

Bashing the bloggers

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“The vast majority of blogs are rubbish and don’t have value.” No, that is not the view of some crusty old newspaper editor or disgruntled veteran hack. That is the opinion of the man who is portal director and editor of [Tiscali UK](#), Richard Ayers.

But hang on a minute – we were all told that professional journalists were going to be swept aside by a tide of citizen journalists. The biased, corrupt, lazy, over-paid hacks would be thrown out of the Palace of the Press and replaced by the public talking direct to the public.

But at the weekend’s [Battle of Ideas](#) debate on citizen media it was the Editors who were in confident form. George Brock from the Times and David Schlesinger from Reuters were understandably defensive of the need for proper professional filters of the torrent of information out there. But even the online journalist [Brendan O’Neil](#) felt the bloggers were just whingers:

“Me. me, me journalism is just a culture of complaint. It’s just anti-editorial, do your own thing. Citizen journalists write 5000 words instead of 500 and publish everything regardless of value.”

The one person on the panel who stuck up for the bloggers was net activist Mike Slocombe who founded the fabulously entertaining alternative site [Urgan 75](#). He pointed out that it was his site that first ran a spoof story about squirrels in Brixton on crack cocaine. The [Mirror](#) ran it again, but for real. I suppose that does prove that professionals can be crap, too. But I agree that we still haven’t seen significant evidence of blogs breaking news. POLIS begins its series of seminars on The Future Of News in November – if you are interested contact us at polis@lse.ac.uk

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