

# Speed is the essence of new media says commentariat commentator Julia Hobsbawm

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[Julia Hobsbawm, the Chief Executive of Editorial Intelligence](#) claims speed is the essence of new media in the last of this year's Polis media leadership dialogues. This report by Molly Kaplan.

[hobsbawm.jpg](#)

Twitter brought up-to-the-minute news of Mumbai to the world. A row boat brought word of Abraham Lincoln's assassination to Britain. "Speed is the essence" of the media revolution since the days of Lincoln according to Julia Hobsbawm, Chief Executive of Editorial Intelligence and author of *Where the Truth Lies*. To close the Polis Media Leadership Dialogue Series, Hobsbawm said, "It's not the medium but the speed of transmission." The over-caffeinated, high speed expectations of media consumers has created a new information cycle. The news happens and rather than the ocean steamer to row boat to reporter chain of 1865, the networked journalists file reports, the trained journalists absorb the reports, and the comments cycle begins.

It is the comments cycle which has occupied Hobsbawm's attention. Her website Editorial Intelligence processes those comments and sends the site's paying subscribers morning reports on the opinions of the day. In a saturated media space, Hobsbawm uses the online posts of the celebrity "commentariat" to synthesize the most pressing news and opinion of the day. In a saturated media space, the reflections of Arianna Huffington, Robert Peston, and Polly Toynbee highlight the most influential trends of the day. People connect to commentary; it is emotional, relatable, conversational.

Editorial Intelligence's mandate is not only to weed out the pressing news of the day. It is meant to ally journalists with PR professionals. Hobsbawm acknowledged that journalists often view PR with antagonistic skepticism, but the two worlds are linked according to Hobsbawm. "We're all in it together." She made no apologies for PR practice. The point is that the two worlds depend on one another; Editorial Intelligence makes that link transparent. It "purifies to the essence what you need to know."

In a world that now requires a purification of information, Hobsbawm predicted certain trends shaping the transmission and absorption of news. Where news is weighted in editorial blogs, the nano-second and second hand gain dominance. Forget fastidious fact-checking. Rumor and gossip will prevail. Next, "conversation will be king." "It's not about content; it's the conversation about content." Hobsbawm concluded that niche markets will prevail. Chris Anderson's "long tail" of Amazon and Netflix will succeed as the commercially defunct mainstream new media continue to struggle.



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