
CONFIDENTIAL AND PRIVILEGED

Witness name: Tony Gallagher
Dated: 12 July 2012
Filed in response to a notice dated 5 July 2012

The Leveson Inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press

**WITNESS STATEMENT OF TONY GALLAGHER
EDITOR, THE DAILY TELEGRAPH
12 July 2012**

I, Tony Gallagher, of 111 Buckingham Palace Road, London W1W 0DT will say as follows:

1. I make this witness statement in response to the Leveson Inquiry's notice dated 5 July 2012. I made an earlier statement on 14 October 2011 and gave oral evidence to the Inquiry on 10 January 2012. I made a further statement on the Hunt/Black plan on 10 July 2012.

(1) Who you are and your current job title.

2. I am the editor of the Daily Telegraph and have been since 2009. A brief summary of my career history is set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 of my first statement.

(2) Your publication contained the article below, under the headline given. Please provide your comments on the article particularly, but not limited to, explaining why the story was chosen for publication; why the contents of the article were considered appropriate; and how you consider the article complies with the Editors' Code of Practice.

'Cat ladies' more likely to commit suicide, scientists claim (2 July 2012)

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The article reported the findings of a recent University of Maryland School of Medicine study into Toxoplasma gondii anti-bodies under the headline: "Cat ladies' are more likely to commit suicide".

The article is based on the findings of a study of 45,000 Danish women which used blood tests from newborns to determine if antibodies were present in the mother at birth. The study showed that those women with Toxoplasma gondii antibodies had an increased risk of killing themselves later in life. The study did not demonstrate a causal link nor determine that woman with cats were in any way more likely to commit suicide, rather it demonstrated a possible predictive association between a common infection which can be caused by exposure to cat faeces and an increased risk of suicide which, though established by a study using women, is not necessarily restricted by gender.

Although the findings of the study were accurately reported in the body of the article, that factual reporting is at odds with the number of references to cats, the headline, and the introductory text which reads:

"Women who own cats are more likely to have mental health problems and commit suicide because they can be infected by a common parasite that can be caught from cat litter, a study has found."

3. Whilst I note no discourtesy is intended, allow me to register my surprise at the service of a Rule 21 Notice. I would have happily responded voluntarily without a contempt of court threat.
4. The article referred to in the Notice was published on the Telegraph website. The Notice does not refer to an article which was carried in the print version of The Daily Telegraph. I attach a copy of the article published in the newspaper (exhibit TG1).
5. The articles were based on a scientific study published in an obscure academic journal which is likely to be read by very few people. The study

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highlighted potentially serious public health implications, particularly for pregnant women and other vulnerable people, such as those with weakened immune systems. For that reason, we considered it important to report this matter to our readers.

6. As is the normal editorial process, the story was first spotted on the agency wires on July 2 by a member of the news desk (the home and foreign desk are often sifting through 3,000 or more stories in a 24 hour spell before selecting articles for publication). He drew it to the attention of the news editor who, believing it would interest the readers, drew it to my attention at news conference.
7. After some consideration, I decided it should appear in the paper in what became a page of human interest stories with pets as a common theme.
8. The website editor, present at news conference and, knowing it was going in the paper, decided it would merit space on the web and accordingly it was published later that day.
9. I note that the Inquiry accepts that "*the findings of the study were accurately reported in the body of the [website] article*". Telegraph readers can be taken to read entire articles and to understand the text in context, including caveats and the limits of the scientific data in the study.
10. It is the nature of publishing that a choice has to be made about how to present information. Arguably, the website headline could have better reflected what was in the body of the piece but the aim of headlines is to interest readers and draw them into the story. Other publishers took a similar approach including ABC News, Fox News, The Toronto Globe and Mail, The Times of India and The Daily Mail (examples attached – exhibit TG2).
11. It is the nature of publishing online, though, that readers can comment upon articles which have been published and engage in a debate and discussion.

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A number of readers did so. Some took issue with the headline and how the study was reported by us, others did not. Many readers who came to the article would also have read the comments. Some, with an interest in the subject, would have seen, at the end of the article, that it said that "*the findings were published online in the Archives of General Psychiatry*" and could have read the study itself, something they would have been unlikely to have done had it not been reported in the press.

12. At the *Telegraph* we take seriously our obligation to report with accuracy outlined at clause 1 of the Editor's Code. I and others have made that point in evidence. As many as 150 articles a day can appear in the print edition of The Daily Telegraph; often, more than 400 a day are posted online.

13. The articles, online and in print, have not been the subject of a single complaint. If the Leveson Inquiry or anyone else wishes to complain about the story, we will consider removing it from the website.

14. Finally, as an aid to understanding how an integrated multi-media newsroom operates, I would be delighted to host representatives of the Leveson Inquiry if this would help in any way.

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.



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Tony Gallagher

12 July 2012