

## **Can The People survive?**

Latest figures show that The People, formerly The Sunday People, is in free fall, with a circulation now below 800,000

Yet in the 1970s, when Liz Hodgkinson and Shan Davies were young reporters on the same paper in the 1970s and early 80s, the paper sold over five million copies a week.

What was its secret in those days? Why did so many people rush to buy it?

It may have had something to do with us of course, as ever since we left, circulation has been declining fast.

But seriously, we believe that in those days the paper offered something unique, and was a skilful blend of serious investigative journalism, celebrity gossip, big buy-ups and excellent sports coverage. In addition, it was fun to read - and fun to work on.

More than two decades after we left the People, we have met up again, in Worthing, where we now live 400 yards away from each other. We are writing our memoirs about the glory days of the Sunday People, the days when there were just four women in editorial (including ourselves); when the mighty unions held sway, and when, in spite of having to put up with horrendous sexual harassment, we considered ourselves highly lucky and highly privileged to be admitted to this men's club at all. Shan was Fleet

Street's very first female crime reporter, and Liz was successively a fashion writer, showbiz writer and consumer correspondent.

The book is full of nostalgia, hilarious stories and unforgettable personalities. We also ask: did we have a better time then - or are today's young female journalists more fortunate?

We've got the stories, we've got the enthusiasm, and we're in touch with all of our colleagues who are still around. We are both published authors still contributing to newspapers, magazines and web sites.

Now all we need is a suitable publisher. Otherwise our stories - and maybe the Sunday People itself - will die with us. Surely this once-great newspaper deserves a book to itself?

Do Press Gazette readers have any suggestions ?

Liz Hodgkinson and Shan Lloyd