

**Abiturprüfung 2004**  
**Gymnasium Haus Overbach, 52428 Jülich**  
**Grundkurs Englisch/ Brodeck**

**Vorschlag II**

**Aufgabe für das 3. Abiturfach**

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**Aufgabe**

Sach- und Gebrauchstext, Aufgabenart A 2

**Fundstelle des Textes**

The National Interest, Radio National with Terry Lane, 8 July 2001

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/natint/stories/s327938.htm>



**Wortzahl:** 564 w

**Text:**

Rupert Murdoch; Privacy Commissioner (Excerpt from transcript)

**Annotations**

**Introductory remark:**

Talk show host Terry Lane talks to NEIL CHENOWETH, author of a new book about Rupert Murdoch which examines some of the very risky recent deals struck by the head of News International.

**2** Vanity Fair – monthly magazine devoted to celebrity lifestyle **5** Adelaide – capital city of South Australia **12** gaffe – a blatant mistake or misjudgement **23** Melbourne – capital of Victoria **26** Pauline Hanson – Australian racist politician **27** Republicans – Australian Republican Movement **30** bugbear – fearsome imaginary creature (to frighten children) **35** cross-media laws – laws preventing the formation of media monopolies

**Arbeitsanweisungen**

1. Point out the media-related issues that are raised in the interview. [Orientation / Context]
2. How is Rupert Murdoch's controversial public image reflected both in content and form of Terry Lane's interview? [Analysis]
3. Talk show host Terry Lane encourages his listeners to give feedback. Write an email letter to him with a comment on Rupert Murdoch's philosophy (as exemplified in his Orwell speech) and the business policies resulting from this philosophy. [Creative writing]

**Hilfsmittel:** Einsprachiges Wörterbuch

**Terry Lane:** Rupert Murdoch is rated as the fourth most powerful person in the United States by Time Magazine. And Vanity Fair reckons that he is the most powerful private citizen in the entire world, but only in alternate years. In the odd years, Bill Gates gets the prize. You'd have to say it's not bad for a boy from the Antipodes who started out with a small afternoon newspaper in Adelaide.

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Neil Chenoweth, who's a senior writer with the Australian Financial Review, is the latest biographer of Mr Murdoch, and Neil's book is called 'Virtual Murdoch: Reality Wars on the Information Highway'. You won't be surprised to hear that it is not published by Harper Collins, Mr Murdoch's own publishing house, which you will remember pulled out of a book contract with the last Governor of Hong Kong, Mr Chris Patton. Mr Patton wrote uncomplimentary things about the old men in Beijing, and Mr Murdoch was trying desperately to recover from a gaffe that he'd made a few years earlier about media and despots. In a couple of speeches, Mr Murdoch had said that George Orwell got it wrong in '1984' (that's the book '1984', not the year 1984). 'All pervasive, unfettered media', Mr Murdoch said, 'do not lead to tyrannies; free media are the enemies of totalitarianism everywhere', which went down well in right-wing think-tanks in Washington and Australia. But it went down like a lead balloon in Beijing, where Mr Murdoch was trying to do business at the time.

20 Well, Neil can fill you in on the details. Neil, good afternoon, and just give us the story of Mr Murdoch's Orwell speech.

**Neil Chenoweth:** Yes it's probably the most famous speech that he's made, and it's really interesting to look at why he makes a speech like that, because 12 months further down the track he says similar things in a Policy Institute address in Melbourne here. And the information revolution is an extremely threatening thing; I think you see all sorts of ways that people are responding to that, whether it's who riots outside the World Economic Forum or things like the rise of Pauline Hanson, you have a feeling that technology is out of control or at least we're addicted to changing the world. And when the Republicans came to power in the mid-1990s, their problem was, with all of these technology changes coming down the pipeline, how are we going to respond? And George Orwell has always been the sort of bugbear for them, because he says technology is bad, technology is a threat to everyone everywhere. And what the right-wing think-tanks were saying, and what their clients were in fact paying them to say, was that No, no, no, look, technology is our great friend, it's going to free people, it's going to open up barriers everywhere. And Rupert Murdoch's take on that was that if that's the case then you shouldn't censor it in any way, you shouldn't have any laws. You shouldn't have cross-media laws, you shouldn't have laws in terms of what you can say or who can own how much media, because that's just holding up the positive effect that technology has. So by attacking George Orwell, Rupert Murdoch was attacking the FCC [US Federal Communications Commission], he was attacking the Broadcasting Authority here, he was saying, 'Let's take all the rules off'.