

Book Branch News

NUJ Book Branch

www.nujbook.org

May 2009

Diary dates

5 May

Branch meeting
(These are held at
Headland House)

2 June

Branch meeting

7 July

Branch meeting

Those on the email list
will receive agendas in
advance.

Book Branch chapels

A & C Black
BCA (Book Club
Associates)
Faber & Faber*
HarperCollins (London)
LexisNexis
Butterworths*
Lippincott Williams &
Wilkins
Lonely Planet
Macmillan (Oxford)*
Open University (Milton
Keynes)*
Orion*
Penguin/DK*
Random House*
Taylor & Francis Books*
Usborne*

* = recognized

Book Branch News Editorial Team

Sylvia Courtnage, editor
Sylvia Kwan, designer
Mitzi Bales, assistant

BBN Deadline

Please send chapel
news and other items
for the next issue to
editor@nujbook.org by
11 May

May Meeting Invitation

Branch Secretary, Cath Rasbash, explains about the Annual Meeting.

The next Branch meeting is really important
– so please do try and come along.

The NUJ Book Branch Annual General
Meeting (AGM) takes place at our May
meeting, at 6.30pm on Tuesday 5 May.

At the AGM, we elect Branch officers
for the coming year; we scrutinize the
Branch's finances for the year past; we
renew affiliations to other organizations;
and we can make any amendments to the
Branch Standing Orders, which control
how our meetings are run.

How to put forward your ideas

Nominations for Branch officers and
suggestions of organizations the branch
wants to support (affiliate to) can be
presented at any time up till the
appropriate point during the meeting.

Proposed amendments to Standing
Orders have to be circulated two weeks in

advance, along with notice of the AGM.
These had to be submitted by 17 April, to
enable them to be included in the
reminder notification of the AGM.

So far (by 9 April), the Committee has
received notice of one amendment, the
text of which is given below.

“Book Branch agrees to amend its
Standing Orders to reduce the quorum for
Branch meetings to four members.”
Proposer Kyran Connolly.

The AGM is your chance to play an
active role in deciding how the Branch is
run. We look forward to seeing you there.

If you need any more information –
please contact me – or another
committee member.

For Book Branch Committee
Cath Rasbash,
Secretary, NUJ Book Branch

Pay gap explained

Mitzi Bales explains how women slip farther behind as the gender pay gap widens

The 2008 Annual Survey of Hours and
Earnings revealed the disappointing and
startling fact that the pay gap between
men and women has widened. From 17%
in 2007, the gap rose to 17.1% in 2008.
The part-time sector is even worse: here
the gap rose from 35.6% to 36.6%.

On average, full-time male workers
earn £15.54 an hour (excluding overtime)
compared to £12.88 for women. Part-time
women workers earn £9.85 per hour.

This dismal picture is explained in part
by the Office for National Statistics as
being due to “a significant number of
women moving into full-time jobs with low
rates of hourly pay.” In other words,
opportunities for women to get jobs in
higher paying fields are limited.

The Equality and Human Rights
Commission, the government's equality
watchdog, adds a disconcerting
observance saying, that, over the course
of their working lives, full-time women
workers would face an average loss in
earnings of £369,000.

The TUC sharply observes that the pay
gap is even greater in the private sector at
21.7%, pointing out that private
companies are not willing to undertake
checks on pay patterns to ensure fair pay
for women. TUC General Secretary
Brendan Barber said: “The link between
fair pay and checking pay systems is
clear. The case for mandatory pay audits
is stronger than ever.”

BRANCH CONTACTS

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Book Branch Website

www.nujbook.org

Freelance Rates

www.nujbook.org/freelance/
freeln01.shtml

**NUJ Freelance Directory
and Rate for the Job**

www.londonfreelance.org.uk

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Book Branch Minutes

3 March 2009**Random House recruitment drive:**

Temporary posters are on display and new recruits have signed up. New materials are being designed funded by the Branch and MABIC.

Membership: February and March lists were accepted. Biggest chapels are Penguin/DK, closely followed by Lexis Nexis. Random House, Open University and Taylor & Francis and Usborne, came next. 78 members are listed as 'workplace unknown'. If chapels can supply staff lists to the branch, it may be possible to match up some of the names.

THE STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

Sue Harris and Fiona Swarbrick led the discussion. Regional newspapers and magazines had been the first areas of the NUJ to be hit by the recession.

Now it is filtering through to the book sector. It is hard to distinguish whether companies are genuinely facing problems, or are taking advantage of the downturn to impose pay freezes and job cuts to boost profits. As ever, we need to watch out for management errors and stand together. Our arguments are as strong as the members standing behind them.

Pearson: profits up 8%; pay freeze on salaries above £30,000; compulsory redundancies threatened at FT. Chapel fought back, and now all job cuts will be voluntary.

LexisNexis: Worldwide pay freeze, but UK management prepared to negotiate as long as a settlement was reached quickly. Daily meetings achieved a 1% across-the-board rise, plus a lump sum to be consolidated into salary. In addition, agreement was reached to negotiate on a pay scale. Both **Orion** and **T&F** chapels achieved decent pay awards with little need for negotiation, reaping the benefit of management knowing they can't mess with a strong chapel.

Random House is writing off a large chunk of bad debt; Zavvi has gone; Borders is in trouble; DK is exposed to the US market.

UK laws on redundancy are weak from the point of view of the worker,

though this is mitigated by the support of a strong chapel. It is vital to get good information on the company's real financial situation – is it really a question of pay freeze versus job cuts? Frequently the situation is not so extreme.

Cambridge University Press:

company proposes to close down most of its print operation, and severely reduce in-house editorial team, despite its good financial health. Unite is on the case.

Ofsted: ostensibly to reduce office costs, management plan to impose home working on most of the staff.

T&F: in contrast, when the company moved to Abingdon, some editors negotiated that they could work from home to avoid the long commute. The company has now stopped this practice in the interests of greater control and motivation of staff.

Conference report: NUJ Women's

Conference was well attended. A speaker from the Fawcett Society covered women's pay and the gender gap, and issues of demeaning images of women. Max Hyde from Equity spoke on the limitation of opportunities for more mature women in entertainment and media, due to youthful stereotypes. The position is even worse for ethnic minority women.

Policy decision: The following motion was passed: 'Book Branch recognizes the importance of conserving material produced for earlier labour movement and community campaigns and making it available to inspire and inform later generations of activists. It welcomes the formation of a group that aims to carry out this work for the Mike Braybrook Archive of material printed at the Community Action Centre in Notting Hill during the 1970s. Book Branch therefore resolves to donate £300 to the Mike Braybrook Archive (Custodians) Group to assist them with their conservation and information recording activities.' Proposed Cath, seconded Mitzi. Passed.