

Putting the politics back into popular TV news

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As any fool knows the news media is going down-market and ignoring the big issues facing the world like global warming. And commercial TV news is the worst of all. True? er.. no false. That at least seems to be the case with this week's ITV News season on climate change, [The Big Melt](#). Last night Mark Austin was live from Antarctica presenting the main bulletins. He interviewed the Prime Minister from Downing Street (I know, that's a bit weird, but it worked) and we saw veteran Science Correspondent (and chain-smoker) Lawrence McGinty hanging by a rope *underneath* ice in a giant chasm to illustrate the depth of the ice cap and the way it is melting. And then Austin effortlessly throws to reporter Martin Geisler with a fantastic human interest piece from the Carteret islands where a whole community is having to leave their low-lying Pacific homes because of rising sea-levels. This was breathtaking, beautifully executed campaigning TV news that led their programmes despite competition from the gripping days events at the Woolwich trial of alleged London bombers. Al Gore would have been proud. This was the popular TV equivalent of [An Inconvenient Truth](#) and proof that the mainstream media still has a tremendous amount going for it – all backed up, of course, by ITV's [new media interactive material](#) on the same theme.

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