

The Politico-Media Complex

The alliances forged between politics and media

In political science, the sordid relationship between politics and the media industry is intertwined to a point where it can manipulate people to comport themselves in ways that enable governments to implement agenda with the consent of the electorate which they otherwise would find challenging to introduce. The relationship between a state's political and ruling classes, its media interests, its interactions and dependencies with corporations, agencies and advocacy groups, its collusion with lobbyists, its means of law enforcement, et cetera is a term collectively coined the Politico-Media Complex.

Amanda Jane Dowler, a 13-year old English schoolgirl, was found abducted, in 2002, and subsequently murdered. Almost a decade later, in 2011, a phone hacking scandal erupted after it had been leaked that Rupert Murdoch's News of the World newspaper tapped into Dowler's voicemail when she was reported missing. An act of malpractice of such magnitude prompted Prime Minister David Cameron and his deputy to launch a public enquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the British press. The enquiry was chaired by Lord Justice Sir Brian Henry Leveson, and lasted a total of 16 months. The conclusions reached in the report demonstrated that phone hacking appeared to be far more widespread than had been previously admitted. It also raised questions as to why politicians, the police force, and, the Press Complaints Commission had failed to thoroughly investigate the News of the World case when the first allegations surfaced as per an investigation conducted by the Guardian newspaper in July 2009. Critics of the parent company News Corporation have argued that its clout was so immense that ministers, chief constables and regulators were unable to stand up to Rupert Murdoch. The dynamics of the triumvirate consisting of the press, the politicians and the police are covered in a diagram called the Leveson Love Triangle: *'favours and reciprocities of the politico-media complex'* as depicted by the Media Policy Project of the LSE.

