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The Return Of The Public: Democracy, Power And The Case For Media Reform



Synopsis

Under the incurious gaze of the major media, the political establishment and the financial sector have become increasingly deceitful and dangerous in recent years. At the same time, journalists at Rupert Murdoch's News International and elsewhere have been breaking the law on an industrial scale. Now we are expected to stay quiet while those who presided over the shambles judge their own conduct. In *The Return of the Public*, Dan Hind argues for reform of the media as a necessary prelude to wider social transformation. A former commissioning editor, Hind urges us to focus on the powers of the media to instigate investigations and to publicize the results, powers that editors and owners are desperate to keep from general deliberation. Hind describes a programme of reform that is modest, simple and informed by years of experience. It is a programme that much of the media cannot bring themselves even to acknowledge, precisely because it threatens their private power. It is time the public had their say.

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Verso; 1 edition (May 22, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1844678636

ISBN-13: 978-1844678631

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.8 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,150,076 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #698 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Elections & Political Process > Political Advocacy](#) #1707 in [Books > Textbooks > Communication & Journalism > Media Studies](#) #1764 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Elections & Political Process > General](#)

Customer Reviews

Dan Hind's position is straightforward: actually existing democracy, particularly in the neo-liberal era, is crippled by the lack of opportunity for an informed Public to emerge and take an active role in social, political and economic policy. The current dispensation in the world of the media has been remarkably deficient in delivering the facts about the contemporary world to Public notice. The content of the modern media is for the most part a diet of celebrity slop, lifestyle trivia, mendacious advertisements, regurgitated PR releases, in short a plethora of pointlessness. Bad enough one

might think, until one considers the treatment given to important issues in the social, political and economic spheres. Here Hind makes the salient point that a media that in large part connived with the Invasion of Iraq in 2003; has provided a more or less congenial climate for thirty odd years of neo-liberal political economy and signally failed to spot the 2007-8 Financial crisis coming; signally "forgot" that the ongoing economic crisis originated in the private sector and, with a unity that would impress the North Korean dictatorship, declared it to be a problem of government spending and debt (see Kushner & Kushner's Who Needs the Cuts?: Myths of the Economic Crisis); and finally act as cheerleaders for the coalitions assault on the remnants of Britain's monument to a civilised society: the post-1945 Welfare State, has ill served the British Public. The reasons for these failings are structural. In brief - large corporations control the majority of the media, and the media reflects the interests of the owners.

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