

As Tabloids Lose Their Right To Lie

Those who read my article on “The Selective Media” will already be well aware of my views of the cowardly behaviour of the English tabloids. Papers such as the Sun, the Mirror, the Daily Mail and the News of the World have time upon time shown no respect for facts or for their responsibilities to enlighten the public.

Today, Formula 1 boss Max Mosley won £60 000 from the News of the World after a judge ruled their allegations of an orgy Mosley admitted to have taken part in was found not to contain Nazi undertones like the “news” paper claimed. Four of the five girls that participated in the orgy with the son of the famous fascist leader Sir Oswald Mosley testified to the advantage of Mosley, whilst the fifth girl did not testify due to the mental anguish she was suffering under. The dominatrix who was to serve as a witness for the legal team of the tabloid paper was the only person involved who claimed that Max Mosley had ordered a Third Reich theme for his orgy. Ironically the legal team of the newspaper that at no point as a published tabloid show any concern for the privacy, mental health or lives of the people they print interestingly written fairy tales about decided against bringing their *only* witness to the stand because of concerns for her mental health. Of course without the testimony of the woman who was paid by the News of the World to provide the paper with film and photo evidence of the session Mosley participated in with five women, the News of the World was never going to win the case. This of course raises the question, was the lawyers of the tabloid indeed concerned about the woman’s health, or were they more concerned with the damage it would do to their employer if the woman was found to be inconsistent in her testimony. One thing is losing a case on the lack of evidence for your claims, it’s quite another, and quite a lot more damaging to lose it on your actual evidence being unraveled.

I have no opinion on whether or not justice was served today; I never watched the tape of Mosley and the women. I never heard them speak and got to translate what they uttered in German to make my mind up if it was related to Nazism or if what the girls testified was true. I think the only way that you could probably know the truth was if you were present, and sadly lie detector results are not passable as court room evidence due to not being a hundred percent reliable. What I am interested in is if this slap on the wrist could actually be the beginning of the change of tabloid publications in England.

Colin Myler, the editor of the News of the World had prepared a statement that he read outside the court, defending his paper’s reporting. He claimed the judgment was further evidence of “creeping laws of privacy” and went on to express his concern about the English press’ freedom after “another judgment based on privacy laws emanating from Europe.” The News of the World name alone claims they are a publication that promises news, news of the world even, yet their biggest concern is that a courtroom may find it a breach of someone’s privacy to print and publish videos of someone’s extramarital sex life. If Max Mosley was guilty of taking part in a “sick Nazi orgy” as claimed by the News of the World, surely there would be enough evidence in what the News of the

World possessed after paying their missing witness, as it stand the newspaper has attempted to destroy the lives of a man, based on the tell tales of a woman who took money to film and participated in a S&M inspired orgy.

Max Mosley, guilty or innocent makes an easy victim because of his wrongdoing for participating in the orgy despite being married. He is also the unfortunate son of a famous 1930s fascist leader, that alone is enough for a paper of the credibility of the News of the World to print something that affect the lives of not just Mosley himself, but his wife and family.

Myler went on to complain about the lack of discussion surrounding the privacy laws and the fact that judges were therefore left to try and interpret the laws themselves. He claimed that this was the reason "the News of the World will remain committed to fighting for its reader's right to know." Which I personally think is very responsibly of them. After all, what is more important than to know the alleged sexual escapades of the rich and the famous?

The newspaper goes on to say that the court acknowledged that the newspaper believed that what they published at the time was the truth. Myler further reading from his prepared statement that; "The newspaper believed that what it published on March 30, 2008 was legitimate and lawful and, moreover, that publication was justified by the public interest in exposing Mr. Mosley's serious impropriety."

The £60 000 in damaged that was awarded to Mr. Mosley is believed to be a record paid out in a privacy case in later times, but it was not the first payment made nor will it be the last.

Certain members of the media has no interest in their responsibility in delivering news to the public, certain "journalist" write articles based on hear say, make belief and what their well paid secret sources claim. Of course those who read these articles, who believe every word and continue to buy these publications based on sensational headlines which are often proved to include "fact" not based on proof or be downright lies, are as much to blame as the newspapers themselves. The public has the right to know if there are stories about public figures that are important for us to know of, we do not have a right to be voyeurs of people's sex lives. We do not have the right to print lies because we chose to believe sources that on several occasions have been proved to be wrong. We do NOT have the right to ruin lives because a story about someone's affair will sell more newspapers than actual factual news.

If the News of the World and their partners in crime are concerned about the growing right to a privacy that people seem to be acquiring, perhaps they should start publishing their papers with the headlines of "what you read in this paper is not based on any actual event or the lives of real people." If you want to print fiction, admit to the fact before doing so. The News of the World may have escaped with just a slap on the wrist, although it must sting the company's wallet. There is no freedom of the press if the press does not obey by the rules of writing the truth. By lying, printing untruths, spying on

private person, paying people to be unreliable sources, these papers are begging to be punished. Hopefully this is only the beginning as the tabloids lose their right to lie.