming past research by Friedman et al. (2015). It is therefore no surprise that mentorships, accommodation and financial support to attend internships and training, as well as networking events, all seem popular diversity strategies, as they all have the potential to give groups who otherwise do not come in direct contact with agents in the industry the social, cultural and financial capital they need.

When it comes to the barrier of geographic location, diversity schemes often find themselves in a catch-22: on one hand, part of their work is about counteracting the London-centricity of work opportunities. On the other, they also experience less challenges by operating in London themselves. Lack of funding and available mentors outside of the city also make it harder to direct support further outwards and sustain support for longer periods of time.

It became clear that assimilation, while often being a necessary tool to fit into a work environment, poses a threat to the value diversity is meant to bring in the first place. While almost all interviewees at some point argued in favour of new interns to make those cultural changes, particularly if they are able to move up to senior positions, it is likely that individuals are forced to perpetuate the power structures and hierarchies present in the industry in order to thrive, as predicted by Douglas and Bourdieu's 'symbolic violence' in the context of inconsistent inclusion, which allows the journalistic field to merely reinforce its hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1989, as cited in Douglas, 2021: 4).

Attitudes that are prominent in the industry, but largely out of control of diversity schemes also require change: most organisations do not have the resources or capacity to sustain their support for a longer period of time to ensure mentees are able to continuously progress upwards. Better standards and codes of conduct need to become the norm in all workplaces so that the access initially provided by diversity organisations can turn into a continuously sustained, upward progression for individuals.

Avenues for future research include a closer interrogation of the ways in which individuals either succeed or fail at achieving the same upward mobility as others upon

entering the industry, in addition to an analysis of strategies that do not solely focus on diversification through staff representation. A combined historical and contemporary study identifying how the journalism industry either hinders or helps certain groups to move socially upwards including how the industry offers opportunities for career progression and increased salaries would help us gain further insight into social mobility and equity within the industry, and what we can do to improve it.

Furthermore, considering additional metrics in diversity strategies such as education, location, socioeconomic background, and disability alongside visible and invisible traits that are more likely to face discrimination, could be one way to ensure we increase newsrooms' representative value. Setting more sophisticated diversity objectives has the potential to build a more sustainable and structural approach towards diversifying the industry, and not only allow aspiring journalists to move socially upward, but also help them build a media industry for all.

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Annex 1

- What are some of the most important reasons to level the playing field in the journalism industry, besides the ethical consideration of redistributing opportunities to disadvantaged young people?
- What are your main objectives with the work your organisation does? And what tools do you use to achieve those?
- From your experience, what do people from lower-income families struggle with the most when trying to break into the creative industries?
- One of the theories I came across during my research was 'inconsistent conclusion' which can manifest by for example providing entry to the industry for a marginalised person, but then continuing to discriminate against them in various ways. Have you ever experienced anything like this with your mentees?
- How do you make sure you're reaching disadvantaged communities and that the people participating in it are not left behind when they've for example finished an internship?
- How often do you get participants from outside of London? And how often do mentees travel back to their hometowns and manage to pursue a journalism career there?
- Where do you find diversity initiatives plateau in their support for young creatives? And where have you experienced that the hands of your organisation are simply tied?
- Finally, if you could send out a couple of calls to action to the industry and government bodies who could influence social mobility within the industry, what would those be?

Annex 2

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Full title of Project: *The limitations of diversity initiatives on social mobility in UK journalism - BA Dissertation*

**Annika Loebig, BA Journalism London College of Communication
Flat 2, 26 Avondale Road, CR2 6JA**

**Please tick off
where applicable**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.
3. The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymisation of data, etc.) to me.
4. Any risks associated with the taking part in the project have clearly been explained to me
5. The use of the data in research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me.
6. I agree to take part in the above study.
7. I agree to the interview being audio recorded.
8. I agree to the interview being video recorded.

<u>Carys Nelkon</u>	<u>24/11/21</u>	<u></u>
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
<u>Annika Loebig</u>	<u>24/11/2021</u>	<u></u>
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

Informed Consent Form

Please consider this information carefully before deciding whether to participate in this research.

Purpose of the research: To understand the impact of diversity initiatives on social mobility within UK journalism and the potential limitations they experience in their desire to improve accessibility and fairness in the industry.

What you will do in this research: If you decide to volunteer, you will be asked to participate in one interview. You will be asked several questions. Some of them will be about your experiences while working for your organisation. Others will be about general views on social mobility within the industry. With your permission, the interviews will be recorded for transcribing. The data I gather from this research will be used for my dissertation 'Breaking the glass ceiling or neoliberal window dressing? The limitations of diversity initiatives on social mobility in UK journalism'

Risks: No risks are anticipated.

Participation and withdrawal: Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. You may withdraw by informing me that you no longer wish to participate (no questions will be asked). You may also skip any question during the interview, but continue to participate in the rest of the study.

Benefits: This is a chance for you to highlight some of the ways in which diversity initiatives can improve their impact on diversity and social mobility within the journalism industry and what support your own organisation might potentially need to reach these goals.

Confidentiality: Your responses to interview questions will be kept confidential when asked to be documented off the record. The recording itself will be stored on a laptop to which only the researcher has access, and deleted upon completion of the dissertation.

Dissemination: This research is not intended for publication, but will be used in the production of an undergraduate dissertation. The final dissertation will be seen by up to three examiners, but at no point will it be made public.

Time required: The interview will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour.

<p>To Contact the Researcher: If you have questions or concerns about this research, please contact: anniloebig@gmail.com</p>
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- BA Dissertation

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8. I agree to the interview being video recorded.

Camille Dupont

25/11/21



Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Annika Loebig

25/11/2021



Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

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<u>Hilly Jane</u>	<u>24/11/21</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
<u>Annika Loebig</u>	<u>24/11/2021</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

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8. I agree to the interview being video recorded.

JOSEPH HALLER

Name of Participant

8.12.21

Date

[Signature]

Signature

Annika Loebig

Name of Researcher

8.12.2021

Date

[Signature]

Signature

Annex 3

Some transcripts leave out the interviewer's questions for the sake of minimising workload as long as the context of the interviewee's answers remains clear. Complete audio records are available upon request with permission of the interviewee in question.

Joseph Harker - the Guardian

Annika Loebig 1:46

What do you, as an expert in the field, feel are the most important reasons to level the playing field in the journalism industry?

Joseph 1:56

I wrote a piece on this about six months ago about the Society of Editors. I just wanted to check that you've read that? Because that got into some of the kind of points that you raised. And the other thing I'd like to say it's great that already, you're starting to think about these kind of wider structural things, rather than the box ticking initiatives that seem to often offer the promise of change, but don't actually do anything. So I think it's very good that you're already thinking about those kinds of issues. Even though you've not actually worked in the industry yet, I assume, to any large extent. So remind me of the question again.

Annika Loebig 2:38

Yeah, so it's just sort of an open question about what you as an expert in diversity and inclusion in the industry think are the most important reasons to level the playing field in the journalism industry for people?

Joseph 2:50

Well, I think first of all, the media has to be representative. And I think there are so many stories where the media has proven that it's not representing or covering the country, the nation, the world as it actually is. I mean, we've seen so many examples recently, whether it's Brexit, Donald Trump, Grenville Tower, even the rise of Jeremy Corbyn, which, in 2017, where there was a sense that the media has always taken its people from Oxbridge colleges, you know, middle class people, mostly men, mostly home counties, or London. And that's the way that the media has always recruited itself for the people it's brought in. And it's been clear that no matter how clever you are, if your group only consists of people from those very small backgrounds, that they're not able to cover the world or the nation as it is, and that you don't know what's happening in Aldon or in Glasgow, or even in inner city parts of London. And that people aren't, their views are never challenged, because they don't meet people who are not from different groups. So they just talk among themselves, they think that they're the experts on everything, and it has, as I say, been shown very often they don't actually know what's going on. So that's the reason that it's not a bit. It's not a case of doing this to be nice to people who have different backgrounds. It's actually doing this just to be better organisations.

Annika Loebig 4:30

Fantastic. I'd like to talk about the Positive Action Scheme a little bit. Could you tell me a little bit about the main objectives of the scheme and how it intends to achieve those objectives?

Joseph 4:50

Well, I guess firstly, I'd say that the Positive Action Scheme has been running for 20 years. So it's not a new thing. Secondly, the Positive Action Scheme on its own would not be enough to make the major changes that are required. So while it's a scheme I'm really proud of having been involved in from the start and having helped to launch and having brought through lots of great journalists, that on its own would never be enough. Part of the thing I found frustrating in all the response to Black Lives Matter, last summer, and all the initiatives that were being boldly announced by various media groups is that this is a conversation that we've been having since the MacPherson inquiry of 1999 into the death of Stephen Lawrence, which was the first inquiry which defined the term 'institutional racism', and made clear that institutions can be racist without individuals actually acting in a racist way, or being racist or willfully being racist. It was just the way that things that set up structures are set up, which basically mean that if you take people from certain backgrounds, for example, then that will automatically by default exclude people from other backgrounds. And this is the way that institutions remain the same and don't change much. So that was a massive landmark moment, 20 years ago. I would say it had a comparable impact at the time to the whole Black Lives Matter movement of 2020. And so many conversations were started at that time, so many initiatives were put in train. And I must say that at the Guardian, we sort of began to push for diversity at The Guardian at that point when it was a very tiny group of people of colour, who had meetings with the editor to say something has to change here, because the Guardian cannot carry on being as it is. And it's clear from the events of last year and these institutional responses to last year, that many organisations had not had that conversation 20 years ago, or had a maybe very brief conversation, and then it sort of dropped the ball and forgotten about it, and had done virtually nothing in the last two decades. So that also informs me in terms of what these organisations are doing now, and how long their injection of enthusiasm for this issue will actually last? If it didn't last that long 20 years ago, can we be sure it's gonna last longer this time? But basically, with the Guardian, we tried to do things like open recruitment, we advertised jobs in the paper. So it was an open process, but we were still not getting any new people: We're still getting the same white people coming in and into the organisation, despite the fact that we were trying to diversify. And so what I then set up was this scheme, the positive action scheme, which was basically directly aimed at what we saw as the problem, which was that people didn't come forward because they didn't think the national press was for people like them. And by and large, they were right, the national press, nearly everyone is an all white institute. And they don't really care or think about people of colour. And so we set up the scheme directly aimed at Black and Asian, aspiring journalists, young people who might be typically student age or recent graduates of that kind of age, that kind of experience. We did have some older career changers, too. But we set that up to reach out directly to ethnic minorities and say that at The Guardian, we are interested in people like you because it needed a symbolic statement like that for people to realise things were changing, and also then for them to come into the building and see what working inside a national newspaper was like. And in those days, it was a newspaper, it was before the website had really launched. And to break down the mystique about this sort of institution of the national press and that as an institution, but also it had a separate task and challenge of persuading editors that there was a rich pool of talent out there that they weren't tapping into. And so what I've made really clear from the very start was people would only be selected on merit. They would only be selected if we could see them as being potential Guardian journalists of the future. It wasn't a kind of, 'oh, we'll just have to pick a few brown faces and they can come in and whatever'. And that meant that when the program we set up for them they would work across lots of different parts of the Guardian. Be that the Media

Department, the feature section, the news section, whatever, they would have a really good experience and a really broad experience about different types of journalism. And also, we gave them a mentor, who would be a person of colour who worked at The Guardian already, who would be able to give them advice on making the most out of their time in the office, and also giving them careers advice for once they've gone. And we also encourage all of them to stay in touch with the Guardian and to continue contributing their thoughts and ideas to us, and hopefully, to be able to continue writing articles for us too. So it was a really important thing. Another thing I really wanted to get over was the fact that when you talk to people about diversity, or bringing people from non-traditional backgrounds, the first response that a lot of them have is 'we don't want to lower standards'. Even today, that's still the kind of thing you'll hear in newsrooms: 'It's a risk', 'we don't want to lower standards'. As if everyone's here just as a positive discrimination or diversity hire, as if they're just not really up to the task. And the only reason we're taking them on is because we're being nice to them. And I just wanted to fundamentally blow that apart so that editors could see these really ambitious, intelligent, talented, gifted, articulate, driven, motivated people who could be really good journalists for the future. And that was just really important for me, that we blew apart that myth. And that myth, as I say, still exists in other parts of the media to this day, and other many organisations and institutions to this day. So they were the two things: making it more accessible, and also showing the kind of quality that was there that the national press were just missing out on.

Annika Loebig 12:02

I'm so glad you bring that up as well about the fact that the industry doesn't want to lower standards. More people go to university to study journalism than ever before, but most people who find work as journalists are still privately educated. So I think that notion that you have to have gone to Oxford to be a good journalist, seems like it's pretty much still there.

Joseph 12:40

I mean, there's a fundamental point, which is that the way they've recruited has been private school Oxbridge, and they think that's the best people, and they've not really seen any reason to go beyond that. But to me, the whole point of diversity and about widening the pool, means more competition, which means you will get better people. The wider you cast your net, the better. And they seem to think you'll get worse people, the wider you cast your net. And it's a crazy thought, so you have to instil in them that if you get 100 applications for a job, rather than 10 applications, almost by default, you'll get a better person, because you've had more people to choose from, and that takes a bit of getting used to from the way that they see things, but I think once they actually see it in action, then they realise that it's clear that the standards actually go up with greater diversity.

Annika Loebig 13:39

You already said that you very clearly welcome Black and Asian and minority ethnic people to apply for that opportunity. But were there other ways in which you were able to reach disadvantaged communities in certain areas? Or was it mainly about trying to attract people through the advert? So were you able to cast your net in specific areas, where you know this is where people would really benefit from getting that opportunity?

Joseph 14:11

We went out to universities and careers fairs and things like that, to go out of the Guardian, when we were trying to build up awareness of the scheme. More recently, we do this mainly through Twitter, and there's enough people who've been through the scheme who share it and spread the word. So that's not been a problem for us. But then we launched a scheme for people with disabilities a few years later. And we've taken on some really good people through that, or we've brought in some really good voices through that. I would like us to be able to have a scheme that is run from, say, our Manchester office at some point, which, now I have a new role, I may be able to start to help set up. But there has not been the time or resources to do that in the past. But reaching out, having schemes for different underrepresented groups, you might think about having a class based scheme, for example. Now that I've got a new role, which is full time working on diversity and trying to embed diversity across the Guardian, they're the kind of things I'll be looking at.

Annika Loebig 15:33

I guess it's more challenging to seek to train up someone who's, you know, a black kid who lives in a council house, for example, in London, because there might be this notion you talked about of them being seen as maybe not having had the right education. So I see how that's much more difficult than just saying, 'if you are from that background, please just apply'. But it seems like that's something that you want to focus on in the future, that you're looking at the intersection of certain disadvantages, if that makes sense?

Joseph 16:09

Yes, I mean, for example, if there was a person who applied for the scheme, who was a private school Oxbridge, then the chances are, we wouldn't take them on the scheme, because they have enough cultural capital to get into the industry.

Annika Loebig 16:29

From your experience, having worked so deeply with diversity in the industry, you must have come across loads of candidates and lots of people trying to get into the media industries. And I'm wondering, from your experience, what do you find that people from lower income black families struggle with the most when trying to break in?

Joseph 16:53

I think even when you're accepted, if the institution doesn't accept differences, then the chances are, you won't succeed. But if things will be really stacked up against you, I think that what institutions don't realise, and is the point you sort of alluded to earlier on, is that if you have one person, and it could be if it's an all-male environment, it could be one woman, it could be a black person, it could be one working class person, whatever, if you go into that organisation, and you're the only one and you're the junior, and the likelihood is you're the most junior person in your department, and then as you go on the chances are your ideas may not be accepted. Obviously, not all ideas are accepted, but you may find that you're getting a lot of ideas rejected. And then it doesn't take long before you start thinking 'is that because they just don't like ideas from people like me?' And I think it doesn't take long before you know that you get that sense of being the outsider, they're not interested. So you have that choice to make, which I think nearly all people of colour have had to make at some point: What do I do at this point? Do I reject who I am, and try to fit in and reject my history, my background, my experience, my life experience, and try to be like a posh white person, like all the people in the senior positions here? Or do I give up on my

career? If I do, I just try to be myself and maintain my own personal integrity. But at the same time, that's probably going to damage any career prospects. And that's the challenge, that's the awful dilemma that most of us getting into the industry have had to face at some point. And I think that in many organisations and institutions, if they don't support people, and don't say we do value you, you're here because we want ideas from people with a background like yourself, you don't have to mimic the rest of the institution, because we want you for your difference then, unless they're given that support. Their English grammar may not be perfect, but at the same time, the stories they can tell will be stories that no other journalist in the organisation can reach. If you prioritise, and if you decide firmly what your real priorities are, and what actually makes the overall organisation better, then I think you can make those adjustments and encourage people, make them feel valued, make them feel that they truly belong, and get the best out of them. And I think that's where probably 90% of our media organisations have a real problem, in that they will take on a scheme, do an internship, someone gets their three months, six months, doesn't like the organisation, maybe they'll even go on staff at a junior level, find it a pretty miserable experience, and leave. And then the editor says at the end of it: 'Well, we tried that diversity thing and it just didn't work'. 'It's too hard, too difficult. Let's leave it'. You can't just mouth platitudes, you have to actually change your thinking.

Annika Loebig 20:11

That actually leads me to my next question very nicely. Because one of the theories that I came across during my research is that of inconsistent inclusion, which, as you know, can manifest by providing people entry into the industry, but then continue to sort of discriminate against them in various ways, which then means that they leave the newsroom again and with them then having less social capital than their white Oxford educated counterparts, it's then even more difficult to reenter the industry again. So even though there are these diversity initiatives, very often these social hierarchies are reproduced within the newsroom anyway. So it doesn't actually create many opportunities for newsrooms to change sustainably. So I'm wondering, have you got any experiences of colleagues trying to get into the newsroom or even any happening to yourself that you could share?

Joseph 21:14

I started at the Guardian in the 1990s. And it was very different then but certainly there was no effort made in that era to cater for people with different backgrounds. It wasn't even a thought. And I think it took the MacPherson inquiry and took that big push that was made after that for it to change. And even then it took a long time. And there's so many barriers to overcome, so many vested interests that didn't want to change so many people who just thought, well, we're the Guardian. We've existed for 200 years, why change now? We've got a successful formula - why change it? I still say the Guardian is way ahead of any other national newspaper. And the stories I've heard from other newspapers show how difficult it is. I mean, let's face it, it's only this year, this March, that the head of the Society of Editors said 'there's certainly no racism in the national press', which was an astonishing thing for a white man to say, who had clearly no experience of it, and clearly was totally at odds with the experiences of people of colour, who are either in the industry, or people of colour, who tried to get into the industry and not being able to. And all the evidence is absolutely the opposite, that institutional racism is absolutely endemic within the national press, not only in terms of the headlines and the scapegoating that we see so often from some of the sort of his parts of the not just the tabloid press the broadsheets as well, but also in terms of the mix of people within the institutions, and you can just see that at senior levels in most

organisations there is close to zero representation of people of colour. It's clear that there's an institutional problem there. We are now 70 years after the Empire Windrush with a large-scale migration of Black and Asian people in this country for several decades. And yet somehow, in these organisations, they've never been able to let anyone in, in any number. And that's in a city, where they're based, which is 40% ethnic minority. It's absolutely classic exclusion policies, either not openly declared, but just subliminally stated, which have kept the press so white, and yet still you have the head of the body, which represents the Group of Editors, say that there is definitely no racism. And it was such a struggle for the Society of Editors to persuade them to even overturn his comments. It took six months before they actually retracted his comments.

One of the questions that I really wanted to ask, because I know that you worked for the Black Briton as an editor, is that because the same author or the same scholar who had coined inconsistent inclusion also made a point about how networks that were established by minority staff rather than by institutions as part of diversity schemes actually tend to be much more effective of improving the quality of working environment for those marginalised groups. Largely because they're more rooted in ethical rather than economic concerns regarding inclusion. So, you know, race is really seen in those spaces and can be engaged with frankly, it's not covered up. And I'm wondering, how much do you think these kind of racist market logics, which on one hand try to extract black capital whenever they can, while also trying to restrict black people's access into the dominant dominant news sphere, how much do these market logics play a role in the limited impact of initiatives trying to diversify newsrooms?

I was at the Voice for four years, that was my first job at the Voice. So that was set up immediately after the 1981 Brixton riots when black people were always talked about, but never talked to. And it was called the Voice because it was quite simple to give us a voice. And that was very successful, at least early on, because it kept the wave and it was during the whole equal opportunities era where counsellors would advertise in it, because they were trying to show that they cared about their local black populations. And so it was initially a very successful model. It put black issues on the agenda. Working at the Voice for those four years, it was such a counter to, not just in terms of its output, but just the very organisation in a well-run, profitable, black-run organisation, which was staffed almost exclusively by black people and aimed at a black audience giving a black perspective on on world affairs, it was a completely sort of transforming environment to work in and completely counter to just about every message on race that were being given by every other institution in the country. And it was a very affirming experience to be there in such a successful organisation. So the idea of a kind of self-organisation like that is really useful. You often get the comments like, 'oh, it's racist, it's a black organisation, it must be racist', it's funny how people are quite comfortable with having magazines for women, but somehow publications for black people are seen as racist or subversive. So we would get comments like that quite often. That's a really important thing, but I don't think we should ever and even now we're seeing it with gal-dem, a brilliant website, which is putting women of colour and non-binary people of colour's voices out there, giving them an outlet, but I do think we can't say that that is enough. Because the main power within the nation is within the national media, still within the big Leviathans, those kinds of huge organisations that are the newspapers and the TV channels. It's where the main media power lies, and so we cannot just be outside them, we've got to be inside them to put these issues on the agenda. The two are both important, but certainly just a black media on its own, however successful it is, will never compensate for a lack of black voices inside the mainstream press in the mainstream media.

Annika Loebig 29:48

Fantastic. Can I ask one last question? If you could think of three main obstacles that we're currently facing to actually improve the social mobility and diversity within the industry for disadvantaged groups, what would those be?

Joseph 30:19

I guess there's two ways that there's a problem in terms of perception of people. In order to attract people to these institutions, these institutions, which have historically excluded people from non traditional backgrounds, they have to do a lot more reaching out, they can't just, like I say, place an ad and expect people to come to them, there has to be a lot more reaching out, sending a signal that things have changed. First of all, there has to be genuine change. Someone at the top has to say, this is not good enough, we are going to do things differently. And I think often what happens is that people inside the organisation may think they want to change, but it's not the person at the top. And everyone looks to the person at the top to make the change, because everyone at the end of the day wants to appease their boss. And if their boss doesn't say this is important, then they won't think it's important. So it has to come from the very top, it has to be genuine. Second, they have to reach out. And they have to accept that there is a historical legacy of why people don't apply. So they have to reach out to let people know that their organisation has changed. And in a way, like I said earlier, when people come into the organisation, they have to be supported and encouraged and made to feel included and valued for who they are. So those are the things that are not being done enough.

Annika Loebig 31:51

Fantastic. Thank you so much for your time. I'm sure you have to rush off now. I'm just gonna stop the recording there.

Carys Nelkon - Arts Emergency

Carys Nelkon 0:11

When we're talking about young people, we're talking about young people aged 16 to 25, who come from underrepresented backgrounds, who have been underrepresented within the creative industries. We're quite intersectional in the way that we work. So we try to look at disadvantages in terms of, you know, maybe you're from a lower socio economic background, you might be a person of colour. It might be that you've been in care, or you've got experience of being a refugee. So there's quite a few different criteria that we have in order to try and reach young people who need the support the most and need the network the most, but don't have the access to it. Okay, so we started in 2010, we could see that the fees were going to go up at University, and our founders knew that that would have put them off going to university, having to pay 9000 pounds, particularly because they were from working class backgrounds. And they knew that lots of people would be put off doing arts and humanities subjects, because they're often seen as softer subjects or not as worthy. But we know that the arts and humanities are the backbone of society, they're a fantastic way for people to express themselves. And also the fact that people who study the arts and humanities often then go on to work in the creative industries, which is one of the worst industries we have for diversity - there's been no change in the social mobility into the creative industries in about 40 years. So because of those savings. What they wanted to do was just start up a bit of mentoring, because they felt like they had made it somewhere. And they

wanted to pass that on. Arts Emergency started with just a group of friends mentoring young people in Hackney and it's kind of grown from there. We still have the same aims, we want to support young people long term. So most of the young people we work with we meet when they're 16, and then we support them in different ways until they're 25. So I think that's what makes us unique is its long term support. We've got a network of about 7000 people who are in the creative industry. We don't just focus on journalism, we've got dancers, architects, it's really broad. But we always have journalists, both young people interested in it, and also volunteers.

And we've supported just over 1000 Young people, since we've been running through mentoring, and most of them are now in our young network. So they continue to receive newsletters, support, opportunities, work experience, paid work, and different things from the organisation with the aim that it will hopefully help them not just hover in and out mentoring but it will help them get on long term.

The charity started during the David Cameron era. So it was very much about the Bullingdon Club and everyone in the cabinet was from Eton. I think a big part of the thinking when they set the charity up was 'If you go to Eton, what do you have? What do you have that means that you often get into these industries?' Or if you have all that privilege, what is that privilege, and of course a lot of it is money, and it's financial backing. That's not necessarily something we can do. But we can help people grow a network, we can develop that social capital, and that cultural capital that you have from being able to go to institutions, and being invited in. We would never put that on the team. But that was certainly part of the thinking at the beginning: 'What is it that people do that helps them get on in life?' There is some replication of that in the model that we're doing, but we're kind of trying to flip it on its head, which isn't perfect, either, because it's not necessarily changing the system, but what it is hopefully doing is helping young people break into the industry, so being offered an opportunity, having access, a lot of opportunities that come around because someone knows someone, unfortunately this also includes unpaid opportunities. That is a big one in journalism - unpaid internships, whether they're formal or informal. They're not meant to be allowed, but we know that they still go on. I think that there's a real lack of career guidance. In Scotland, every single school has a career counsellor. But that's not the case across the UK, and certainly isn't the case in England. So people trying to work out what to do often don't have that guidance. And I think that's why Mentoring can be helpful, because it can be quite specific to the area that you're interested in or broader, if that's helpful.

What else holds people back? Money. Money holds people back if you just got to get a job, and then that stops you from getting other opportunities. We know lots of structural things hold people back. So structural racism, any kind of discrimination really. But I think not being able to get information, and then not having the confidence, a sense of belonging, and the cultural capital and the social capital are probably the things that we have identified that people struggle with, and those are the two things that we're trying to help with. It's that confidence, a sense of belonging, opportunities, and then getting them the right information.

One of the things that came up in the Panic! report is that taste, the cultural capital you have from understanding what's tasteful, and what's not tasteful, which is classism masked up as taste. I also think that because the creative industries are hard to get into, and then even if you get into them, they're not always fantastically paid, there is a lot of anxiety from families. If you go to university, you wonder if you are going to be able to pay the rent.

I think that Oxford and Cambridge are particularly alien to most. It looks like Hogwarts, we all know of those secret rules, secret societies, that are alienating. It puts people off going and makes families worried about people going. I remember I worked at an organisation in the Education Department that was for barristers, so it was a different thing, but it looked like Hogwarts, and I had a friend who had gone to quite a posh school. I think he came to have lunch with me once, and he said 'Oh gosh, this building brings back my fear of being back in school.' I went to your bog standard public school. So I was like, 'I can't think of anything less like my school than this.' And it just made me think, people go from a school that looks like Hogwarts to a university that looks like Hogwarts to a profession that looks like Hogwarts. There's no adjustment that has to happen there, and I think that is the tricky thing then, you might feel you have to assimilate - but should people have to assimilate? Probably not, but I think people do feel they have to when they feel they stand out, it might be that they don't get the opportunity. It's very difficult and it's very complicated, because it is about your identity.

I think it's very difficult when we're still supporting young people who, when they go into an office, in whatever industry, they might be the only black person there, or the only working class person there. And that comes with a lot of baggage, because it means that whenever there's a discussion about what we're going to do for Black History Month, everyone looks at you. It means that things disproportionately fall on people for those reasons. It makes you feel awkward, and it can make you feel unwelcome as well.

I think it can be very difficult deciding how far to go to try and fit in because no one likes to be the person who's always like, 'Guys, we need to do things like this' or especially if you're a junior member of the team. So you're right that the sooner we have a creative industry that looks more like the actual society, the better, because it will better represent us in the stories that we tell, in the advertising, in the art in the, academia. If you only have people with certain experience in all of these things, we're only able to tell certain kinds of stories and hear certain kinds of voices. So it's only going to continue to perpetuate itself.

Because they're young people going in, often they're not the people pushing the big ideas that are going to change and sometimes they actually are. I don't think when people say no, your ideas aren't good enough, or that they ever explicitly say that that's to do with racism. I think that the racism that I have noticed that young people we have supported experience is more along the lines of microaggressions and the drip of 'you don't belong here because of this or you've done this wrong' and being hyper visible. I guess from our point of view, we work with a lot of organisations that want you to see the ethical side of things and are wanting to diversify, but saying that and actually doing the work are sometimes different things and that's where I think that there can be issues. But I would find it hard to find an example of exactly what you said. I think that probably the theory is correct. But I don't really have any examples of it.

We support individuals rather than organisations. So say a young person does experience discrimination in the workplace, which has happened, then they usually decide to leave, or once you've got a warning for something that you feel you don't deserve, generally, you tend to leave. I have seen that happen. It's frustrating because these are the organisations they're working with, not people that have said, 'oh, you should work for these people'. But they're just organisations that they're working for. That's why it comes back to this network thing of like, you know, say

someone who was really wealthy and connected, faced discrimination in their workplaces, for whatever reason, it's likely that they would then have a network to go and garner advice about what to do. And I think that's where we end up being a bit of a standing, because when these things happen to our young people, sometimes they'll come to us because we are that standing for them to say what do I do? This has happened. What do I do in this situation? Because nobody can recognize themselves.

We're an organisation that has grown very quickly. I joined in 2016 and I was the second person working here. And now we've got about 16, or 17 team members. So it's grown quite quickly. Because Arts Emergency's mostly funded by our network, who are UK wide and even outside of the UK, our aim is to be able to support young people, not just in London, but all around the UK. What makes it difficult is that so much of the creative industries is in London. And also, there are so many young people living in London.

We know that we can run a bigger project in London than we can. If we were just doing what financially makes sense, we would just be a London organisation. We would just have mentors in London, have mentees in London, but like you say, it's already London-centric. And actually, we want to make sure we're working elsewhere. So we've worked in Manchester for about five years and our aim in the next three or four years is to launch another three projects. So we launched Manchester about four years ago, we did a bit of work in San it. Then we decided to close up projects, but we opened a project in Merseyside. That's been going well. Next year, we're going to be working in Leeds and Bradford. We've also got a pilot this year in Brighton. So our hope eventually is to work across the UK. But it's just a case of growing the organisation sustainably.

There are so many more volunteers. So it's easier to match people in London. Like in Merseyside, at the moment we've got twice the amount of applications from young people as we do mentors. And that's not the case in London because we do have mentors. And it's a difficult year. Everyone's tired. The creative industries have taken an absolute beating during the pandemic. So it's difficult. But it does take a while to build your volunteer base. We've been in Manchester for five years, but we've really worked hard to build that community there. Whereas in London, we don't have to work as hard because people are already there, it's easier. But that doesn't mean that that's the right thing to do, just because it's the easy thing to do.

I'm sure it's the same for everyone, it's just financially, there's a lot of competition for funding. We're quite different to other organisations in that we get a lot of funding from individuals. So people who give five pounds a month or higher value donors. So what that means is that we have a bit more independence than a lot of arts organisations or diversity schemes that rely on 'if we don't get this from Paul Hamlyn trust, then that's it, we can't run the program this year'. And so we've tried to diversify our funding over the last few years. We're not as reliant on individuals, we also are applying for trust, while they're doing a bit of corporate funding. People think about mentoring, and they think, 'oh, great, just introduce some people, just pop him a little email', but it takes a lot of work, it's to do things right and to make sure that you're following safeguarding, and that you're looking after people and you're not just leaving people in the Wild West, it takes a lot of resources. So, it always comes down to money, really. And in terms of support, I think what's interesting at the moment is that in the wake of Black Lives Matter last year, I think there's been a lot of focus over the last few years on setting up panels and saying, 'We've got this diversity problem, what should we do about it?' And people just talk and talk and talk but it's the doing that

matters. We know that people who tend to be at the top of organisations are much more likely to believe in meritocracy and the idea that if you work hard enough, you'll make it. And then those at the bottom, you probably have faced more structural difficulties. It's complex. I think there's the money to do the work. But also, there's the attitude. And I think, if there was unlimited funds, the thing I would like to focus on at the moment is, if I feel we're doing a good job with our young people, and I want to keep growing that work, but what work could we do with our network that would allow people to try and make change from where they are? I think a lot of people feel stuck even though maybe, actually, they could make a change if they just had a bit of support. You know, even just small HR changes can make a really big difference.

I think we would like to work with more people. I think we would like to have some more guaranteed paid opportunities for young people. So I think we would like to work more with industry in that way. And there are organisations who do similar things to us. I wonder if there will be some kind of working together at some point, but I don't think there's anyone who's as broad as we are and founded in activism like we are.

It would have to be the right partner in terms of their outlook and the way they work, and that often happens so far, but certainly, we are always trying to work collaboratively. And we do that more and more.

There's obviously lots of HR things. And so in journalism, with so much of it being freelance, it's the same problem in TV, where it's freelance, you're more likely to get in for a short contract. That's a very difficult thing to combat, really, because that's systemic. And so thinking about the ways in which they hire, where their pool of people is coming from.

If you do have people who may be from backgrounds that aren't represented currently in your staff, like making sure that they're listened to, making sure that you've got good HR practises in place, and that you pay people, that you give people good wages, and you value the work that people do. And I think there is a kind of attitude sometimes of like, 'Oh, you're so lucky to work in the arts', that you're expected to put up with a lot of bad practice that gets swept under the rug.

To think about if there are any schemes your organisation can be involved in, to think about where you're advertising your roles, to think about how you are training your staff. So, have you made it clear in the culture of your organisation that you value diversity? That could be ethnicity or gender diversity. Or how do you value your staff? And how can you claim to have all of these values, but how do you actually live them without falling on the same excuses. Because I think during the pandemic, there's a feeling sometimes that's like, 'Oh, it's so difficult to change, it's really difficult to change things'. There's definitely been a feeling within the pandemic, that we've had to change things really quickly, because we've had people working from home, things have closed, things have opened; we can do it, but it takes a concerted effort. I guess there's a feeling at the moment I found that everyone is very tired from all of that work, but I would hope that if we can change, let's keep pushing for it, because we obviously can do it when we have to do it. So if people do find these issues important, which a lot of people say they do, let's try and get a group of people together at work, who agree with you and think about what you can do that would make a difference at your organisation. I don't know, lots of different things. From really small things to really big things. And obviously giving money to Arts Emergency is one thing I'd say and mentor with us and give your time and volunteer.

We had one of our mentees do an apprenticeship at Sky in journalism, and the way in which they have supported him over the years seems like best practice. So I wish there were more apprenticeship schemes like that in journalism. There are a few but they are few and far in between of course. But with apprenticeships, you have to come to it at the right time. But I have been really impressed with how they have run that scheme.

Camille Dupont - PressPad

Camille Dupont 0:16

Oh, well, I mean, you can't really have good journalism without thinking about diversity. You're supposed to be reporting on the best stories, but how can you do that if you ignore parts of society, because you have a bias? Everybody has a bias, nobody can just know about everything. And by making sure that we have media that represent society, we actually ensure better reporting. So I think it just makes sense, even with the ethical considerations out of the way.

As you may have read, we are actually two organisations that are PressPad. So we've got the social enterprise and the charitable foundation. On the social enterprise, we're just looking at what actually could be sustainable and self-sustained. It is what we believe is the accommodation side. So supporting people, it's a sort of two-stream system where people who can afford to pay for accommodation, we would like them to pay for it. And people who can't wouldn't have to, because the people who pay and organisations obviously, who would then support us as well, support their interns, but also support us just to stay afloat. People who give money then help the people who can't. So although we would always want good remuneration, and obviously the announcement of an increase of minimum wages is actually quite a good thing. Overall, it still is not enough, so that's one thing. We want to help with the very practical situation of not knowing where to live, but also, the other part of the scheme we have is the mentoring. So it's not mentoring in the sense that you meet every month and you talk about things. It's more like you don't know anyone, your parents don't have friends in the industry and so you meet someone who's going to become your reference point in the industry you can turn to when you don't really know whether something's right or wrong and where you stand. That's really what we want to create. And it's really hard to find if you don't have that set up in an informal outside of work way. So let's say if you're doing the BBC on their scheme, or the Guardian or the Times or whatever, and then we would pair you with someone, hopefully someone you're not working directly with. So you know someone outside and then have a cup of coffee in the morning or the weekend, you can just talk to them about how you're feeling, what you're doing. And then they can say, 'Oh, actually, I think this is right, or no, this is certainly not right, you should definitely not let this slide', or 'you've really enjoyed writing this story, so why don't we work on something together?' Or maybe they know someone. It always starts like this. So it's about creating these connections. And the other side is we are also very aware that not everything can be business. We're not here to make money, but we're here to be self-sustained. And we also know there's a lot of things that will never make money, and that shouldn't really, so that's the bursary side. This is where we got fed up with COVID and all the schemes being stopped. We're still finalising everything. But there are juries that have bursaries and grants given to people through this charitable foundation, for people who may be paid for instance, but have literally no support and can't afford anything. Or, for instance, if you're on a minimum wage, you might be able to pay for your food, for your transport, and for a bit of your rent, but you might not be able to pay for all of it and still be able to maybe go for a beer every once in a while, because that's the reality of living on such low wages in London, or outside of London for that matter. So we want to provide this as well, partly funded through the money we would make. So that would be reinvested in

the charity, and also through donations, and grants that we would be awarded ourselves. But as you know, we've also done PressPad Remote. So we also believe that better training, those more practical things, can really be provided at the right level. Also, nobody needs a degree or should need a degree to be in journalism. That's one of the things you've probably read in the NCTJ's latest reports. I mean, that was shocking.

You know, NCTJ qualification, although not perfect, it's still putting up a lot of doors, and that is not a degree level qualification. So the minimum people should need isn't a degree, but it ends up being this way. Then when you leave your degree, what we've noticed as well is people still don't find jobs, a) because they don't have the connections. Or they were misunderstood or when explained properly what the degree was offering, and the skill that they would need to work in the media. So we're here to also try and work on that. And then the last pillar is also campaigns, which we obviously haven't been able to launch because the charity's been founded for only a few months. So we're working on all of this. But we think that financial support or non-financial training and campaigning are three key elements of what we can propose on the charitable side.

I think if you come from a background with less financial security, financial security is a big thing. And you will be more likely to want to do a job where you're more secure. And what we found as well is a lot of people we've helped with the PressPad remote, for instance, were eligible for free school meals, and they don't know where to start. And if you don't get into a scheme, if you don't get into a graduate scheme or equivalent, regardless of your industry, what do you do? Freelancing isn't necessarily something that everybody can afford, because where can you work and live as a freelancer, when you have no work for a few months, especially when you're beginning and you don't know that you're not being paid right away. You're being paid maybe Saturday, or maybe six a day, or maybe a year later, because they're a really bad payer, and you didn't know about it, or you were really underpaid. So there are different ways to get into journalism. But how do you get yourself in a position where you can use these ways to get into journalism or in the media? In general, regardless of irregular pay and lack of connections, not knowing what is the right thing to say, what to do, how to behave, how to get dressed - you wouldn't dress the same if you managed to land a staff job at the Financial Times as you would for Vice. You wouldn't talk to your editor the same way necessarily, the culture is different. And you don't know any of these things, unless you've got someone to tell you. I worked at the National Student as an editor, which has now closed. But what I noticed is the people who've made it in journalism, and all the way through, not necessarily as staff, but through freelancing, were the ones who either could afford to live with their parents for longer, and not necessarily be in London, or were near enough London that they weren't being passed out on some opportunities. And also, the ones who work extremely hard to the point of burning out. So taking another job, and doing freelancing on the side, is very common as well in journalism. So you work somewhere else, and then you sometimes have time to do freelance, but you don't always do. And it's really hard as well, to understand that that's also not something that's being talked about enough at all, that the big names you see in journalism, most of them have another gig on the side, possibly freelance.

I've heard about two things. Actually, funnily enough, I watched the Society of Editors' free webinar. They do quite a lot of webinars and stuff like that. And I was curious to see what they were doing. And they're like, 'You need to work in your local paper'. There are very few local papers who are independent, a lot of them are through big names, like Reach, just to name one. And it's actually not that easy to get into. A lot of the offices are centralised with freelance workers. So when they were saying, 'Oh, you need to work with your local paper, it really felt like, well, do you know how the industry is now in local papers? There's loads of community, there's loads of projects that exist, but it's actually not as easy as it was before to find the opportunities because they're now published by

whoever is looking after that. The jobs are in, I think it was West Sussex, and I was like, I'm not going to drive two hours to work as a local journalist or to get to Brighton. That's quite a long way. And so you actually have these hubs now, which are a good thing outside of London. But what seems to appear is that it's actually not as easy as it was before to even get into local journalism. Examples that were given went like, 'I wanted to write for my local papers, I'd send them something. And I didn't really know how it worked and then they just kept me on'. One of the good things is now we do have processes in place to increase diversity. But it's also because it's so centralised, because all the papers are being grouped together. Is that actually easier to get into? So it's not actually that easy. Even in local papers, there are some changes, I think, because some of the big players in London are also trying to expand. And also, one of the good things that came out of Covid-19 probably is working from home. And there, you don't necessarily have to be in London all the time. So maybe if you live, I'll say, I'm going to Taunton. And you're from there, and you're in Southwest, and then you actually realise you don't need to be logged in every day, you could just be in London, one day a week or two days a week. Financially it makes more sense for you to get a flat with your friends in Taunton and stay there, or to do that, and then just go into London every few days instead of every day, which financially makes more sense. So yes, it is a complicated issue. But they're all getting more and more opportunities outside of London, which doesn't mean the financial strain is not there, we don't know how the salaries are going to evolve. So we don't know whether people are going to keep London waiting. Not that the money was excellent necessarily or whether you'll get paid less if you come into London. We don't know that yet. And I think it's something we really need to keep in mind as well. So one thing they did, which I do think is really important, is if you do an internship or a two-week internship, you need to leave with the name and the email address of everyone you want to work with, and pitch them stuff within the next month. Because that's sort of how work placements should work. You shouldn't have to get, I don't know how many internships you would do, 3/5/2 week or a six month internship, because that then becomes a problem in itself. Because then you rely on that to get work and you're still not paid much and you'd still not have time to do freelance if that's what you want to do, and you don't get the proper staff work, if that's what you want to do. So I think that's also something we're not really taught anywhere, is leveraging our network, and trying to make the most of the opportunities we are grabbing or given and try and turn that into something helpful for your career. And that's the next step of networking. So you've got to connect, and think about what you do with that. That is really helpful wherever you are.

We're actually trying to work on something at the moment, I can't really say much, but we're trying to work on something, to give people the keys to fitting in better in a way that you know how to navigate all these things. This is one of the things that I think the Kickstart Scheme is not addressing, for instance. We've seen all of these pop up, and the Kickstart Scheme was like, 'oh, yeah, by the end of next year, we'll have had hundreds of people from diverse backgrounds come in', and I'm like, 'Yeah, but where are they going then? What do you do with them? Do they feel like they've learned some things? Do they feel like they belong there? Were these six months helpful to them and for their career? Obviously, we won't get answers on that necessarily from newsrooms directly, or from magazines or from people themselves, because we won't be able to know for a while. But there is really something that I think we should not forget when we hear about all these diversity schemes. We know people feel discouraged, because they didn't necessarily go to the same school or their accent is prominent, or they don't feel like they got the opportunity because of the way they behaved in the newsroom. Like, for instance, they didn't go grab it, or they went for it, but it was interpreted differently because of biases, conscious or unconscious. And so yes, there are problems. And I think some newsrooms hopefully, I want to say most, are starting to become aware of that. Because they're like, 'oh, yeah, we have all these schemes.' And then people will start saying, 'Oh, they leave, they go'. They go freelance, they're still writing. So we'd honestly as readers don't really know. But behind the scenes, you actually

probably see a lot of diverse writers, again, I don't have figures. But it would be really interesting to see the figures of freelancing versus staffing in the media, because from what we've seen and heard, there seems to be something, or maybe it's the loudest who are talking about it, or who've told us, where people that don't sustain staff roles end up being freelance or, as we all know, sometimes, stay trapped into a specific subject that they haven't chosen. So, yeah, there's a lot to explore there as well.

A lot of people who are trying to get into journalism, or online journalism will have another role on the side. And yes, again, we haven't asked these questions. It's just something we've noticed and other people we've talked to for PressPad Remote, or we know that there is actually a lot of diversity in freelancing further along in the career. But I can't say exactly, it just seems like there is a lot of people who want their freedom back, whatever that means. Which would be good for career progression I guess as well, like, you probably get to do more. But obviously, she never told me anything like that, but Sirin Kale, who is a really, really good journalist, is not staff or she wasn't a few months ago at the Guardian, but she left her staff job to then go freelancing. That's just one example where that pops up. But there's quite a lot. Whether that brings more diversity, or not, I don't know. Because again, you need to have really good other regular income on the side, or really good freelancing, really good relationships and networks and commissions to be financially stable and to afford to do freelance journalism. But yeah, if you ask other people and try and see what their take is on that, that would be interesting to know and find out.

(on assimilation and perpetuating the glass ceiling) What we're working on is not for people to deny where they're from, or to not have any impact, I think it is difficult to go in, you can't just go in and erase everything. You will need to work with these people who you may not necessarily have anything in common with apart from your interest in journalism, which should be enough, but not always is, but it's also about if you haven't had a chance to do any work experience, for instance, and this is your first encounter in this world, how do you talk to people? What are the etiquettes of things that aren't necessarily things that have to do with culture, but things that are related to how you do your job well with people. And that is a skill you need to have as a journalist anywhere, or someone who is in the media, but sometimes we don't give you the keys to do that whereas in similar environments you might be given them. So it's more about giving the keys to understand them, the media, the world you live in, and you work in. So that then you can stay in and make the impact. But you don't feel discouraged or you're not being passed out on opportunities because you didn't know and that is something that's really important. Ultimately, you're changing, you evolve in the environment you're in, so I think everybody sort of changes wherever they evolve and they go. But yeah, it is important to change the culture, but it's also important that people stay in to change the culture. You continue to change the culture with the interns. You need people who stay in and contribute and change things. So it is about finding that balance. What do they need to know to feel like they're included and know how it work? And then how will they bring their own selves and their own diverse stories to the media?

It's less about assimilation and it's more about, 'okay, what do you need to learn to make it work?' Like, I moved to this country, I needed to learn the language of the media industry, so that you can then interact with people more?

As a charity, obviously, we can't be partisan. However, that's what the campaign work is in terms of contributing to the debates, and also helping them understand what the specific challenges of the media are. We also help others realise, maybe gaps they have in their programmes or things like that. So this is definitely something that we would like to do. And we do that on a small scale at the moment,

but hopefully, when we can get more funding and have more resources, we'll be able to do that on a bigger scale.

I would say let us in your newsrooms, that is helpful. But that also means I think there's a lot to say about small projects that could have a very big impact. And it's actually really hard to get funding for that. So I don't necessarily say 'we gave you this money, so you need to do this' because that would be consulting. But this is a big issue for all media organisations. Where's the money to solve it? How can they help us understand how they're doing things right now in more detail?

I think to help organisations that are trying to do that, the best thing to do is to open the doors, and then just trust the process. We're not here to take anybody down. That's not what PressPad is here for, it is to lift people up. So don't be scared. And also, I think Arts Emergency would be saying, yes, the funding, so that we actually know where the money needs to go. As organisations that work with people who are beneficiaries or people who need it. I think that's one of the things they probably would have said, as well, but online stuff is great for people who know where to find them. And we are finding that it will be good to go back to face to face, because if you go to people, you will have more impact, it's just cheaper to do it online. It will help giving money for like two, three people is not going to help drum up drastic change in the industry, you need to help more people to be able to make a big change, and people to stop self-censure to go in the industry in the first place. So I mean, there's probably a lot more to say, but from the top of my head, that would be the two main things.

I wasn't really involved in the list of mentors before, so I can't really tell you whether they're long standing or just interested for the next round, and the next stage of PressPad, but we do know some people have reached out and said, 'I want to give back so I want to be merged with people who are from the highlands, so people who are similar to me - I want to help them because I know how hard it was to get in. And with a lot of journalists or just media professionals, if you reached out to them and you explained 'I followed you and I know we come from the same area', a lot of them I think even without us would help. Because you want to help your peers, especially if you know how hard you worked. Another thing we've noticed is there's a lot of people who give back, because they were given to in the first place, or they really struggled and didn't get the help. And they're like, 'I know how hard it was to get here, I want to make it easier for the next ones'. I think it's a really good thing to do. But it can't just be people who have struggled who should help, because that's also adding another layer of issues in terms of time, in terms of so many things. But it needs to be valued as something important and essential to journalism and to the media, that taking part in a scheme like this, or helping people, giving back, like what Olivia did, who comes from a family that was very supportive, and so on. She was like 'I struggled to get in for this reason, but I want to give back to all these people by setting this up'. And we need more people like her to do that. Because until giving back is really valued and is not seen as something that is done on the side to maybe look good for a bit, and then you just let it slide, we will make complete changes. And that will come from also working with newsrooms and magazines, just big actors in the media, because they will see the value against it, you know, or promotions or for career progression in general. And that giving back is a big part of journalism in the media, because you work with different people.

A lot of initiatives are in a very difficult funding situation, everyone is in the same boat at the moment. And because journalism is such a broad issue, international, and it's not specific to a community, it's to help society at large. It is not necessarily something that is easy to fund, because it has less tangible impact, it's more long-term. That's also why Arts Emergency mentioned the money because it is really important that we understand the issues faced by the big actors in the industry, the press obviously doesn't necessarily have that much money or is struggling to keep it, but there is money. Some people

have power to help, whether it's in government or whether it's in the media in general. The help doesn't necessarily need to be just money, but can be practical help, or making it easier for us to turn to certain issues so that we can solve them better and don't have to fight to get information or these sorts of things.

I'm doing Distance Learning NCTJ. And there's a lot of people who really struggle with that because of the lack of support you get. So although it's meant to be helping diversify entrance in journalism, it is very discouraging. I mean, I'm okay. It is hard, but I'm okay. But I've been added by random people I met on a Facebook chat. And actually, a lot of them are thinking about quitting because they don't get enough support. So it was a difficult situation, unless you have parents to help out. But I couldn't afford to. When the National Student closed down, that's when I took NCTJ, because I wanted to stay in something I really struggled to get into. But I wanted the qualification to be taken more seriously. And so when I looked it up, I was like, well, this is the cheapest option, I could probably pull it through. But you get no help to find your placement, which you have to complete to get your NCTJ qualification. You could do one of the big NCTJ courses and so on, the faster ones, but that's still quite a few weeks with no work that you need to be able to financially get through. Also, if you're a British citizen, that may not be something that you can do because you can't have a no-status situation, because you don't have the means officially for the home office to do that. So there's so many issues there. And also, quite a few distance learners I've briefly talked to were actually students, well, graduates, who realised they needed NCTJ for the work they wanted to do but didn't know they needed until they applied for jobs. And so they went into uni, they went for the local university journalism course, but that didn't necessarily have NCTJ qualifications attached to it. So there's also quite a lot of things there that are not helping diversity because it means more money being spent on qualifications, which you don't necessarily need, especially if you're freelancing. But if you want to work as a staffer and you want to work in reporting society or lifestyle, fashion. I think the diversity bucket needs to be looked at as well in that way. And yeah, the NCTJ qualification is a good thing to have. It's not always something that everybody can afford once you've actually looked at the practicalities of it. I know you can also do your evening courses and I've got a friend who's done it and it really helped her to do that in the evening after work to help her finance it. So yeah, there's a lot there to unpack.

You can have a scheme where you get to be an apprentice. But again, look at a change of career. You can't change your career if you can't afford to do that. So few people have done it. (Brings up example of editor of The Face who used to be a lawyer)

If you go to uni to be a lawyer, you study law. And then you sort of know what your path is. Journalism is so much more opaque. How do you get there? There's so many different ways you could get into other professions that are so much easier to figure out. But not in journalism.

Hilly Janes - Women in Journalism

Hilly 0:04

I think what's particularly important for journalism and for the media in general, is that if you think of the media as being a mirror that reflects us back at ourselves as the mirror to society, then it needs to be reflecting everybody in society. And given that women are half of who we are, more or less, it's important for the industry that it's reflecting, I mean, not just from an ethical point of view or political point of view, but it's also a kind of commercial argument as well. Because if you're not reflecting and including the voices of women, you're arguably reducing your chances of selling them your content. You're missing some of your target market, really your

possible target market. So, as well as the social considerations that I think are very important, commercial ones are as well. In my career, that's grown as women have become more and more financially independent, breadwinners often responsible now for very big purchases, like houses, white goods, washing machines, things that you used at home technology, computers, school fees, the family car, they probably have a lot of say in holidays, you know, a lot of women are now important players as consumers in a way that say, my mother's generation weren't really, because they didn't have the income.

I was in the industry for 30 years. I think when I started out, it was very much so that my bosses would have been white, male, often Oxbridge educated and because I always worked on papers, like the Times or the Independent, when it was a big broadsheet newspaper, or the Guardian, often you would be the only woman in the room in editorial conferences in those sort of decision making situations. I remember somebody wrote a piece for me once about, because I was always an editor really more than a writer, she wrote a piece about being in the first intake of girls to an all male public school in this country, going into the sixth form when the sixth form started letting girls in. And in the title she described it as being a lone banana in a cage of monkeys. And I thought that was a bit, well, it felt like it was such a good way of sort of summing it up, that you were going to be sort of pounced on, demolished. So yeah, I mean, that has changed a lot, I think. But from what I hear it has started going backwards a little bit in lots of ways, which is a bit worrying. Because there was a huge expansion in the 90s, I guess, when we had Tony Blair, and all those Labour governments here in this country for a long time. And they hadn't been in power for a very long time, and things like education and health became very important on the political agenda in a way that they had never been. Things like what was happening to the NHS, or what was happening in schools being a kind of game changer in an election. That had never really happened before. And I think that's partly because those are traditionally things that women look after, and women worry about, whether it's the kids going to school, and making sure everybody's going to the doctor or getting vaccinations, whatever it is. They became politically very important in terms of winning elections. And that meant that the sort of media reflected that a lot more. There was a lot more reporting of those kinds of issues. And that meant that more women were being recruited because they were the women maybe who were covering those subjects or knew about them. And then I mean, again, there was a whole sort of political thing about the unions in this country, which had a very big stranglehold on the whole production of newspapers. I don't know if you've done anything about that in the course, but they absolutely dominated how many papers could be printed, what time they could be printed, how many staff there were, the printing presses, that kind of thing. And that was all completely overthrown in the late 80s by Rupert Murdoch, who just sort of took that power away from them. But it did mean that there was a huge expansion then. Because it was the owners and the journalists who decided how big the issues were going to be. And what time newspapers would go to press, and all that kind of thing. So there was a huge expansion. And a lot of that was within areas like lifestyle, fashion, health, you know, women's areas. So that created a lot of jobs, actually, and a lot of work for me and myself included, I was very lucky it was sort of the right time, right place, right skill set.

So you think that unions not having a stranglehold, as you say, on the industry was a positive thing for women who wanted to get into the journalism industry? Am I interpreting that right?

Yes, it was interesting. I think it was probably positive. I mean, it was bad for the printers. And the people who were in those traditional unions, it was terrible for them. But things like the Times

newspaper on a Saturday before that huge change was about 24 pages. That was all the whole newspaper was. If you go out and buy the Times now on a Saturday, it's huge. It's got five sections and a magazine, maybe two magazines sometimes. And that sort of scale, and amount of content wasn't possible because the unions wouldn't have agreed to print it.

But was there a reason as to why they didn't want a bigger newspaper? I'm really curious now.

Well, I'm not sure.

It's to make sure that women are fairly represented in the industry, not just the way they're written about or portrayed, but also to make sure that they are able to climb up the career ladder and get the same opportunities as men, once they're in the industry. Probably what you've noticed on your course is that there are more women than men on most journalism degrees. And journalism is now very much a graduate level profession. Most journalists, young journalists, are graduates. I don't know if you've gone on the website, we've done quite a bit of research in the past into this kind of thing. It's not really academic research in the sense that you'd get a first year MA kind of thing. It's more like content analysis, really. And we've done two exercises at different periods, where we looked at the things like the number of female bylines on the front page of newspapers every day for a week. And the kind of images as well, or the kinds of stories about women and found things like, you know, there are far fewer front page stories written by women. Women are used far less as expert voices as quotes. And that very often they're portrayed as victims, or they are sort of evil temptresses or they are members of the royal family or something, or celebrities. You sort of know that instinctively, but sitting down and actually counting every newspaper every day for seven weeks really gave that some evidence. And then we went back and we did that exercise again, about three or four years later and found that very little had changed. And then, because the organisation's got some very good contacts and people working all over the place, we did a kind of audit of desk heads. in newsrooms, particularly for sports editors, home news editors, foreign editors, because they're the people with the real power. And they're the ones who are going to edit the newspaper. You're not going to be a newspaper editor unless you've done a big news job probably in this country. And we found that most of them were men as well. So they're the people who were doing the hiring. And they're also the people who were deciding the content of what's going on. So that research is all there, you can have a look at it. And then I think having investigated this for half the population, and I think because of all the Black Lives Matter stuff last year, we decided we would start doing the same kind of investigation into Black people and people of colour. And that was the same thing as with women, much worse actually, especially in terms of black women. So I think the kind of problems that people from ethnic minorities face are very similar to the kind of ones that are faced by women, you know. And the way that you can sort of try and fight those battles is by knowing there's a lot in common with them, really. So that's made us much more conscious as an organisation of people. There's quite a big committee. Most of them, nearly everybody's a volunteer on that committee, myself included. I mean, I get a tiny amount of money every month, but it's not paid work in that sense. So making sure that we have more people of colour on the committee, we do a lot of panel events. And we try to make sure that if it's a panel of women, say with four people or five people, that there's always at least one woman of colour on that panel. We do some quite big showbiz-y events in conversation with really hot, very high profile female journalists. And we're trying to include more women of colour in that, because that's just a one to one, you know, so we've had people like Laura Kuennsberg. And what's her name Mishal Husain from the BBC, Katharine Viner, the

editor of The Guardian. But actually, what's interesting is that it's quite hard to find women of colour in those very senior roles, because they haven't been in the pipeline. They haven't been coming up in the ranks behind to get into those positions of power, because that's really important: That pipelining thing that women are not just being recruited, but they are staying there. Or if they drop out, usually, for some kind of caring responsibility, might be children, increasingly, it's elderly parents, that they don't fall off the ladder completely, that there are ways for them to get back in again. So those are all the kinds of things we campaign for. We can campaign for them, but we also do a lot of panel events and seminars, which are really sort of trying to empower women individually to try and make those changes themselves, so they don't lose confidence, they don't drop out. We have a big mentoring scheme as well, which, again, is to help women, whatever stage of their career they're at, to get promoted, to stay there, not to lose their confidence, to get back in if they've dropped out. We did an event last week, that was for very senior women about being a media leader: What does it actually take to be really, really at the top? And that was really interesting, because there were some very, very senior women there. It was really interesting hearing about the challenges they face and how they've overcome them and how even though some of them are running huge teams of people, are editing newspapers, they're all making notes about the things that each other said, thinking, 'Oh, that's a really good idea'. One of them, Cristina Nicolotti Squires, Head of Content at Sky News got 350 people working for her there. And teenage children, which during lockdown has been so hard to do both. And she was saying she now has half an hour every day in her diary, which is called 'Do Not Disturb' and it's just half an hour where she might go for a walk, she might just potter around the office, she might just sort of stop and think and have a cup of coffee - but she's made those slots in her day where nobody's allowed to phone her, call her, email her. Her PA presumably will protect her, but it's little things and you can see them all writing thinking 'That's a really good idea, you know, I'm going to do that'. So it's both that real personal aspect of women helping each other on a personal level and also then on a much more kind of meta level.

It's interesting, because running that mentoring scheme and having run the events team at which for a long time now, there are definite categories of reasons why people apply and want to mentor. So at the very early stages of people's career, it's maybe that they're in a very masculine environment, they're young women, perhaps you've only been in the industry one or two years. And they've been kind of lucky enough or good enough to get maybe a really good job or to be in a big newsroom, but they feel very overwhelmed by it, they're not very confident. They can't see anybody there who might be a mentor for them, even informally inside the office. Maybe they're working for a lot of older men. There's a great phrase, it's 'you can't be who you can't see'. And it's one reason why people, particularly from non-white male backgrounds, don't progress up the career ladder or don't want to, because they can't see anybody there that sort of looks like them or feels like them. So that's why it's about role models, really seeing somebody doing a job and thinking, 'wow, you know, I'd really like to do that', you know, 'she's really cool, or he's really cool. That's something I could see myself doing'. And if you can't quite see yourself in that role, I think it holds people back. Quite a lot of it is to do with not having contacts and not networking and thinking that's this sort of horrible, scary thing. That it's about going to events full of people you don't know, drinking horrible white wine, and sticking your business card under somebody's nose, which isn't to me what networking is about at all, really. So again, I think something like Women in Journalism, the idea is that it provides a very welcoming, friendly space for that. So just about this month we're doing our first in-person event of two years really, or 18 months. I mean, it'd be interesting to see how that works. But you know, people always say it's very friendly,

people are very welcoming, they chat to you, they're helpful. So that's important. Then it's usually the whole thing of babies, families, going on maternity leave, everything from not knowing what your rights are, to not really negotiating very well perhaps when you come back. I mean, negotiating is a big problem, asking for more money is a big problem. Women just don't seem to like doing it very much. They feel they're being pushy, and sort of saying they deserve a lot better than what they're getting. And there's that whole imposter syndrome thing there of 'I shouldn't really get this promotion or ask for that because I'm not really worth it'. But what's interesting, I think, is that all women feel like that, even if they're at the very top of the profession. A lot of women have this sort of imposter syndrome problem.

So that's all about practical ways of empowering women and encouraging them to speak up and be competent and speak in public and so on. Or very practical things like how to negotiate with somebody, how to actually step by step. So if you're only offered that, if you feel like a freelancer or something, and you're offered X for doing why you think, 'bloody hell, that's gonna take me a week', you know, and why isn't enough money? And say, well, I don't think I could do it for Y but what I could do, rather than doing it and then working your balls off and being exhausted, and then you getting sort of 200 pounds, or something is saying, 'Well, I don't think I could do that for 200 pounds, but what I could do for 200 pounds is this'. I mean, really properly learning to negotiate or just understanding that you can negotiate your way down from the very high figure. But you can't negotiate your way up from a low one, if that's where you've started. You can say 'I want 2000 pounds and end up getting 1000'. But if you say 500 in the first place, you're never going to get 1000. So, you know, there's a lot of really practical skills there that you can literally teach people, I think.

You can't make sure they reach you. But I mean, it has been one of the positive things about COVID, that because so many events are online, you know, anybody could come. And that's been a real benefit. And one of the things that's been just very helpful to us is that Alison Phillips, who is the chair of WIJ at the moment, she's editor of the Daily Mirror, and she's a really lovely person, I'm doing an 'In conversation' with her on Wednesday at LCC, but the Daily Mirror was part of Reach PLC and Reach has a huge number of local papers and online sites. So she's been very keen herself on pushing this. We've got to reach out to the regions and when we were sort of very much a London based events organisation that was hard to do. But now it is easier. And we will for example launch the next mentoring scheme later this month if I get my act together. I will make a point of saying the meetings can be online, however you want to do them, it's nice to meet face to face. And we've got the editor of the Yorkshire Post now on the committee as well. And she works for JPIMedia, which is another big local media group. We are just planning next year to try and do a couple of live events in Leeds rather than in London, and we did a big event in Scotland recently as well with a sister organisation. COVID has sort of given everybody no excuse, you know, for not either reaching out or for coming.

One of the things that helps women hugely when they have children, or parents when they have children is if they can work from home a bit or have flexible hours. And that's been such a battle for such a long time. Because I think a lot of blokes in charge would have thought if you're working from home, you're skiving. And I think a lot of them have probably traditionally had wives who were at home. Getting the kids to school, cooking the dinner, making sure that sort of family stuff was happening. And they didn't really want to be part of that, they didn't want it, they want to be at home because they don't get roped into it, honestly. And I think what COVID has shown men is

that you can work from home. Allison was editing the Daily Mirror from a bedroom at home for over a year. And it could be done, I think a big Penny has dropped. But unfortunately, it's taken a horrible pandemic to get people to understand it.

Well, given that it's a graduate profession, that for a start in this country, they may not want to take out a student loan, they may come from families where people don't really engage with the media, they don't know what journalism is, or that they're a bit suspicious of it, they don't wake up in the morning and listen to the Today program or subscribe to The Guardian, or whatever it is. And then again, I think the whole idea of networking and contacts, that can be very difficult for them, they don't come from those kinds of backgrounds. And although there's a lot of clamping down now on just handing out work experience, and internships to your friends, children, which was how it worked in the past, that's getting cleaned up a lot on a more fair level. Again, it's like, you can't be who you can't see: You've never met any journalists, or sort of encountered them and will know what they do then. And there's very little in schools to tell children in this country about what the media is and how you would work in it. There's a job there for the industry. A lot of and especially because the industry has been commercially difficult now for the last few years because of online and because of news for free, because the money will go to Google and Facebook, you don't want to be a journalist, there's no money in that. You won't get a proper job. I was discouraged by my parents, however long ago that was. And very often children, especially from Asian migrant families, their parents want them to be doctors and lawyers and pharmacists, and uptown, you know, they're pushed very firmly in a particular direction by them. They're wonderfully aspiring parents, who see education as the key to social mobility, but only into particular professions that are very secure and respectable.

I think women are more willing to help each other, they're more willing to help each other on a more emotional level as well. You know, to listen and understand and hear when people are having problems or feel that I can have confidence. I mean, it's a brutal industry, people lose their jobs, and they get made redundant. That's another reason why they get knocked off the career ladder. But you know, that's what happens. That happens a lot, to me, certainly. I can't remember who it was but years ago, someone said to me you're not a proper journalist before you've been sacked, made redundant, and walked out. 'Oh, God', I thought 'well, that's actually happened to me'. It's a tough old business. It's not a business for super shy, retiring people who don't like being with other people.

One of them would be the whole issue of funding at universities in this country, which is a complete mess. If you're putting off people from lower socio economic backgrounds from going to university, because they're afraid of the student loan, there's something very wrong with that. I think also in terms of education, the whole business of having school children understand the importance of good journalism and why we need it, I mean, good journalism, accurate reporting, speaking truth to power, all that kind of stuff. Investigation. I think that would help.