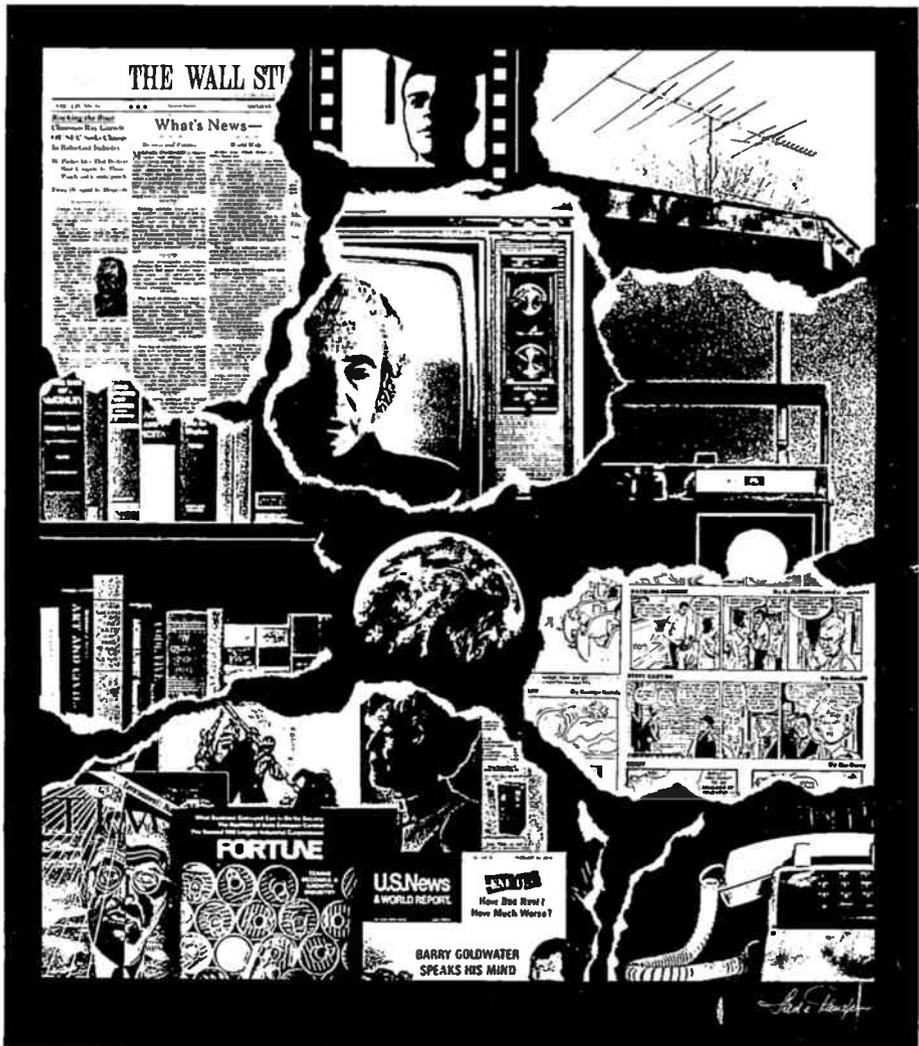


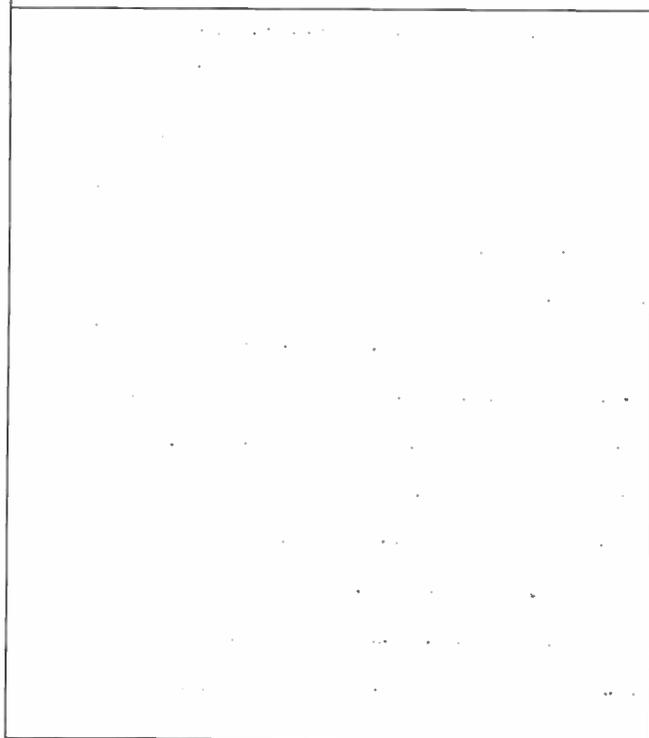
readings in mass communication: concepts and issues in the mass media

second
edition

MICHAEL C. EMERY □ TED CURTIS SMYTHE



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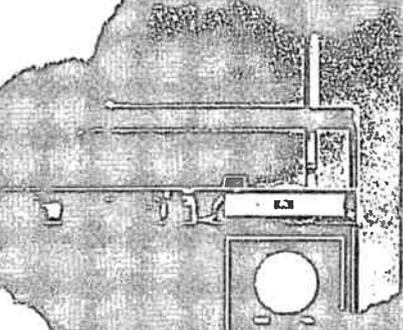
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MICHAEL C. EMERY
California State University, Northridge

TED CURTIS SMYTHE
California State University, Fullerton



wcb

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Curtis D. MacDougall
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Because our topical categories do not fit the course organization of some instructors, we have reorganized the articles into categories that reflect mass media orientations, such as broadcasting, newspapers, and the like. In a few cases, articles naturally fit into more than one media category; we have placed some of those titles in appropriate categories when it has appeared reasonable to do so. Titles appearing more than once in this Contents have been “flagged” by an asterisk after the name of the author. The Appendix and Index are not included in this Media Contents.

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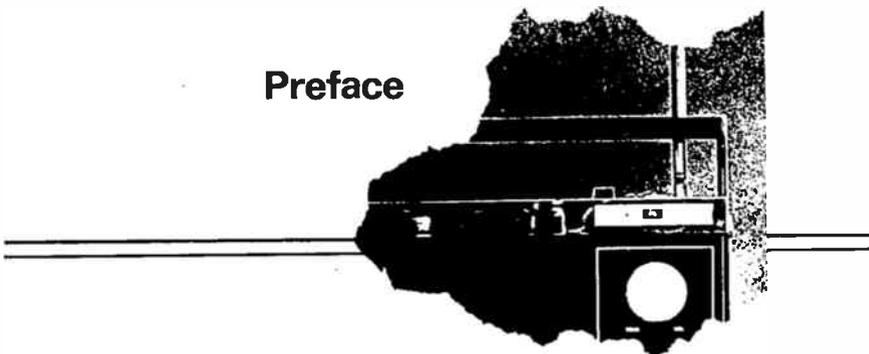
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Preface



During the summer of 1971—simultaneously with the Pentagon Papers case and the controversy over the CBS documentary, *The Selling of the Pentagon*—the first edition of this book was prepared. In addition to the confrontation between government and media, there was anticipation of the 1972 presidential campaign, with heavy concern about the role of television and the possibility of excessive spending by media-conscious politicians.

Candid criticism of the media had reached new levels of acceptance and journalism reviews were flourishing; media outlets seemed to be making money; and amazing technological improvements were being announced in all areas of mass communication. There was excitement about the role of the mass media in society; we attempted to study the various changes.

Those changes were in the concepts with which we view the media, in the media themselves, and in the criticism we voice about media performance.

Looking quickly at the past two years, nothing much *seems* to have changed. Government and news media are still adversaries; the problem of campaign spending for media exposure is still with us; journalism review editors have much to criticize; and the string of technical achievements gets longer each week.

We are still very much concerned with the problems of how to increase access of the people to the mass media and how to increase nongovernmental control over the mass media—in other words, how to insure more quality for the reader and viewer while at the same time decreasing the governmental influence which has been so pervasive in the forms of censorship, intimidation, and propaganda.

But if we look at the media through another window, much has changed in the past two years. The Watergate crimes and the Nixon campaign scandals led to intensification of the bitterness and suspicion in the "press-government" fight. Hostility flared at press conferences when the White House "enemy lists," containing the names of newsmen, were revealed. This period also saw threats against public broadcasting, and Clay Whitehead's speech which pitted station owners against the networks—in a continuation of the original Spiro T. Agnew charge that network news lacked "objectivity."

Media highlights were the initial exposure of Watergate by the *Washington Post*, the televised hearings of Senator Sam Ervin's committee, and the resignation of the vice-president.

There have been new and important suggestions about such problems as counter advertising; the handling of government news releases; press treatment of minorities, and women in general.

But on the other hand, those familiar with the contents of the first edition will rediscover Agnew, Nicholas Johnson, Carey McWilliams, Seymour Hersh, and the others who provided lessons not only for 1971 but for all time. Paul Conrad of the *Los Angeles Times* graciously allowed additions to the cartoon collection that appeared in the first edition, taking time out during the height of the Watergate sessions to contribute proofs, as he did in 1971 when the Pentagon Papers created a cartoonist's dream.

We have maintained the theme of the book through the interrelating of the three main parts. Just as before, we sometimes were limited in the selection of articles by space considerations. When required, articles were edited for timeliness and clarity, but substantial editing changes were few. And as before, our selection of articles was not necessarily based on agreement with the opinions expressed therein. We do disagree, either singly or together, with many of the opinions.

We do agree, as always, that the messages of these writers and critics deserve attention. We hope that through discussion the inadequacies in some of these positions will be exposed. We did not try to give both sides to each question; in many cases there is what we call a "conventional wisdom" which prevails, ideas that already are well stated and well known. We wanted to present as many new useful ideas and as much information as possible to go along with the established positions.

Criticism and suggestions for further improving these selections will be welcome again. The editors express their appreciation to their

editor at WCB, Richard C. Crews, and to those many colleagues who found the book helpful and took time to make suggestions. A special thanks is due those talented authors and their publishers who gave us permission to reprint their work. While they are responsible for the content of their articles, we take full responsibility for the selections.

Michael C. Emery

Ted Curtis Smythe

Introductory Bibliography



Two standard bibliographic sources for every student of mass communications are those by Warren C. Price, compiler, *The Literature of Journalism* (1959) and by Price and Calder M. Pickett, compilers, *An Annotated Journalism Bibliography: 1958-1968* (1970), both published by the University of Minnesota Press. Dr. Pickett's contribution to the second volume of *An Annotated Journalism Bibliography* was substantive following Dr. Price's death. These bibliographies offer basic, comprehensive annotations of most of the books dealing with American mass communications published through 1968. A student may start here and build upon this base by seeking information about contemporary books and articles from other sources.

For an up-to-date, thorough analysis of recent *books* in mass communications, a student should consult the following sources: the book review sections of *Journalism Quarterly* and *Journal of Broadcasting*. Eleanor Blum at the School of Communications, University of Illinois, publishes in mimeograph form, a list of books which college libraries receive. These are annotated. The list may be available in some schools and departments of journalism and communication. An excellent source for extensive annotation is Christopher H. Sterling's *Mass Media Booknotes* from Temple University. This mimeographed monthly lists on the front page the books reviewed in that issue. It is an outstanding source of information on and criticism of books in the mass communication field.

The standard bibliographic sources for *articles* in mass communications should be supplemented by searching the *Business Periodicals Index*, *International Index*, *Topicator* (which indexes only adver-

tising, public relations, and broadcasting publications), and *Infill-Phot* (which indexes and abstracts photography magazines). Here, too, the student should consult the back pages of *Journalism Quarterly*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, and *Journal of Marketing*. All three journals list and categorize current articles from journals of mass communications. Using these sources, a student can quickly find up-to-date sources on nearly any topic of mass communications that is receiving attention in the nation's periodicals. Many specialized indexes also are available that do not fit into the scope of this book. A few of these indexes or bibliographic sources are listed in the appropriate introduction to the various parts of the book.

Most of the sources listed in the bibliographies in this edition are of books dealing with mass media subjects. There are, however, some subjects that have not yet been covered—or covered well—in a book. In those cases where the material is either of recent origin or has not been treated in a book, we have listed magazine articles. Many pertinent articles and books will be printed after this book has gone to press, and the listing of those that will be available to the student during the effective life of this book cannot, therefore, be complete. For this reason, we suggest that students establish a habit of regularly reading some of the following periodicals. Such a reading practice will help the student to keep abreast of media issues.

For a general overview of what is happening in mass communications, students should regularly consult *Columbia Journalism Review*, the top magazine in the field of media criticism, and *Quill*. Other good journalism critics include *Chicago Journalism Review* and (*More*), which is based in New York. There are several journalism reviews available—some sixteen have been established in the past five years—but at least five have ceased publication or have reduced their publishing schedule drastically as we go to press. A student should consult one of the reviews appropriate to his community, state, or area, if one is available.

Excellent sources of industry statistics, news, and media practices can be found in *Editor & Publisher*, a weekly newsmagazine for publishers; *Publishers Auxiliary*, a publication for suburban and weekly newspaper publishers; *Broadcasting*, a weekly newsmagazine on radio, television and cable; *Variety*, a weekly tabloid dealing with news about broadcasting and film; *Advertising Age*, a weekly tabloid on the advertising industry.

In addition to these news publications, students should regularly read *The Bulletin* of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, a monthly magazine on issues as viewed by editors of the metropolitan press; *Grassroots Editor*, a bimonthly dealing with issues of press

responsibility, law, and practice, primarily from the small newspaper point of view; *Nieman Reports*, a quarterly dealing largely with comment about topics of press practices and press freedom by former Nieman Fellows; *Seminar*, a quarterly that reprints and offers original articles, largely on print media topics; *Quill*, a monthly dealing with issues of press freedom and news of broadcasting and newspapers; *Freedom of Information Center Reports* (FoI), a biweekly dealing with issues of freedom of information and surveys of current issues in mass media; *FoI Digest*, a bimonthly bulletin summarizing FoI news developments around the United States; *Public Relations Journal*, a monthly magazine dealing with comment about that field; *AV Guide—The Learning Media Magazine* and *Media & Methods*, both dealing with application of media to teaching; and *Film in Review*, a magazine issued by the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures.

There is another classification of publication with which students intent on mastery of the field should become acquainted. This classification includes the scholarly publications which give—usually—much greater depth and insight on media issues, past and present. These publications seldom are able to keep abreast of the issues in the field; when articles appear in these journals they are usually the result of comprehensive research conducted with the perspective of the passage of time. Included in this group are *Journalism Quarterly*, which encompasses the entire field of mass media experience; *Journal of Broadcasting*, *Educational Broadcasting Review*, *Gazette* (in English), which deals primarily with European media subjects, often historical; *European Broadcasting Review*, Sec. B, which thoroughly covers the radio and television field in Europe from an administrative, program, and legal point of view; *Public Opinion Quarterly*, often useful for studies on the effects of mass media; *Film Quarterly*, which offers serious comment on the art of the film, and the *Television Quarterly* and *Public Relations Quarterly*, both of which carry thoughtful articles on their respective fields.

In a category by itself is the outstanding *Handbook of Communication*, edited by Ithiel de Sola Pool, Wilbur Schramm, and others. It is a compilation of special articles prepared by a galaxy of scholars in communication. The authors give excellent, general summaries of their fields and include comprehensive bibliographies. The book is published by Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1973.

Students who regularly sample these magazines and journals will find a wealth of information and comment on the issues and trends in the field of mass communications during the 1970s.

With the hope that the information and persuasive media will—through alert, aggressive, and unselfish actions—help to further elevate the rising level of consciousness in this land.

PART ONE



Changing Concepts of the Function and Role of the Mass Media

As our first chapter demonstrates, one of the pressing issues of recent years in regard to press and electronic media is the issue of access to the media. This means different things to different people. To some it means access by ordinary people to the mass media so that the views of ordinary people can be heard. Others think that access should be available to spokesmen for responsible groups whose viewpoints are not finding adequate expression in the media. Still others would give access to those who feel they have been maligned, mistreated or misrepresented by the press or by reports in the press. Finally, because of recent Supreme Court decisions regarding libel and slander, some people would give access to the press to those who have been libeled, according to previous judicial standards, but who today no longer have legal recourse through the courts.

Some court action already has occurred in the access area. As this edition was being prepared for the press, the Florida Supreme Court upheld a Florida state law which requires that newspapers give "right of reply" space to political candidates who have been criticized by the newspapers. The Florida law states, specifically, "If any newspaper in its columns assails the personal character of any candidate . . . or . . . otherwise attacks his political record, such newspaper shall immediately publish free of cost any reply he may

make . . . provided that such reply does not take up more space than the matter replied to." The *Miami Herald* appealed the decision and will be supported by other major newspapers and newspaper associations.

This example is but one of the outgrowths of the "access" controversy; if the United States Supreme Court were to uphold the Florida court's opinion, it would establish the most far-reaching "breach" made in this century of the established concept of the First Amendment. At the very time such legal moves are being made, the FCC has required that cable television companies must provide (under certain conditions) an "access" channel for use by groups or individuals. Even as the FCC has required this, it is beginning to question the concept of the Fairness Doctrine—a doctrine that was affirmed by the Supreme Court in the *Red Lion* case in 1969. Perhaps the pendulum will begin to swing the other direction. In any case, some students of the mass media, particularly those of broadcasting, think that the emphasis on access is misdirected. Martin Mayer argues that "access to *media* means nothing at all, as [access experiences] and the history of public television indicate. Access to *audience* might have some value But access to audience must be earned, with talent." (Mayer's emphasis.) Mayer also argues persuasively that the "emphasis on access means that the hard questions of broadcasting will never be considered at all." (*About Television*, pp. 353-54.)

Whether access is or should be the paramount interest, it is certain that access is not the only issue. To understand this as well as other issues, consult the readings in Part I, along with the suggested bibliographies which accompany each subject.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The issue of how to increase access to the mass media, whether print, broadcasting, or cable, has received exhaustive treatment in the popular, scholarly, and legal journals in the past several years. Yet, few books have dealt with the subject; most writers have been content to deal with only parts of the issue without an exhaustive exposition of whys and wherefores. Finally, however, Jerome A. Barron, whom we reprint in the text, has published a book-length rationale for access to the print media, entitled *Freedom of the Press*

for Whom?: *The Rise of Access to Mass Media*, Indiana University Press, 1973. This is the most thorough exposition of the access thesis available. In "Press Access: Rationale and Response," *FoI Center Report*, no. 296 (January 1973), James E. Fields has provided an interesting and useful bibliographical essay on the subject. His survey cites the views of proponents and exponents. Two general books dealing with the Barron thesis, in part, are by Thomas I. Emerson, *Toward a General Theory of the First Amendment*, 1967, and *The System of Freedom of Expression*, 1970, both by Random House. A useful corollary book, touching tangentially on the issue, is John Hohenberg's *Free Press, Free People: The Best Cause*, Columbia University Press, 1971.

Nicholas Johnson, former FCC Commissioner, has offered the most useful and popular book on how the citizen can influence television in his *How to Talk Back to Your Television Set*, Bantam Books, 1970. His most recent study, *Broadcasting in America: The Performance of Network Affiliates in the Top-50 Markets*, 1973, includes a concluding chapter on "How You Can Improve Television in Your Community." According to *Broadcasting*, the chapter "is designed to inform members of the public how they can use the information in the report, among other materials, in putting pressure on stations they believe are not providing adequate service." A good, general survey of access and challenge trends with examples is "The People v. the Wasteland," by Peter A. Lance in *(More)* (June 1972), pp. 8-10. Also useful because of the many examples given is the *Survey of Broadcast Journalism*, edited by Marvin Barrett, Columbia University School of Journalism. This survey has been published annually since 1968-69. An excellent background study that puts the regulatory process in perspective is *The Politics of Broadcast Regulation*, by Erwin G. Krasnow and Lawrence D. Longley, St. Martin's Press, 1972. Included are case studies on FM, UHF, the FCC's attempt to regulate commercial time, and license renewal challenges.

Cable television has already produced a copious literature. Some excellent sources are given in the bibliography for Part II of this book. Some recent, thorough studies that deal with the problem of access to cable television, to supplement Barry Head's article, are those by Charles Tate, ed., *Cable Television in the Cities: Community Control, Public Access, and Minority Ownership*, The Urban Institute, 1971; and by the Sloan Commission on Cable Communications, *On the Cable: The Television of Abundance*, McGraw-Hill, 1971. Unfortunately, both were published before the FCC's 1972 rules on access channels. The FCC report should be consulted for

updating on public access channels. An interesting “how-to-do-it” manual is provided in *Guerrilla Television* by Michael Shamberg, Holt, 1971. Shamberg relies on portable videotape machines for access to cable and broadcast television. An up-to-date report on access can be found in Richard Kletter’s, *Cable Television: Making Public Access Effective* (R-1142-NSF), a Rand Report, Summer 1973. Students interested in cable should consult the ongoing series of cable reports by Rand Corporation. An interesting and informative field report on what is taking place on the educational channel can be found in *Cable Television & Education: A Report from the Field*, The National Cable Television Association, March 1973.

The issues in Chapter 2 center on ways of increasing control of the mass media through external sources, such as press councils, and through internal sources, such as ombudsmen. To understand the reasons why some people have such strong desires to exert some control over the mass media—in ways considered consistent with the First Amendment—consult *The First Freedom* by Bryce Rucker, University of Southern Illinois Press, 1968. Rucker gives a comprehensive, though now dated, picture of media concentration and ownership in the United States. An excellent article updating some of the figures and facts in Rucker’s penetrating analysis is “The Rush to Chain Ownership,” by Robert L. Bishop, in *Columbia Journalism Review* (Nov.-Dec. 1972), pp. 10-19. See also “Merger, Monopoly and a Free Press,” by Stephen R. Barnett, in *The Nation* (Jan. 15, 1973), pp. 76-86. Barnett discusses the FCC’s hesitancy in acting on single ownership of daily newspapers and television stations in the same city. He confronts the free press problems raised by the case-by-case approach recommended by the industry itself. One also should consult *A Free and Responsible Press*, Commission on Freedom of the Press, University of Chicago Press, 1947, for the first articulation of the need for a press council to appraise media performance in America. While the concept of a press council was only one of several useful and controversial suggestions by the Commission for improving media performance, it formed the germinal idea around which later local press councils were established. In addition to our articles on the National News Council and on press councils, *A Free and Responsive Press*, from which our reports were reprinted, should be consulted for case studies of the Minnesota and Honolulu Community-Media councils. The reports were written by Alfred Balk and published by the Twentieth Century Fund. A thorough report of local press council experiments in America will be found in *Backtalk: Press Councils in America*, by William Rivers, et. al., Canfield, 1972.

Rivers also has an article on publisher and television network resistance to the proposed National News Council in "How to Kill a Watchdog," *Progressive* (Feb. 1973), pp. 44-48. A good, supplementary study of the British Press Council can be found in George Murray's, *The Press and the Public: The Story of the British Press Council*, Southern Illinois University Press, 1972.

Many newsmen would prefer that evaluations of press performance be done by those in the business. In addition to our readings on ways of providing professional review, students should consult William L. Rivers' and Wilbur Schramm's, *Responsibility in Mass Communications*, revised edition, Harper & Row, 1969, for a view of the need for responsible reporting and media coverage in all mass media. A skeptic on the value of journalism reviews, ombudsmen, and "reporter control" for improving the press is Morton Mintz, whose "Auditing the Media: A Modest Proposal," *Columbia Journalism Review* (Nov.-Dec. 1972), pp. 20-24, suggests that both a heightened sense of professionalism and increased meetings between reporters and management may be a means of improving press performance. A proposal to give the broadcast journalist even greater control over news can be found in "'Democracy in the Newsroom' and the FCC," by Stephen R. Barnett, in a paper prepared for the Conference on Communication Policy Research, Office of Telecommunications Policy, Nov. 17-18, 1972. Barnett wants to establish the "general principle that operational control of the broadcast-news function should lie, ordinarily, with broadcast journalists and not with the station licensee." An outsider's view of Ben Bagdikian's former role as ombudsman on the *Washington Post* is expressed by J. Anthony Lukas, "The Limits of Self-Criticism" (*More*) (September 1972), p. 3 ff. Our survey of journalism reviews by Marty Coren can be supplemented by James Aronson's "Meditations" in *Antioch Review*, particularly his interesting portrait of Roldo Bartimole, editor and publisher of *Point of View*, the personal journalism review for Cleveland, and by Don Rose's "New Voices of Newsmen," *The Nation* (Jan. 10, 1972), pp. 43-46, which deals primarily with the *Chicago Journalism Review*.

The issue of how to increase protection for sources of news (or, whether they should be protected at all), received extensive airing in 1972 and 1973 when the Supreme Court ruled June 29, 1972, on a newsman's privilege. The *Columbia Journalism Review* offered three articles by respected spokesmen in the Sept.-Oct. 1972 issue which outlined the issues well. See also the February 1973 special issue of *The Bulletin* of the American Society of Newspaper Editors which

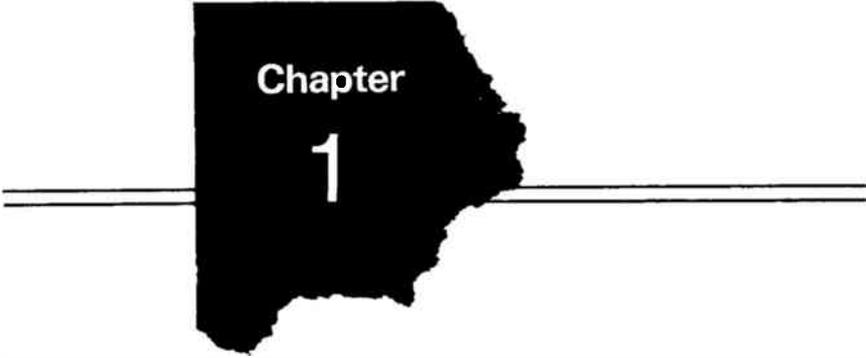
deals with the issue of "The Press Under Fire," particularly recent cases of court and grand jury demands for sources of newsmen stories. A.M. Rosenthal's "The Press Needs a Slogan: 'Save the First Amendment!'" *New York Times Magazine* (Feb. 11, 1973), is an impassioned plea by the managing editor of the *New York Times*. An excellent summary of some of the recent subpoena cases can be found in "Is the Free Press in Danger?" by Timothy Ferris in *Rolling Stone* (April 26, 1973), 1, pp. 24-26 ff. See also *Press Freedoms Under Pressure*, Twentieth Century Fund, 1972, which includes information on shield laws, the Department of Justice guidelines on news subpoenas, and a handy reprint of the Supreme Court's decision on the Pentagon Papers case. A corollary issue to the judicial need for information about sources is the long-standing debate, now somewhat muted, between the courts and the press over the simplistic issue of free press, fair trial. An excellent basic work is Donald L. Gillmor's *Free Press and Fair Trial*, 1966. For students interested in further study in this area, Marlan Nelson has compiled a 576-item *Free Press-Fair Trial: An Annotated Bibliography*, Utah State University Department of Journalism, 1971. This includes citations through 1969.

How can we make our reporting more relevant? To ask the question seems to answer it, because relevance usually is in the mind of the reader or the listener. Nevertheless, the issue is joined and new forms of reporting have developed in an effort to provide reporting that has greater relevance to certain segments of society. An insightful analysis of the different forms of journalism now subsumed under the rubric "new journalism," edited by Everette Dennis and William Rivers (*Other Voices: The New Journalism in America*, Canfield, 1974), should be supplemented first by reading Dennis' (editor) *The Magic Writing Machine*, School of Journalism, University of Oregon, 1971, which contains chapters on leading writers; then Robert J. Glessing's, *The Underground Press in America*, Indiana University Press, 1970; and *The New Journalism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973, by Tom Wolfe, a leading exponent of the "new journalism" genre. The desire for a more precise journalism, as outlined by Dennis, gets a full treatment in *Precision Journalism: A Reporter's Introduction to Social Science Methods*, by Philip Meyer, Indiana University Press, 1973. Meyer is one of the leading practitioners of the utilization of social science research techniques in journalism. An interesting study of the relevance of one "underground" radio station is found in "A Radio Station with Real Hair, Sweat, and Body Odor," by Susan Brandy, *New York Times Maga-*

zine (Sept. 17, 1972), pp. 10-11 ff. Almost a case study of WBAI in New York, the article depicts the station's warts and its double chin. It also demonstrates that WBAI performs a function by providing alternate views of the "news."

Students interested in the relevancy of interpretive reporting should consult *Interpretive Reporting: A Bibliography*, by Curtis MacDougall and John DeMott, AEJ, 1971. Carey McWilliams' article on muckraking should be supplemented by "The New Muckraking," by K. Scott Christianson in *The Quill* (July 1972), pp. 10-15. Christianson emphasizes the role of newspaper investigative teams. For a personal look at Jack Anderson, a contemporary muckraker, consult Susan Sheehan, "The Anderson Strategy: 'We hit you—pow! Then you issue a denial, and—bam!—we really let you have it,'" *New York Times Magazine* (Aug. 13, 1972), pp. 10-11 ff. Ms. Sheehan does not discuss the Senator Thomas Eagleton debacle in much depth, however, so consult "Jack Anderson: A Candid Conversation with the Muckraking Syndicated Columnist," *Playboy* (November 1972), pp. 87-88 ff. This interview presents Anderson's explanation (and apology) as well as much more about his methods and philosophy. For interesting historical contrast, compare Fred J. Cook's *The Muckrakers: Crusading Journalists Who Changed America*, Doubleday, 1972, an affectionate and readable study of six of the foremost muckrakers at the turn of the century. Cook, himself, is considered one of the best contemporary muckrakers by Carey McWilliams, long-time editor of *The Nation*.

Another view of journalism educators can be found in "Journalism Teachers: A Failure of Nerve and Verve," by Melvin Mencher in *Nieman Reports* (Dec. 1972—Mar. 1973), pp. 18-20 ff., and in Curtis D. MacDougall's "Schools of Journalism Are Being Buried," *Grassroots Editor* (Sept.-Oct. 1972) pp. 22-26. Our articles by Seymour Hersh and Barry Lando can be considered case studies of media performance on the Vietnam war, but more properly they should be read to see how journalists react in crisis-type situations when the first information the reporters get is unbelievable or is very difficult to substantiate. In both cases, the press ultimately published or broadcast the correct and full story. But the emphasis is on *ultimately*—many readers were misled in the interim.



Chapter

1

Increasing Access to the Mass Media

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PRINT MEDIA: ACCESS AND REPLY

ACCESS TO THE PRESS: A NEW CONCEPT OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Jerome A. Barron

In American law the classic question of free expression has always been whether something already said or published can be the subject of legal sanction. It has been the stated purpose, not always accomplished, of our constitutional law to try to keep as much as possible of what is said and published out of the reach of legal sanction. Therefore, for those who are able to obtain access to the media our law is a source of considerable strength. But what about those whose ideas are too unacceptable to gain entrance to the media? Is it time to focus our attention not only on the protection of ideas already published but on making sure that divergent opinions are actually able to secure expression in the first place?

The failure of existing media in this regard is revealed paradoxically by the advent of the sit-in and now the riot. These are really an inadequate underground press which bear tragic witness to the unwillingness of existing mass communications to present unpopular and controversial ideas. If southern newspapers had given voice to the Negro community's real feelings about segregation during the past 50 years a whole society would not have been so startled by the sit-in. If the northern press had given some space to the feelings of the Negro community about discrimination in housing and slum living in general, they would not have been so startled by the riots in Detroit, Newark and New Haven. Recently stories appeared in the press about a newspaper in Lynchburg, Virginia, which would only publish obituaries of Negroes if they were purchased as commercial advertisements. But this was just a particularly unattractive symptom of a basic problem—the horror of upsetting the community applecart—which dominates the press in this country. The dissenter is thus driven to look for novel, even violent, techniques to capture the

Jerome A. Barron, law professor at George Washington University, originally published "Access to the Press—A New First Amendment Right," in the June 1967 *Harvard Law Review*. This edited text appeared in the March 1969 *Seminar Quarterly* and is reprinted with Professor Barron's permission.

attention of the public. Paradoxically, when he does this he reaches instantly the network coverage, the front-page story, which otherwise he could never have obtained. For now the trappings of violence and shock have a claim both to “news” and, less avowedly, to entertainment which the commercial bias of the media instantly picks up for immediate coverage.

The grand language of the First Amendment has been used by the media to say that government may impose no responsibilities on them. But constitutional protection is given not to the “press” but to “freedom of the press.” What was desired was assurance for the interchange of ideas. But the present structure of the mass media is away from rather than toward ideas. Ideas suggest disagreement and disagreement is not good for business. As V.O. Key wrote in his “Public Opinion and American Democracy”: “Newspaper publishers are essentially people who sell white space on newsprint to advertisers.” In the light of this, the present constitutional status of the American press is a romantic one. The theory is that the “market-place of ideas” is self-executing and that according to some Darwinian principle the best ideas will secure primacy over all competing ones.

A more mundane but more candid approach to the First Amendment ought to lead to the realization that a right of expression which is dependent on the sufferance of the managers of the mass media is pitifully anemic.

The difficulty with doing anything about this situation is that the First Amendment has conventionally been thought of as prohibiting *governmental* restraints on expression. But what of private restraints on expression?

Suppose a monopoly newspaper publisher decides that a certain cause or person shall simply receive no space in its pages? What remedy does such a person have? Presently the answer to this question is simple: none. What would seem necessary would be an approach to free speech and free press—the area which constitutional lawyers describe as First Amendment problems—which would recognize that forbidding governmental restrictions on expression is quite useless if the power to prevent access to the channels of communication may be exercised at the pleasure of those who control them. The mandate for a free press is not a constitutional gift to publishers alone. The reader, the public, and in a larger intellectual sense, the world of ideas, all have a stake in the press. That indeed is the reason for the special status of the press in the United States.

The lack of any obligation on newspapers to publish minority

viewpoints is particularly aggravated by the rise of the one-newspaper city. Little attention has been given to the problems raised by the vanishing numbers and the general blandness of the American press. In New York City where 14 English language newspapers were published in 1900, only two morning papers and one afternoon paper survive. Nor is this a big-city phenomenon. In a book significantly entitled "Freedom or Secrecy," J. Russell Wiggins of the *Washington Post* offered these statistics on the lack of competition in the American press:

"The number of newspapers in the United States declined from 2202 in 1909-10 to 1760 in 1953-4. The number of cities with competing daily newspapers declined from 689 to only 87. The number of cities with non-competing dailies increased from 518 to 1301. Eighteen states are now without any locally competing daily newspapers."

The goal of informing the public is the reason that the American Constitution has a First Amendment which says that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press," in the first place. As Mr. Justice Brandeis put it 40 years ago, the First Amendment rests on the premise that free expression is indispensable to the "discovery and spread of political truth" and that "the greatest menace to freedom is an inert people." It might be said that the decline in the number of newspapers and the rise of monopoly situations is offset by the fact that newspapers not only compete with each other but with radio and television as well. But what is the effectiveness of radio and television competition in terms of informing the public?

Marshall McLuhan's singular insight into the electronic media is that the attraction they have for us is in their form, rather than in what they have to say. What intrigues us is the television screen itself. The implication from this would appear to be that the electronic media are not very well suited to making public issues meaningful. The question then arises: perhaps on balance the existing press *is* doing this informing job well enough. The fact that the press is in fewer hands than ever has not resulted in a desire on the part of its controllers to bend us, Orwellian fashion, to their political will. The problem is that the media, print and electronic, share a common blandness, a pervasive aversion for the novel and the heretical. The reason for this is that the controllers of the media have no political wish to dominate. They are business men and their stance is essentially one of political neutrality. It is simply not good business to espouse or even give space to heresy and controversy.

Despite the foregoing, there appears to be no change in the

approach to the First Amendment and to the press from the romantic view which has thus far prevailed. Judicial indifference to the problem of access to the press was vividly underscored by a case decided by the Supreme Court in 1964. There the Supreme Court reversed a \$500,000 libel suit which Commissioner Sullivan of Montgomery, Alabama, had won against *The New York Times* in the state courts of Alabama. Among other things, Commissioner Sullivan charged that he was libelled by a political advertisement appearing in the *Times* on March 29, 1960, entitled "Heed Their Rising Voices," which protested the handling of a civil rights demonstration by Birmingham, Alabama, police. Mr. Sullivan was the Birmingham City Commissioner in charge of the Police Department. The Supreme Court of the United States created a new privilege for newspapers sued by public officials for libel: no damages would be allowed unless the official suing could show that the newspaper acted in "actual malice." As a legal matter, "actual malice" is most difficult to prove. Therefore the decision in *New York Times v. Sullivan* amounted to a grant to the press of a new and relatively complete freedom, where articles about public officials are concerned, from the libel laws. The rationale of the decision, as Mr. Justice Brennan put it, rested on the "principle that debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide-open, and that it may well include vehement, caustic and sometimes unpleasantly sharp attacks on government and public officials."

But the disturbing aspect of the *New York Times* decision is its romantic and unexamined assumption that limiting newspaper exposure to libel suits will automatically result in removing restraints on expression and thus lead to the "informed society." Although the Supreme Court changed the law of libel for the benefit of newspapers, the court did nothing in the way of demanding something in exchange from the press such as a requirement to provide space for reply by the public officials which newspapers choose to attack.

What is particularly disturbing is that the newspaper freedom from libel litigation begun in the Supreme Court is being extended by the lower courts to attacks in the press on non-elected persons, so-called "public figures," as well as public officials. Thus when Linus Pauling was attacked by the *National Review* he sued for libel; the New York Court took the position that Pauling was equivalent to a public official in that like such an official he had voluntarily entered public life and debate and therefore that newspapers and magazines should have the same freedom to attack him, without fear of libel suit, in the interest of "uninhibited and robust" public discussion.

One would not quarrel with this approach if some awareness were also displayed that as the law presently stands if someone in the public eye becomes a source of irritation to a publisher, he may attack such a person both without too much concern for the libel laws and with no duty to provide such a person an outlet for his views. How much does this contribute to "wide-open" public discussion?" Probably very little. One can rationalize and say that the *New York Times* case is a victory for the left and the Pauling case a victory for the right. But both represent a defeat for the goal of providing the public with a balanced presentation of controversial public issues.

Nevertheless the legal horizon is not entirely bleak. A case offering very encouraging possibilities for the future was decided by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in 1966. In that case, various Negro churches and organizations brought suit against the Federal Communications Commission for renewing the license of the owner of a Broadcast station in Jackson, Mississippi. The Negro organizations, claiming to speak for the 45% of Jackson which is Negro, claimed that the station had failed to provide effective opportunity for the expression of views in favor of integration although the station gave very effective opportunity for expression of segregationist views. The Federal Communications Commission took a narrowly technical position and said that the Negro organizations were not the appropriate persons to challenge renewal. Only those could challenge renewal who were in the broadcast business: in other words in direct competition with the station.

The Court held that the interests of community groups in broadcast programming was sufficient to entitle the Negro organizations to demand a full hearing on whether the Jackson station ought to have its license renewed. The Jackson, Mississippi, broadcast case marks the beginning hopefully of a new judicial awareness that our legal system must protect not only the broadcaster's right to speak but also public rights in broadcasting. It amounts to recognition that there is a community or public interest involved in the media as well as the interest represented by management. The Court put the matter with stark simplicity: "(T)he freedom of speech protected against government licensees of means of public communication to exclude the expression of opinions and ideas with which they are in disagreement." (*sic*) Furthermore, the Court said that requiring broadcast licensees to use their license so that the listening public may be assured of "hearing varying opinions on the paramount issues facing the American people is within both the spirit and letter of the first amendment."

That such a decision comes out of a broadcasting context is not too surprising for the FCC has long had a rule, the so-called "fairness" doctrine, that broadcasters have an obligation to provide balanced presentation of a constitutional issue of public importance. It is a kind of "equal time" for ideas requirement. The rule has not been a great success. The path of evasion is too obvious: avoid controversy and you won't have to give time to viewpoints you don't like. On the other hand, failure to provide balanced presentation of controversial issues might result in a refusal to grant a broadcast licensee, who only has his license for three years, renewal. Such decisions are now more likely since it has been held as a result of the Jackson, Mississippi, case that groups in the community as well as other broadcast stations and applicants have a right to call the station to account.

The new development in broadcasting is in sad contrast to the situation of the press. In this area, not only has there been no new ground broken but, indeed, as we have seen, developments are if anything retrogressive. Thus the Court in passing in the Jackson, Mississippi, case remarked: "A newspaper can be operated at the whim or caprice of its owners; a broadcast station cannot." Is it not time to rethink whether mass circulation newspapers, many of which are monopoly situations, ought to continue to be operated entirely "at the whim or caprice" of the owner?

I would hope that the new awareness of the listener's stake in broadcasting would lead to a similar concern for the reader's stake in the press. Obviously the daily press cannot be at the disposal of the vanity of the public. Everyone cannot be written about and every idea cannot be given space. In the *United Church of Christ* case, the Jackson, Mississippi, Negro organizations were allowed to contest the station's license although this certainly did not mean that in the future just any listener could contest a licensee's renewal application. The basic test is whether the material for which access is desired is in fact suppressed or undercovered. If it is, it is still not necessary to give space to every group associated with the suppressed viewpoint as long as one such group is allowed to present its case. The machinery for implementing some guarantee of confrontation of ideas could be achieved independently of legislation through the courts themselves by decision. In the *New York Times* case the Supreme Court created a new relative freedom from libel for newspapers by the method of "interpreting" the First Amendment. Similarly, techniques could be used to fashion a right of access to the press for the public. If this approach does not work, then a carefully worded right of access

statute which would aim at achieving a meaningful expression of divergent opinions should be attempted. The point is that we must realize that private restraints on free expression have become so powerful that the belief that there is a free marketplace where ideas will naturally compete is as hopelessly outmoded as the theory of perfect competition has generally become in most other spheres of modern life.

RIGHTS OF ACCESS AND REPLY

Clifton Daniel

So far as I am concerned, we can begin with a stipulation. I am perfectly prepared to concede that there is a problem of access to the press in this country. However, the dimensions of the problem have been greatly exaggerated, and the proposed legal remedies are either improper or impractical.

My contention is that the remedies should be left largely to the press itself and to the reading public, and that adequate remedies are available.

About the dimensions of the problem: I suppose there *are* some publishers and editors who capriciously and arbitrarily refuse to print material with which they disagree. But I don't know them.

In an adjudication made two years ago, the British Press Council, which is the official British forum for complaints against the press, had this to say: "We are finding more and more that even quite large localities cannot support more than one newspaper. We are satisfied, however, that most editors of such newspapers are now accepting it as a duty to see, as far as possible, that events and views of interest to all shades of opinion are impartially reported while reserving the editorial right to come down on one side or the other."

Exactly the same thing could be said—and truthfully said—about the press in this country. More than thirty years ago, Eugene Meyer, who had quarreled with the New Deal, resigned from the Federal Reserve Board, and bought *The Washington Post*, set out

Clifton Daniel, associate editor of the *New York Times*, was a member of a six-man panel before the Section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities, 1969 American Bar Association Convention. The text was reprinted in the December 1969 *Seminar Quarterly* along with Commissioner Cox's statements and is used with Mr. Daniel's permission.

deliberately to find a New Deal columnist for his newspaper. He thought his readers were entitled to get the New Deal point of view as well as his own.

Hundreds of American publishers and editors take the same attitude today. They go out of their way to find columnists and commentators who are opposed to their own editorial policies.

New ideas are not being suppressed. On the contrary, a hurricane of dissent is blowing through the world. It is shaking the foundations of all our institutions. Can anyone here doubt the truth of that statement?

When and where has it ever before been possible for a man like the Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy to reach an audience of millions by simply painting a few signs, assembling 150 poor people, and appearing before the television cameras at the gates of Cape Kennedy?

The great guru of the right of access, Prof. Jerome Barron of the George Washington Law School . . . speaks of insuring "access to the mass media for unorthodox ideas."

I thought until I got into this argument that the main complaint against the press was that we were giving too much access to the unorthodox—hippies, draft-card burners, student rioters, black militants, and the people who make dirty movies and write dirty books. At least, that's the message I get from the mail that comes across my desk.

In spite of the mail, I still concede that there is a problem of access to the press. But its dimensions are not great and the solutions proposed are not practical.

Advocates of the right of access blandly ignore the problems and techniques of editing a newspaper. Prof. Barron speaks of the press as having "an obligation to provide space on a non-discriminatory basis for representative groups in the community."

Note the key words: Space. Non-discriminatory. Representative groups.

First: Space! How much space?

The New York Times received 37,719 letters to the editor in 1968. At least 85 to 90 per cent of these letters, in the words of our slogan, were "fit to print." However, we were able to accommodate only six per cent. If we had printed them all—all 18 million words of them—they would have filled up at least 135 complete weekday issues of *The New York Times*. Yet, every letter-writer probably felt that he had some right of access to our columns.

Some letter-writers and readers have been aggressively trying to enforce that presumed right. For many months the adherents of an

artistic movement called Aesthetic Realism have been petitioning and picketing *The New York Times*, demanding reviews for books and paintings produced by members of the movement. Criticism, incidentally, would be meaningless if critics were required to give space to artistic endeavors they consider unworthy of it.

Art galleries in New York plead for reviews. They contend that it is impossible to succeed in business without a critical notice in *The Times*. That is probably true. But no one, surely, is entitled to a free ad in the newspapers. No artist has a *right* to a clientele. He has to earn his audience by the forcefulness of his art, the persuasiveness of his talent. How much more cogently does this apply to political ideas!

Non-discriminatory! Discrimination is the very essence of the editing process. You must discriminate or drown.

Every day of the year *The New York Times* receives an average of a million and a quarter to a million and a half words of news material. At best, we can print only a tenth of it. A highly skilled, high-speed process of selection is involved—a massive act of discrimination, if you like—discrimination between the relevant and the irrelevant, the important and the unimportant.

When I was preparing these remarks, I suggested to my secretary that she buy a bushel basket, and fill it with press releases, petitions, pamphlets, telegrams, letters and manuscripts. I wanted to empty the basket here on this platform just to show you how many scoundrels, scroungers and screwballs, in addition to respectable citizens and worthy causes, are seeking access to the columns of our newspaper.

Actually, 168 bushels of wastepaper, most of it rejected news, are collected and thrown away every day in the editorial departments of *The New York Times*. Do you imagine that the courts have the time to sort it all out? Do they have the time and, indeed, do they have the wisdom? Even if judges do have the time to do my job as well as their own, I think Ben Bagdikian, the leading critic of the American press, is right when he says that “judges make bad newspaper editors.”

Representative groups! What constitutes a representative group? Who is to decide? I would say that representative groups already have access to the press. It's the unrepresentative ones we have to worry about.

I am not prepared to argue that it's easy for anybody with a cause or a grievance to get space in the newspapers. Indeed, it isn't easy. In my opinion, it shouldn't be. When you begin editing by statute or court order, your newspaper will no longer be a news-

paper. It will be "little more than a bulletin board," as Mr. Jencks has said, [Richard W. Jencks, President, Columbia Broadcasting System Broadcast Group] "—a bulletin board for the expression of hateful or immature views."

Nowhere in the literature on access to the press do I find any conspicuous mention of the hate groups. Does this newfangled interpretation of freedom of the press mean that an editor would be obliged to give space to ideas that are hateful to him? Must he give space to advertisements that are offensive to his particular readers? Must a Jewish editor be forced to publish anti-Semitism? Must a Negro editor give space to the Ku Klux Klan?

Prof. Barron, it seems to me, looks at these problems in a very simplistic way, and defines them in parochial terms. All but the most localized media have national connections of some sort: They broadcast network television programs. They buy syndicated columnists. They subscribe to the services of the great national news agencies. An idea that originates in New York is, within a matter of minutes, reverberating in California.

In determining who is to have access to the press, who would decide how widely an idea should be disseminated? Must it be broadcast in prime time on the national networks? Must it be distributed by the Associated Press and United Press to all their clients? And must all the clients be required to publish or broadcast it? Just asking these questions shows how impractical it is to enforce access to the press by law or judicial fiat.

It is impractical in another sense. In contested cases, it might take a year or more to gain access to the press for a given idea or item of news. And if there is anything deader than yesterday's news, it's news a year old.

Not only is it impractical to edit newspapers by statute and judicial interpretation, but it would, in my view, be improper—that is to say, unconstitutional.

My position on that point is a very simple one: Freedom of the press, as defined by the First Amendment, means freedom of the press. It doesn't mean freedom *if*, or freedom *but*. It means freedom *period*. Prof. Barron's proposition, however exhaustively elaborated, cannot disguise the fact that it involves regulation of the press—freedom *but*.

I cannot guess what the makers of our Constitution would have said about television, but I have a pretty good idea of what they meant by freedom of the printed word, and they certainly did not mean that it should be controlled, regulated, restricted or dictated by

government officials, legislators or judges. Indeed, the makers of the Constitution meant exactly the opposite—that officialdom, constituted authority, should keep its hands off the press, that it should not tell newspapers what to print or what not to print.

To repeat: My proposition does not mean that there is no need for greater access to the press. It simply means that legislators and judges should not be—indeed cannot be—the ones to decide how much access there should be. Editors should decide, under the pressure of public and official opinion, constantly and conscientiously exercised.

There are effective devices that the newspapers and their readers could employ. Mr. Bagdikian mentions some of them in the *Columbia Journalism Review*:

1. Start a new journalistic form: an occasional full page of ideas from the most thoughtful experts on specific public problems.
2. Devote a full page a day to letter-to-the-editor.
3. Appoint a fulltime ombudsman on the paper or broadcasting station to track down complaints about the organization's judgment and performance.
4. Organize a local press council of community representatives to sit down every month with the publisher.

Press councils have already been tried in several small cities. They work well. A press council for New York City—or perhaps a media council, taking in broadcasters as well as newspapers and magazines—is under consideration by the Twentieth Century Fund. In September, 1969 the Board of Directors of the American Society of Newspaper Editors went to London to make a study of the British Press Council.

There are also other ways, as Mr. Bagdikian says, “of keeping the press a relevant institution close to the lives of its constituents.”

One way is hiring reporters from minority groups, as the newspapers are now doing. Not only is opportunity given to the minorities, but also they bring into the city room the special attitudes of their communities.

In New York the communities themselves, with outside help, are bringing their problems to the attention of the press. Community representatives have been meeting with newspaper editors and broadcasting executives under the auspices of the Urban Reporting Project. A news service is being organized by the Project to provide continuous reporting from the neglected neighborhoods to the communications media.

In one of the neighborhoods—Harlem—a new community newspaper, the *Manhattan Tribune*, has been established to train Negro and Puerto Rican journalists.

I am aware that not everybody with a cause can afford a newspaper to promote it. It is not as difficult, however, to launch a new newspaper as some people would have you believe.

In 1896 a small-town publisher, Adolph S. Ochs, came to New York from Chattanooga, Tenn., borrowed \$75,000, bought the moribund *New York Times*, and converted it into an enterprise that is now worth \$400 million on the American Stock Exchange.

They say nobody will ever be able to do that again. But I wonder.

Fourteen years ago, Norman Mailer, the novelist, and Edwin Fancher put up \$5,000 apiece to start an offbeat, neighborhood weekly in Greenwich Village. Altogether, only \$70,000—less than Adolph Ochs needed to gain control of *The New York Times*—had to be invested in the *Village Voice* before it turned a profit. Its circulation is now more than 127,000—greater than the circulation of 95 per cent of United States dailies. Its annual profit is considerably more than the capital that was required to launch it.

From the beginning, the *Village Voice* has been a forum for those unorthodox opinions that are said to be seeking access to the press.

It was the *Village Voice* that blazed the trail for the underground press. While you may think that the underground press is scatological and scurrilous, its existence is nevertheless welcome proof that our press is indeed free, and that the First Amendment does not have to be reinterpreted, rewritten or wrenched out of context to give expression to unorthodox ideas.

I had not intended in these remarks to discuss the right of reply. But I think I should respond to Commissioner Cox, [FCC Commissioner Kenneth A. Cox] who says that Congress could constitutionally apply equal time and right-of-reply obligations to newspapers.

I don't agree with him. The First Amendment very plainly says—it couldn't be plainer—that Congress shall make *no law—no law—*abridging freedom of the press.

However, the right of reply does not provide as much of a problem for newspapers as enforced access to the press. Indeed, the right of reply is widely recognized and accepted. In practice, most newspapers recognize a prior-to-publication right of reply when dealing with controversial matters.

On *The New York Times*, we have a standing rule that anyone who is accused or criticized in a controversial or adversary situation should be given an opportunity to comment before publication. The rule is sometimes overlooked in the haste of going to press. It is often not possible to obtain comment from all interested parties, but the principle is there and the effort is required. More importantly, the same is true of the news agencies which serve practically every daily paper and broadcasting station in the United States.

The right of reply after publication is also widely accepted. However, I would caution against creating an absolute right of reply or trying to enshrine such a right in law. Newspapers, it seems to me, *must* have the right to refuse to publish a reply, provided they are willing to accept the consequences of doing so—a suit for damages, for example.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA: INCREASING ACCESS

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT TELEVISION?

Nicholas Johnson

Television is more than just another great public resource—like air and water—ruined by private greed and public inattention. It is the greatest communications mechanism ever designed and operated by man. It pumps into the human brain an unending stream of information, opinion, moral values, and esthetic taste. It cannot be a neutral influence. Every minute of television programming—commercials, entertainment, news—teaches us something.

Most Americans tell pollsters that television constitutes their principal source of information. Many of our senior citizens are tied to their television sets for intellectual stimulation. And children now spend more time learning from television than from church and school combined. By the time they enter first grade they will have

Nicholas Johnson, former FCC Commissioner, is the author of "How to Talk Back to Your Television Set." This article appeared in *Saturday Review*, July 11, 1970, and is reprinted with the permissions of Mr. Johnson and of *Saturday Review*, copyright 1970.

received more hours of instruction from television networks than they will later receive from college professors while earning a bachelor's degree. Whether they like it or not, the television networks are playing the roles of teacher, preacher, parent, public official, doctor, psychiatrist, family counselor, and friend for tens of millions of Americans each day of their lives.

TV programing can be creative, educational, uplifting, and refreshing without being tedious. But the current television product that drains away lifetimes of leisure energy is none of these. It leaves its addicts waterlogged. Only rarely does it contribute anything meaningful to their lives. No wonder so many Americans express to me a deep-seated hostility toward television. Too many realize, perhaps unconsciously but certainly with utter disgust, that television is itself a drug, constantly offering the allure of a satisfying fulfillment for otherwise empty and meaningless lives that it seldom, if ever, delivers.

Well, what do we do about it? Here are a few suggestions:

STEP ONE: *Turn on.* I don't mean rush to your sets and turn the on-knob. What I do mean is that we had all better "turn on" to television—wake up to the fact that it is no longer intellectually smart to ignore it. Everything we do, or are, or worry about is affected by television. How and when issues are resolved in this country—the Indochina War, air pollution, race relations—depend as much as anything else on how (and whether) they're treated by the television networks in "entertainment" as well as news and public affairs programing.

Dr. S.I. Hayakawa has said that man is no more conscious of communication than a fish would be conscious of the waters of the sea. The analogy is apt. A tidal wave of television programing has covered our land during the past twenty years. The vast majority of Americans have begun to breathe through gills. Yet, we have scarcely noticed the change, let alone wondered what it is doing to us. A few examples may start us thinking.

The entire medical profession, as well as the federal government, had little impact upon cigarette consumption in this country until a single young man, John Banzhaf, convinced the Federal Communications Commission that its Fairness Doctrine required TV and radio stations to broadcast \$100-million worth of "anti-smoking commercials." Cigarette consumption has now declined for one of the few times in history.

What the American people think about government and politics in general—as well as a favorite candidate in particular—is almost

exclusively influenced by television. The candidates and their advertising agencies, which invest 75 per cent or more of their campaign funds in broadcast time, believe this: to the tune of \$58-million in 1968.

There's been a lot of talk recently about malnutrition in America. Yet, people could let their television sets run for twenty-four hours a day and never discover that diets of starch and soda pop can be fatal.

If people lack rudimentary information about jobs, community services for the poor, alcoholism, and so forth, it is because occasional tidbits of information of this kind in soap operas, game shows, commercials, and primetime series are either inaccurate or missing.

In short, whatever your job or interests may be, the odds are very good that you could multiply your effectiveness tremendously by "turning on" to the impact of television on your activities and on our society as a whole—an impact that exceeds that of any other existing institution.

STEP TWO: Tune in. There are people all over the country with something vitally important to say: the people who knew "cyclamates" were dangerous decades ago, the people who warned us against the Vietnam War in the early Sixties, the people who sounded the alarm against industrial pollution when the word "smog" hadn't been invented. Why didn't we hear their warnings over the broadcast media?

In part it is the media's fault, the product of "corporate censorship." But in large part it's the fault of the very people with something to say who never stopped to consider how they might best say it. They simply haven't "tuned in" to television.

Obviously, I'm not suggesting you run out and buy up the nearest network. What I am suggesting is that we stop thinking that television programming somehow materializes out of thin air, or that it's manufactured by hidden forces or anonymous men. It is not. There is a new generation coming along that is substantially less frightened by a 16mm camera than by a pencil. You may be a part of it. Even those of us who are not, however, had better tune in to television ourselves.

Here is an example of someone who *did*. The summer of 1969, CBS aired an hour-long show on Japan, assisted in large part by former Ambassador Edwin Reischauer. No one, including Ambassador Reischauer and CBS, would claim the show perfectly packaged all that Americans want or need to know about our 100 million neighbors across the Pacific. But many who watched felt it was one

of the finest bits of educational entertainment about Japan ever offered to the American people by a commercial network.

Ambassador Reischauer has spent his lifetime studying Japan, yet his was not an easy assignment. An hour is not very long for a man who is used to writing books and teaching forty-five-hour semester courses, and there were those who wanted to turn the show into an hour-long geisha party. He could have refused to do the show at all, or walked away from the project when it seemed to be getting out of control. But he didn't. And as a result, the nation, the CBS network, and Mr. Reischauer all benefited. (And the show was honored by an Emmy award.)

There are other Ed Reischauers in this country: men who don't know much about "television," but who know more than anyone else about a subject that is important and potentially entertaining. If these men can team their knowledge with the professional television talent of others (and a network's financial commitment), they can make a television program happen. Not only ought they to accept such assignments when asked, I would urge them to come forward and volunteer their assistance to the networks and their local station managers or to the local cable television system. Of course, these offers won't always, or even often, be accepted—for many reasons. But sooner or later the dialogue has to begin.

There are many ways you can contribute to a television program without knowing anything about lighting or electronics. Broadcasters in many large communities (especially those with universities) are cashing in on local expertise for quick background when an important news story breaks, occasional on-camera interviews, suggestions for news items or entire shows, participation as panel members or even hosts, writers for programs, citizen advisory committees, and so forth. Everyone benefits. The broadcaster puts out higher-quality programming, the community builds greater citizen involvement and identification, and the television audience profits.

Whoever you are, whatever you're doing, ask yourself this simple question: What do I know or what do I have to know or might find interesting? If you're a Department of Health, Education and Welfare official charged with communicating vital information about malnutrition to the poor, you might be better off putting your information into the plot-line of a daytime television soap opera than spending a lifetime writing pamphlets. If you're a law enforcement officer and want to inform people how to secure their homes against illegal entry, you might do better by talking to the writers and producers of *Dragnet*, *I Spy*, or *Mission: Impossible* than by making slide presentations.

STEP THREE: Drop out. The next step is to throw away most of what you've learned about communication. Don't make the mistake of writing "TV essays"—sitting in front of a camera reading, or saying, what might otherwise have been expressed in print. "Talking heads" make for poor television communication, as educational and commercial television professionals are discovering. Intellectuals and other thinking creative people first have to "drop out" of the traditional modes of communicating thoughts, and learn to swim through the new medium of television.

Marshall McLuhan has made much of this clear. If the print medium is linear, television is not. McLuhan's message is as simple as one in a Chinese fortune cookie: "One picture worth thousand words"—particularly when the picture is in color and motion, is accompanied by sound (words and music), and is not tied to an orderly time sequence.

Mason Williams, multitalented onetime writer for the Smothers Brothers, is one of the few to see this new dimension in communication. He describes one of his techniques as "verbal snapshots"—short bursts of thought, or poetry, or sound that penetrate the mind in an instant, then linger. Here are some that happen to be about television itself: "I am qualified to criticize television because I have two eyes and a mind, which is one more eye and one more mind than television has." "Television doesn't have a job; it just goofs off all day." "Television is doing to your mind what industry is doing to the land. Some people already think like New York City looks." No one "snapshot" gives the whole picture. But read in rapid succession, they leave a vivid and highly distinctive after-image.

Others have dropped out of the older communications techniques and have adapted to the new media. Those students who are seen on television—sitting in, protesting, assembling—are developing a new medium of communication: the demonstration. Denied traditional access to the network news shows and panel discussions, students in this country now communicate with the American people via loud, "news-worthy," media-attractive aggregations of sound and color and people. Demonstrations are happenings, and the news media—like moths to a flame—run to cover them. Yippie Abbie Hoffman sees this clearer than most:

So what the hell are we doing, you ask? We are dynamiting brain cells. We are putting people through changes. . . . We are theater in the streets: total and committed. We aim to involve people and use . . . any weapon (prop) we can find. All is relevant, only "the play's the thing." . . . The media is the message. Use it! No fund raising, no full-page ads in *The New York Times*, no press releases. Just do your thing; the press eats it up. Media is free. *Make news.*

Dr. Martin Luther King told us very much the same thing. "Lacking sufficient access to television, publications, and broad forums, Negroes have had to write their most persuasive essays with the blunt pen of marching ranks."

Mason Williams, Abbie Hoffman, Dr. Martin Luther King, and many others have set the stage for the new communicators, the new media experts. All dropped out of the traditional communications bag of speeches, round-table discussions, panels, symposia, and filmed essays. And they reached the people.

STEP FOUR: *Make the legal scene.* Shakespeare's Henry VI threatened: "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers." Good advice in the fifteenth century perhaps. But bad advice today. We need lawyers. And they can help you improve television.

Examples are legion. The United Church of Christ successfully fought *two* legal appeals to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, one establishing the right of local citizens groups to participate in FCC proceedings, and one revoking the license of WLBT-TV in Jackson, Mississippi, for systematic segregationist practices. In Media, Pennsylvania, nineteen local organizations hired a Washington lawyer to protest radio station WXUR's alleged policy of broadcasting primarily right-wing political programming. In Los Angeles, a group of local businessmen challenged the license of KHJ-TV, and the FCC's hearing examiner awarded them the channel. [Editor's Note: The challenge was rebuffed by the Commission.] There are dozens of other examples of the imaginative use of rusty old legal remedies to improve the contribution of television to our national life.

For all their drawbacks, lawyers understand what I call "the law of effective reform"; that is, to get reform from legal institutions (Congress, courts, agencies), one must assert, first, the factual basis for the grievance; second, the specific legal principle involved (Constitutional provision, statute, regulation, judicial or agency decision); and third, the precise remedy sought (legislation, fine, license revocation). Turn on a lawyer, and you'll turn on an awful lot of legal energy, talent, and skill. You will be astonished at just how much legal power you actually have over a seemingly intractable Establishment.

STEP FIVE: *Try do-it-yourself justice.* Find out what you can do without a lawyer. You ought to know, for example, that every three years *all* the radio and television station licenses come up for renewal in your state. You ought to know when that date is. It is an "election day" of sorts, and you have a right and obligation to "vote." Not

surprisingly, many individuals have never even been told there's an election. [Editor's Note: The renewal schedule is given on page 28.]

Learn something about the grand design of communications in this country. For example, no one "owns" a radio or television station in the sense that you can own a home or the corner drugstore. It's more like leasing public land to graze sheep, or obtaining a contract to build a stretch of highway for the state. Congress has provided that the airwaves are public property. The user must be licensed, and, in the case of commercial broadcasters, that license term is for three years. There is no "right" to have the license renewed. It is renewed only if past performance, and promises of future performance, are found by the FCC to serve "the public interest." In making this finding, the views of local individuals and groups are, of course, given great weight. In extreme cases, license revocation or license renewal contest proceedings may be instituted by local groups.

You should understand the basic policy underlying the Communications Act of 1934, which set up the FCC and gave it its regulatory powers. "Spectrum space" (radio and television frequencies) in this country is limited. It must be shared by taxicabs, police cars, the Defense Department, and other business users. In many ways it would be more efficient to have a small number of extremely high-powered stations blanket the country, leaving the remaining spectrum space for other users. But Congress felt in 1934 that it was essential for the new technology of radio to serve needs, tastes, and interests at the local level—to provide community identification, cohesion, and outlets for local talent and expression. For this reason, roughly 95 per cent of the most valuable spectrum space has been handed out to some 7,500 radio and television stations in communities throughout the country. Unfortunately, the theory is not working. Most programing consists of nationally distributed records, movies, newswire copy, commercials, and network shows. Most stations broadcast very little in the way of locally oriented community service. It's up to you to make them change.

You have only to exercise your imagination to improve the programing service of your local station. Student groups, civic luncheon clubs, unions, PTAs, the League of Women Voters, and so forth are in an ideal position to accomplish change. They can contact national organizations, write for literature, and generally inform themselves of their broadcasting rights. Members can monitor what is now broadcast and draw up statements of programing standards, indicating what they would like to see with as much specificity as possible. They can set up Citizens Television Advisory Councils to issue reports on broadcasters' performance. They can send delega-

tions to visit with local managers and owners. They can, when negotiation fails, take whatever legal steps are necessary with the FCC. They can complain to sponsors, networks, and local television stations when they find commercials excessively loud or obnoxious. If you think this is dreamy, pie-in-the-sky thinking, look what local groups did in 1969.

Up for Renewal?

All licenses within a given state expire on the same date. Stations must file for license renewal with the FCC ninety days *prior* to the expiration date. Petitions to deny a station's license renewal application must be filed between ninety and thirty days *prior* to the expiration date. Forthcoming expiration dates* for stations located in the following states include:

- Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands: February 1, 1976; and 1979.
- Alabama and Georgia: April 1, 1976; and 1979.
- Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi: June 1, 1976; and 1979.
- Tennessee, Kentucky, and Indiana: August 1, 1976; and 1979.
- Ohio and Michigan: October 1, 1976; and 1979.
- Illinois and Wisconsin: December 1, 1976; and 1979.
- Iowa and Missouri: February 1, 1974; 1977; and 1980.
- Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Colorado: April 1, 1974; 1977; and 1980.
- Kansas, Oklahoma, and Nebraska: June 1, 1974; 1977; and 1980.
- Texas: August 1, 1974; 1977; and 1980.
- Wyoming, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, and Idaho: October 1, 1974; 1977; and 1980.
- California: December 1, 1974; 1977; and 1980.
- Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Guam, and Hawaii: February 1, 1975; 1978; and 1981.
- Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont: April 1, 1975; 1978; and 1981.
- New Jersey and New York: June 1, 1975; 1978; and 1981.
- Delaware and Pennsylvania: August 1, 1975; 1978; and 1981.
- Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, and West Virginia: October 1, 1975; 1978; and 1981.
- North Carolina and South Carolina: December 1, 1975; 1978; and 1981.

*Dates subject to change.

Texarkana was given national attention last year when a large magazine reported that the city's population of rats was virtually taking over the city. Of lesser notoriety, but perhaps of greater long-run significance, was an agreement hammered out between a citizens group and KTAL-TV, the local television station. In January 1969, the Texarkana Junior Chamber of Commerce and twelve local unincorporated associations—with the assistance of the Office of Communications of the United Church of Christ—filed complaints with the FCC, and alleged that KTAL-TV had failed to survey the needs of its community, had systematically refused to serve the tastes, needs, and desires of Texarkana's 26 per cent Negro population, and had maintained no color origination equipment in its Texarkana studio (although it had such equipment in the wealthier community of Shreveport, Louisiana). But they didn't stop there. Armed with the threat of a license renewal hearing, they went directly to the station's management and hammered out *an agreement* in which the station promised it would make a number of reforms, or forfeit its license. Among other provisions, KTAL-TV promised to recruit and train a staff broadly representative of all minority groups in the community; employ a minimum of two full-time Negro reporters; set up a toll-free telephone line for news and public service announcements and inquiries; present discussion programs of controversial issues, including both black and white participants; publicize the rights of the poor to obtain needed services; regularly televise announcements of the public's rights and periodically consult with all substantial groups in the community regarding their programming tastes and needs.

The seeds of citizen participation sown in Texarkana have since come to fruition elsewhere. Just recently five citizens groups negotiated agreements with twenty-two stations in Atlanta, Georgia, and similar attempts have been made in Shreveport, Louisiana; Sandersville, Georgia; Mobile, Alabama; and Jackson, Mississippi.

In Washington, D.C., . . . a group of students under the supervision of the Institute for Policy Studies undertook a massive systematic review of the license applications of all television stations in the area of Washington, D.C., Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland. They used a number of "performance charts" by which they evaluated and ranked the stations in amounts of news broadcast, news employees hired, commercials, public service announcements, and other factors. The result was a book that may become a working model for the comparative evaluation of television stations' per-

performances.* Citizens groups all over the country can easily follow their example.

I have felt for some time that it would be useful to have detailed reviews and periodic reports about the implications of specific television commercials and entertainment shows by groups of professional psychiatrists, child psychologists, educators, doctors, ministers, social scientists, and so forth. They could pick a show in the evening—any show—and discuss its esthetic quality, its accuracy, and its potential national impact upon moral values, constructive opinion, mental health, and so forth. It would be especially exciting if this critical analysis could be shown on television. Such professional comment would be bound to have *some* impact upon the networks' performance. (The 1969 *Violence Commission Report* did.) It would be a high service indeed to our nation, with rewards as well for the professional groups and individuals involved—including the broadcasting industry. It is not without precedent. The BBC formerly aired a critique of evening shows following prime-time entertainment. It would be refreshing to have a television producer's sense of status and satisfaction depend more upon the enthusiasm of the critics and audience than upon the number of cans of "feminine deodorant spray" he can sell.

These examples are only the beginning. Television could become our most exciting medium if the creative people in this country would use a fraction of their talent to figure out ways of improving it.

STEP SIX: *Get high (with a little help from your friends).* Have you ever made a film, or produced a TV documentary, or written a radio script? That's a real high. But if you're like me, you'll need help—lots of it—from your friends. If you've got something to say, find someone who's expert in communication: high school or college filmmakers, drama students, off-time TV reporters, or local CATV outlets with program origination equipment. Bring the thinkers in the community together with the media creators. CBS did it with Ed Reischauer and its one-hour special on Japan. You can do it too. Get others interested in television.†

**(IPS, Television Today: The End of Communication and the Death of Community, \$10 from the Institute for Policy Studies, 1540 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.)* Citizens groups all over the country can easily follow their example.

†A free pamphlet, "Clearing the Air," has been published by Media Ithaca, Department of Sociology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14850. It explains how average citizens can obtain free air time over radio, television, and CATV.

STEP SEVEN: *Expand your media mind.* Everyone can work for policies that increase the number of radio and television outlets, and provide individuals with access to existing outlets to express their talent or point of view. Those outlets are already numerous. There are now nearly ten times as many radio and television stations as there were thirty-five years ago. There are many more AM radio stations, including the “daytime only” stations. There is the new FM radio service. There is VHF television. And, since Congress passed the all-channel receiver law in 1962, UHF television (channels 14-83) has come alive. There are educational radio and television stations all over the country. There are “listener-supported” community radio stations (such as the Pacifica stations in New York, Los Angeles, Houston, and Berkeley). This increase in outlets has necessarily broadened the diversity of programming. However, since the system is virtually all “commercial” broadcasting, this diversity too often means simply that there are now five stations to play the “top forty” records in your city instead of two. In the past couple years, however, educational broadcasting has gained in strength with the Public Broadcasting Corporation (potentially America’s answer to the BBC). Owners of groups of profitable television stations (such as Westinghouse and Metromedia) have begun syndicating more shows—some of which subsequently get picked up by the networks.

Cable television (CATV) offers a potentially unlimited number of channels. (The present over-the-air system is physically limited to from five to ten television stations even in the largest communities.) Twelve-channel cable systems are quite common, twenty-channel systems are being installed, and more channels will undoubtedly come in the future. Your telephone, for example, is a “100-million-channel receiver” in that it can call, or be called by, any one of 100 million other instruments in this country.

Cable television offers greater diversity among commercial television programs—at the moment, mostly movies, sports, and reruns—but it can also offer another advantage: public access. The FCC has indicated that cable systems should be encouraged and perhaps ultimately required to offer channels for lease to any person willing to pay the going rate. In the *Red Lion* case, the Supreme Court upheld the FCC’s fairness doctrine and, noting the monopolistic position most broadcasters hold, suggested that “free speech” rights belong principally to the audience and those who wish to use the station, not the station owner. This concept—which might raise administrative problems for single stations—is easily adaptable to cable television.

If someone wants to place a show on a single over-the-air broadcast station, some other (generally more profitable) program must be canceled. A cable system, by contrast, can theoretically carry an unlimited number of programs at the same time. We therefore have the opportunity to require cable systems to carry whatever programs are offered on a leased-channel basis (sustained either by advertising or by subscription fee). Time might even be made available free to organizations, young film-makers, and others who could not afford the leasing fee and do not advertise or profit from their programming. Now is the time to guarantee such rights for your community. City councils all across the nation are in the process of drafting the terms for cable television franchises. If your community is at present considering a cable television ordinance, it is your opportunity to work for free and common-carrier "citizens' access" to the cables that will one day connect your home with the rest of the world.

Television is here to stay. It's the single most significant force in our society. It is now long past time that the professional and intellectual community—indeed, anyone who reads magazines and cares where this country is going—turn on to television.

BROADCAST REGULATION BY CONTRACT: SOME OBSERVATIONS ON "COMMUNITY CONTROL" OF BROADCASTING

Richard Jencks

As America enters the second year of the decade of the Seventies, its most characteristic protest movement is no longer the Civil Rights Movement—or the Peace Movement—or the revolt of youth.

Instead, it is that combination of causes which has been summarized by the awkward word "consumerism." . . .

The consumerism movement is in many ways typically American. It is reformist in its objectives, populist in its rhetoric, intensely pragmatic in its methods. . . .

On issues ranging from the ecological impact of pesticides to the urgent need for automobile safety, and from thermal pollution to the

Richard W. Jencks, Vice-President, CBS Washington, delivered these remarks on "Broadcast Regulation by Private Contract: Some Observations on 'Community Control' of Broadcasting" at the 1971 Broadcasting Industry Symposium, Washington, D.C. This edited version is used with his permission.

SST, consumerism is persuading the public to demand of government that it reorder its priorities, and that it pay less attention to conventional notions of progress.

In all of these activities the aim of consumerism was to induce government action, whether by the executive branch, by the Congress, or by regulatory agencies.

In broadcasting, consumerism has stimulated regulatory action in a number of areas, of which one of the most notable was in connection with the broadcast advertising of cigarettes.

Consumerism is responsible for another development in the broadcast field in which its role is quite different—in which it seeks not so much to encourage regulatory action as to *substitute* for government regulation a novel kind of private regulation.

That development is a trend toward regulation of broadcasting through contracts entered into by broadcast licensees with private groups—contracts entered into in consideration of the settlement of license challenges. This form of regulation has been called the “community control” of broadcasting. It begins with the monitoring and surveillance of a broadcast station by the group. It ends with the group’s use of the license renewal process in such a way as to achieve a greater or lesser degree of change in—and in some cases continuing supervision of—a broadcast station’s policies, personnel and programming. . . .

A strategy was developed in which a community group would, prior to the deadline for a station’s renewal application, make demands for changes in a station’s policies. If a station granted these demands they would be embodied in a contract and embodied, as well, in the station’s renewal application. If a station refused to grant these demands the group would file a petition to deny renewal of the station’s license. Such a petition, if alleging significant failures by the licensee to perform his obligations, can be expected to bring about a full-scale FCC hearing. As a result, there is obviously a powerful incentive in these situations, even for the best of stations, to try to avoid a lengthy, costly and burdensome hearing by attempting to reach an agreement with such a group. . . .

Probably the most fundamental demand made in recent license challenges is that a large percentage of the station’s weekly schedule be programmed with material defined as “relevant” to the particular community group—usually an ethnic group—making the demand. . . . The demands I am referring to here go far beyond even what the most responsive broadcast stations have done in the way of local public service programming or what the FCC has expected of them.

In one recent case it amounted to a demand that more than 40 percent of a station's total programming schedule must be programmed with material defined as "relevant" to the minority group. . . .

Philosophically, this kind of demand raises a basic question as to the purpose of a mass medium in a democratic society. Should the broadcast medium be used as a way of binding its audience together through programming which cuts across racial and cultural lines? Or should it be used as a means of communicating separately with differentiated segments of its audience? . . .

It seems possible that there is a strong thread of racial separatism in the demand for relevance. Like the demand of some black college students for segregated dormitories, it may be regarded in large part as a demand for segregated programming. . . .

Connected with the notion of relevance is the interesting idea that programming done as part of a requirement of "relevance" must be an accurate reflection of the "life-style" of the particular minority community.

The director of a national organization whose purpose is to encourage license challenges by local groups recently spelled out what he meant by the idea of the truthful portrayal of a life-style. On his arrival in Dayton, Ohio, to organize license challenges by local groups there *Variety* described his views as follows: "If one third of Dayton's population is black, then one third of radio and TV programming should be beamed to the black community. And this should be produced, directed and presented by blacks." Referring to *JULIA*, the NBC situation comedy, he was then quoted by *Variety* as saying: "How many black women really live like *JULIA*? I'd like to see her get pregnant—with no husband. That would be a real life situation."

Now, I think that was meant seriously and it is worth taking seriously. . . .

Considerations like these go directly to the heart of what a mass medium is, and how it should be used. We live in an era in which the mass media have been dying off one by one. Theatrical motion pictures are no longer a mass medium and less and less a popular art form. They now reach relatively small and diverse social groups—not infrequently, I might add, with strong depictions of social realism. They no longer reach the population at large. Magazines, once our most potent mass medium, are almost extinct as such. There are plenty of magazines to be sure, but almost all serve narrow audiences. . . . Central city newspapers, as suburbanization continues, find their ability to reach megalopolitan areas steadily decreasing. . . .

Television can be said to be the only remaining mass medium which is capable of reaching most of the people most of the time. Is it important to preserve television as a mass medium? I think so. I think so particularly when I consider the racial problem in this country.

For the importance of television as a mass medium has not been in what has been communicated *to* minorities as such—or what has been communicated *between* minority group leaders and their followers—but in what has been communicated *about* minorities *to the general public*. . . .

Such communication occurs when programs are produced for dissemination to a mass audience for the purpose of *uniting* that audience in the knowledge of a problem, or in the exposure to an experience, not for the purpose of fragmenting that audience by aiming only at what is deemed “relevant” by leaders of a single minority group. . . .

I referred earlier to the excoriation by some black leaders of NBC’s *JULIA*, the first situation comedy to star a black woman. The question may well be asked whether the shift for the better in white American attitudes about black people is not more likely to have been caused by programs like *JULIA*—and by the startling increase in the number of black faces on other television entertainment programs which began in the mid-60s—as it is to any other single cause.

No one should doubt that racial attitudes *have* changed, even though much remains to be done. A Gallup poll, published last May, asked white parents in the South whether they would object to sending their children to school where any Negroes were enrolled. In 1963, in answer to the same question, *six* out of every *ten* white parents in the South had told Gallup pollsters that they would object to sending their children to schools where any Negroes were enrolled. In 1970, seven years later, according to Gallup, only *one* parent in *six* offered such an objection. Other recent public opinion polls show similar gains in white attitude toward blacks. . . .

These advances in the direction of an integrated society were made possible in part, I suggest, by a mass medium which, with all its faults, increasingly *depicted* an integrated society. . . . Americans who in their daily lives seldom or rarely deal on terms of social intimacy with black people have been seeing them on the television screen night after night for some years now. . . .

If audience fragmentation to meet the special requirements of minority groups would destroy television as a *local* mass medium it would, by the same token, of course, make impossible the continu-

ance of network television as a *national* mass medium. Again, some might welcome this. Some think it might happen anyway. John Tebbel, writing recently in *The Saturday Review*, observed: "There is no reason to suppose that network television is immune to the forces that are gradually breaking up other national media." He does not, however, celebrate that possibility. "It is seldom realized," writes Tebbel, "how much network television binds the nation together. . . . To fragment television coverage into local interests might better serve the communities, as the egalitarians fashionably argue, but it would hardly serve the national interest which in the end is everyone's interest."

I have discussed what seems to me to be the basic objective of community group demands upon the media—the fragmentation of programming to serve what are perceived as ethnically relevant interests.

The *means* used by the community groups may have an important impact on the nature of American broadcast regulation, and in particular upon the FCC. Commissioner Johnson often has provocative insights and this instance is no exception. He has praised the idea of regulation by community groups and has called upon his colleagues on the Commission to, in his words, "set a powerful precedent to encourage local public interest groups to fight as 'private attorney generals' in forcing stations to do what the FCC is unable or unwilling to do: improve licensee performance."

This puts the question quite precisely. *Should* private groups be encouraged to do what official law enforcement bodies are "unable or unwilling to do"? In particular, should they police a licensee by means of exploiting the power of that very regulatory agency which is said to be "unable or unwilling" to do so?

It would seem that to ask the question is to answer it. Despite the trend of vigilantism in the Old West, it is not a theory of law enforcement which has found many supporters in recent times.

In the first place, private enforcement is unequal. Although Commissioner Johnson may refer to the role of these groups as that of "private attorney generals," they do not act as a *public* attorney general has to act; the demands they make on a television or radio station are rarely if ever concerned with any constituents other than their own.

In the second place, private law enforcement is hard to control. Whenever law enforcement depends on the action of private groups, the question of private power is apt to become all too important. A medium which can be coerced by threat of license contest into

making such concessions to black or Spanish-speaking groups can as readily be coerced by a coalition of white ethnic groups. More so, in fact, since in most American cities there is, and will continue to be for some time, a white majority. To expect a situation to exist for long in which tiny minority groups can coerce stations into providing special treatment, and not to expect the majority to seek the same power over the station, is to expect, in Jefferson's famous phrase, "what never was and never will be."

Clearly there is at the heart of this matter a broad question of public policy—namely, whether public control of licensee conduct should be supplemented by any form of private control. It is plain that the encouragement of "private attorney generals" will result to some degree in the evasion of the legal and constitutional restraints which have been placed upon the regulation of broadcasting in this country. . . .

For a weak broadcaster, if not a strong one, will doubtless be found agreeable to entering into a contract under which he will be required to do many things which the Commission itself either *cannot do, does not wish to do or has not yet decided to do*. . . .

All this might be questionable enough if community group leaders were clearly representative, under some democratically controlled process, of the individuals for whom they speak. However public spirited or *bona fide* their leadership, however, this is rarely the case. The groups making these challenges are loosely organized and tiny in membership. Not infrequently, the active members of a group seeking to contract with stations in a city of several million number scarcely more than a few dozen.

So far the effectiveness of community group strategy has rested upon the paradoxical willingness of the Commission to tacitly support these groups and their objectives. . . . Many of those who believe that the Commission is a "do-nothing" agency may not be concerned with where regulation by private contract is likely to lead. Others may feel that to weaken duly constituted regulatory authority by condoning such private action is, in the long run, to make the performance of broadcast stations subject to undue local community pressures. These pressures may not always be exerted in socially desirable ways.

Not long ago the Commission held that it was wrong for a broadcast licensee to settle claims made against it by a community group by the payment of a sum of money to the group even for the group's legal expenses. The Commission felt that this would open the way to possibility of abuse, to the detriment of the public interest.

But nonmonetary considerations which flow from the station to a community group can be just as detrimental. Suppose, for example, a weak or unwise station were to give a community group special opportunities to influence the coverage of news. Is such a concession less damaging to the public interest than the payment of money? . . . I mentioned early in this talk that the consumerism movement, at its best, is in many ways fully within the American tradition. . . . But it must be added that the movement is also typically American in its excesses. It is sometimes puritanical, usually self-righteous and often, in its concern with ends, careless about means.

The American system of broadcasting, while not perfect, has made real contributions to the public good and social unity. It has done this through the interaction of private licensees, in their role as trustees of the public interest, on the one hand, and the authority of government through an independent nonpartisan regulatory agency. Heretofore in this country when we have spoken about the community, we have generally meant the community as a whole, acting through democratic and representative processes.

I suggest that those who are interested in the quality of life in this country—as it pertains to the preservation of a vigorous and independent broadcast press—should wish to see that private community groups do not supplant the role either of the broadcaster or of the Commission.

VOICES ON THE CABLE: CAN THE PUBLIC BE HEARD?

Barry Head

If things keep going the way they are going now (and that's what things generally do), cable communication will soon be chalked up on the Big Board of our social stock exchange alongside all those other issues: poverty, crime, environment, war, urban decay, civil rights, transportation, and so on. When that happens we will have yet one more subject for experts to disagree about and for the rest of us to avoid on the ground that there's nothing we can do about it. At

Barry Head is director, Workshop on Public-Interest Communications, Education Development Center, Newton, Mass. He has been associate producer of "The Advocates" for PBS. Copyright 1973 by Minneapolis Star and Tribune Co., Inc. Reprinted from the March 1973 issue of *Harper's Magazine* by permission of the author.

that point, we will doubtless sit around blaming inaccessible experts and shadowy corporations for the grotesque shape of our wired-up nation.

Then, perhaps in the pages of this very magazine, some irritating social historian will point out that cable communication was not a "problem" at all. It was, instead, an instrument of such enormous power that it held the promise of solutions to our *real* social problems. Worst of all, the decisions that finally rendered the instrument inaccessible, or ineffectual, or both, were not, in fact, made in unreachable boardrooms and distant corridors of government; they were made at the municipal level where franchises to wire up individual communities were handed out—by local, identifiable, flesh-and-blood decision-makers to whom each of us had access and whom each of us could have influenced.

As local cable systems begin to interconnect, they will form a kind of electronic railway system that will span the nation. There will be railheads and switching yards in thousands of communities, and from these will run dozens of feeder lines into virtually every home. What will be remarkable will not be the clarity of picture—which is all most people now associate with "being on the cable"—but the flexibility, the practically limitless capacity, and the viewer-response capability of this new communications configuration. Freed from the tyranny of one-way transmission over the airwaves' limited spectrum space, we will have a cornucopian abundance of wide, continuous, two-way frequencies that can handle all our communications needs—from an electronic impulse to instantaneous mail transmission to a printout of any book in the Library of Congress.

It will be tragic indeed if the only cargoes that move on these rails are thousands of reels of old film, thousands of tapes of game shows and situation comedies, thousands of exhortations to buy thousands of products, and thousands of hours of useless information. What is at stake is nothing less than a chance for us, collectively, to bring coordination to our disjointed society, and for each of us, individually, to become an identifiable, responsive, and significant member of that body. More specifically, cable communication could:

- give us new access to our decision-makers;
- provide a survival kit for the disadvantaged by bringing them essential information on employment, housing, health, nutrition, day care, and other assistance in providing for their needs;
- significantly raise the level of public education uniformly across the nation, ease overcrowded classrooms, offset the shortage

of teachers by giving everyone electronic access to continuing education;

- provide the means to monitor and combat environmental deterioration;
- open new international perspectives on ourselves and others by clarifying our different aspirations while emphasizing the commonality of many of our problems;
- permit the population of our overcrowded cities to disperse, enable those who remain to form cohesive communities with easy and effective access to each other and to the central urban entity;
- enable minority interest groups to reach their members, each other, and the rest of us, giving the “right of a minority to become a majority” a new practical validity;
- lessen the likelihood of violence born of the inability to communicate anxieties and grievances;
- bring new methods to bear on crime prevention and control;
- carry family-planning information beyond the reach of field workers to those who most need it;
- obviate unnecessary business trips by making two-way video communication, data transmission, and facsimile printout possible.

These are but a few of the more obvious changes that cable communication could make in our lives. (The details of how they may come about—together with the new problems cable may usher in—can be found in the sources mentioned on page 45.) But while there is consensus among communications experts that cable offers us a potent new problem-solving instrument, there is also agreement that the tool may never take realizable form. The chances of the experts being proved right increase enormously so long as an uninformed and largely uninterested public considers the question somebody else’s business. The worst error is the assumption that the whole thing will one day be properly resolved in Washington.

But wait, you say, there are all those good men in Congress . . . No, there aren’t. A well-informed official who deals with Congress over cable issues puts it this way: “There are perhaps ten men on the Hill who understand what cable communication is about—and that’s being generous.” Chances are the Congressmen *you* elected don’t even know what CATV stands for.

. . . and there’s the Federal Communications Commission . . . In fact, the FCC’s vacillating attitude toward the growth of cable has been another clear indication (as if yet another were needed) that it

does not and cannot speak for the public interest. One of the FCC's most serious problems is the complete lack of leadership from Congress. Unsurprisingly, the FCC has a history of mediation between competing industry and government interests rather than one of statesmanlike trusteeship of the public airwaves. In addition, the FCC may well be the most understaffed, underfinanced, and overpressured regulatory agency in Washington. It won't help you in Dubuque.

... and the *Office of Telecommunications Policy* . . . The OTP is the three-year-old communications arm of the Executive Office of the President. It runs on an annual budget of \$2.6 million, and its functions, according to its highly controversial director, Clay T. ("Tom") Whitehead, are as follows:

First, the Director of the Office is the President's principal adviser on electronic communications policy. Second, the Office enables the Executive Branch to speak with a clearer voice on communications matters and to be a more responsible partner in policy discussions with Congress, the FCC, the industry and the public. Third, the Office formulates new policy and coordinates operations for the Federal Government's own very extensive use of electronic communications.

"We like to think that we are representing the public interest," says Brian Lamb, the thirty-one-year-old assistant to the director for Congressional and media relations, but clearly there is scant room for that role in the Office's job description. Moreover, there is no identifiable "public" with which the Office might act as a "responsible partner."

... and the *Cable Television Information Center* . . . The newly established CTIC, a semiautonomous unit within the Urban Institute, stands quite apart from the regulators, the lawmakers, and the policymakers. Funded by \$3 million from the Ford and Markle Foundations, the Washington-based Center is headed by a wunderkind named W. Bowman Cutter. Faulted by his adversaries for being short of field experience in cable communications, Cutter—and his youthful staff—is nonetheless highly knowledgeable about cable and its implications. "Cable communications," Cutter says, "present *the* critical test of whether or not we can manage our technology." The Center's charter is to "provide to government agencies and to the public the results of objective, nonpartisan analyses and studies and technical assistance about cable television. The Center will also attempt to assist state governments in their regulatory decisions regarding cable television; and provide, when needed, information regarding federal government policy toward cable."

But though the Center will, according to Cutter, "make clear that its function is to serve the public interest," the individual citizen or citizen coalition will find it little help; it shuns advocacy. Its job is to provide the facts, just the facts, on request.

... and *Publi-Cable, Inc.* Springing bravely through the Washington mulch, *Publi-Cable* is a voice of *pure* advocacy with no organization, no office, no money, and, as of its recent first birthday, minimal influence. "We're an ad hoc group, a brush-fire operation," concedes Dr. Harold Wigren, director of *Publi-Cable* as well as educational telecommunications specialist for the National Education Association. "We're trying to alert as many communities as possible to the dangers and opportunities in the franchise decisions made by their local officials. But there aren't many of us and we've all got other jobs. We're spread pretty thin." Out of more than 150 individuals representing various groups concerned about cable, a core of sixty or so meets every month in Washington. They are a well-connected lot, and their influence, small though it may be, is well directed and quite out of proportion to their number. Such loose consortia, however, are always prey to internal dissension, suffer from financial anemia, lack long-range strategies, and have no way of ensuring the stability or rational behavior of local groups that may spring up in their wake. *Publi-Cable* is no exception; it certainly cannot be regarded as heralding sustained public attention to the future configuration of our wired-up nation.

But isn't there a National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting? The NCCB, Thomas Hoving's once-bright hope for reforming broadcasting in this country, has imploded. All that remains in Washington is a tiny holding operation in a signless, unnumbered room in the back of the United Presbyterian Church's headquarters way out by American University. There are a paper board of trustees and a fitful newsletter. There is vague talk of resurgence.

Who, then, will speak for you during the next several years as our new communications systems take shape? The simple truth is that there is no voice with a broad public constituency to address the all-important questions of uses and programming. (Critically short of manpower and resources, even the New York-based Office of Communications of the United Church of Christ—that redoubtable and astonishingly effective manifestation of the Church Militant—will reach few communities.) You will have to make yourself heard where you live, and the costs and benefits of local action vs. inaction are indicated by two examples.

- By the time that an Illinois state statute authorized municipi-

palities to grant cable franchises in 1965, Peoria—in a sealed-bid process with no public hearings, no citizen involvement, and no outside consultation—had contracted an agreement with General Electric Cablevision that included no specific performance requirements. Six years later no cable had been laid. “In January 1971,” says Peoria’s corporation counsel, Paul Knapp, “we asked GE to renegotiate. Cable technology had changed a lot, and there were experiences in other cities to learn from. GE refused and insisted on sticking to the old contract. Because nothing had been done—no studies, nothing—we declared them in default in February and considered the contract invalidated. In April GE took us to court to challenge our action. In December the court decided in their favor, holding that because the city had failed to act affirmatively during the intervening years it had effectively waived its rights to invalidation. We appealed. The appellate court sustained the trial court’s decision. I am now recommending we appeal to the Illinois Supreme Court.”

The other side of the argument is presented by Boyd Goldsworthy, whose Peoria firm of Goldsworthy & Fifield is representing GE Cablevision. The trouble, says Goldsworthy, lay in FCC restrictions on importing programming from distant markets—in this case bringing, say, Chicago and St. Louis channels to Peoria cable subscribers. Precluded from offering this inducement to subscribers, GE Cablevision believed that building a Peoria system would be economically unfeasible—a contention with which Paul Knapp, naturally, disagrees. Who is in the right may be a murky question, but for the average Peorian the consequences of inattention are crystal clear: his city is involved in expensive and lengthy litigation; he has none of the benefits that cable could bring, and he may lack them for a long time to come.

- The experience in another heartland city, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, was dramatically different. There, the city manager, Gordon Jaeger, had already weathered a four-and-a-half-year franchise struggle as city manager of Normal, Illinois. Soon after taking the Oshkosh post, Jaeger recommended to his city council that they employ a consultant and draw up a model cable ordinance *before* they were faced with deciding among contenders. With the help of a veteran consultant, Robert A. Brooks of the Chesterfield, Missouri, firm of Telcom Engineering, Inc., a model was duly adopted. Bids were solicited and three subsequently received. The job of evaluating the competitors was turned over to a small but representative citizens committee, and the franchise was granted to the Cypress Communications Corporation of Los Angeles (now a part of Warner Communications), which,

unlike the other two bidders, accepted a September 1973 deadline for commencement of service. What is Oshkosh getting? A thirty-six channel cable system in which two channels are reserved for municipal use and two for public access on a first-come first-served basis—in both instances an allocation twice the minimum FCC requirement.

But in addition Oshkosh is getting a separate, two-way, twelve-channel “loop” interconnecting the University of Wisconsin, all public and private schools, the Fox Valley Technical Institute, the library, and the museum. Robert Snyder, the coordinator of radio, TV, and film for the university and a member of the citizens committee, expects a major payoff to be in community-wide curriculum development and teacher training. “But although the loop will be primarily a closed circuit,” Snyder explains, “programs on it can be fed into the regular cable system. Thus the possibilities for adult education in general are enormous.” The greatest danger is that the loop will stand idle. To prevent this eventuality, Gordon Jaeger has appointed a twelve-member committee to plan now how it can best be put to use.

Few communities will be as fortunate as Oshkosh in having a knowledgeable city manager, concerned key citizens, and a progressive cable company with which to work. The operative question, then, is what can the rest of us realistically try to do? Influencing the FCC is an unlikely option. Within the FCC’s bailiwick logically lie considerations of copyright, assurance of service to all sectors of the public, minimum technical standards and channel allocations, non-discriminatory access, and limits to concentration of ownership. Shaping even the broad outlines of these important areas, which is all the FCC will do, should provide ample grounds for combat, but only the most sophisticated citizens and citizen groups will have the ability to enter the fray at the national level.

State government is a good deal more accessible and must be forced to play a leadership role. Governor Patrick Lucey of Wisconsin impaneled a blue-ribbon citizens committee to hold hearings all over his state—a laudable initiative but one that also demonstrated the difficulty of arousing citizen interest without local groundwork by library associations, religious organizations, PTAs, and similar centers of social concern. (All such associations, at the national, regional, and local level, should place on their agendas the dual question: “What can cable mean to us and what can we do about it?”). Last May, Governor Nelson Rockefeller signed a bill to create a five-member commission that will regulate the growth of cable in New York. The commission will set franchising guidelines for local governments,

regulate contract obligations between cable companies and their subscribers, set rates, and oversee the coordination of separate systems. Few states are taking any interest in cable, however, and while the layman may well hesitate to enter hassles over the details of state regulation, there is no excuse for tolerating a recklessly high level of ignorance and apathy on the part of state officials. We are all adequately equipped to ask the offices of our secretaries of state what attention is being paid to the growth of cable and to urge that a responsible commission be established or that other appropriate action be taken.

But the most important determinations of what we see on our local cable systems—how much of it and whether it is cumulatively a positive, negative, or irrelevant influence on our immediate community—will be made much closer to home in our town halls. Here, we can help shape the details of the franchise, applying our own perceptions, needs, and desires. Here, as individuals or in small coalitions, we can monitor the acquisitiveness of cable interests, the defensiveness of entrenched broadcasting interests, and the heedlessness of the officials empowered to act on our behalf.

Three actions are immediately appropriate for every citizen:

1. Call your corporation counsel (town attorney) and find out where your community's franchise stands. Has one been granted? On what terms? Is a grant pending? What is your town's franchising authority?

2. Inform yourself. Two important and comprehensible sources for basic information on cable communications are *On the Cable*, the report of the Sloan Commission on Cable Communications (McGraw-Hill, cloth, \$7.95; paper, \$2.95) and *Cable Television: A Guide for Citizen Action* by Monroe Price and John Wicklein (Pilgrim Press, \$2.95). An excellent survey of the history, technology, and implications of cable is to be found in *The Wired Nation* by Ralph Lee Smith (Harper Colophon, \$1.95). Ben Bagdikian's *The Information Machines* (Harper & Row, \$8.95) is a useful survey of mass media—past, present, and future.

3. Join a citizens-concerned-about-cable group in your community. If there isn't one, start one or act as an individual. The *Guide for Citizen Action* mentioned above will help you; if, having read it, you still don't know how to proceed, get in touch with Publi-Cable, c/o The National Education Association, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, phone: (202) 833-4120; or the Office of Communications, United Church of Christ, 287 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10010, phone: (212) 475-2121.

Finally, though each community will present a different mosaic of issues, interests, and alignments, at least three principles for citizen action should hold true in all cases:

1. Insist on widely publicized public hearings well before franchise decisions are to be made. A community needs ample time to identify all its options and to air all its viewpoints.

2. Avoid the simplistic “good guys vs. bad guys” trap. There are many legitimate interests competing in the cable controversy. Speedy cable penetration *is* in the public interest, and this means providing adequate economic incentive to offset the enormous capital investment needed to build a system. Although the huge multiple-system owners bear watching, they are *not* automatically the enemy; they may be the only entrepreneurs who can afford to extend cable’s range of services. Wholesale destruction of existing broadcast structures is *not* in the public interest, and this means providing some economic safeguards. Successful pursuit of elusive public interest is more likely through statesmanlike compromise than through shrill consumerism.

3. Let nothing be given away for too long and without provisions for frequent periodic review. Nobody knows for sure what configurations of ownership and technology will serve what social and economic needs and produce what social and economic effects. Thus, while it may be necessary to grant a ten-year franchise in order to ensure incentive, development, and stability, such a franchise should stipulate at least biennial amendment. This is necessarily a period of trial and error; make sure that what goes wrong today can be set right tomorrow.

These simple actions and basic rules of thumb are well within any citizen’s capability and, if taken and followed, should have a profound effect on how our inexpert experts wire us together. The single clear question we all face is this: “Are the implications of cable serious enough to warrant my participation?” If our conclusion is no, it should be a no of decision rather than of oversight, and before arriving at that conclusion it would be well to ponder Fred Friendly’s words in *Due to Circumstances Beyond Our Control*:

The great malfeasances against the people of our country are more an indictment of the society that permitted them to happen than of the individual rogues who committed the frauds. In the case of television, it isn’t a question of scoundrels or frauds; rather an indifferent society has given away more than it was ever entitled to, like an executor who permitted the trust in his care to be squandered.

Noting the imminence of revolutionary new technology, Friendly concluded:

If indifference and naïveté caused us to give away our electronic inheritance when the industry was in its untested infancy, to do so again with the stakes so high would be little short of cultural suicide.

Cultural suicide is a dire eventuality indeed. But if things keep going the way they are going now (and that's what things generally do—unless each of us takes a hand in stopping them), it could just come to that.

A Guide to CATV

Communicating via cable is, in itself, old hat. In Budapest in the 1890s there was a wired audio system providing music, market reports, and even news-on-the-hour. It was, in fact, the wireless nature of the airwaves that made broadcasting seem such a miracle—so much so that returning to earth and using cable for picture transmission seems to many faintly regressive.

The first cable television systems in the U.S. were started in Pennsylvania and Oregon about 1950. In communities that were too distant from broadcasting stations or that were situated in rugged terrain, a master antenna was placed at some advantageous elevation and cables were laid to subscribers' houses, bringing them amplified signals that produced strong, clear pictures. From this arrangement arose the name Community Antenna Television (CATV).

By 1955 there were about 400 cable systems in the U.S. By 1965 there were more than 1,000. [In 1973, an estimated 2,883 operating cable systems were serving 6.0 million homes—roughly 9 percent of the total number of homes with television. About two-thirds of all systems have fewer than 2,000 subscribers.] Most of them carry twelve or fewer channels.

The load-carrying and two-way capacity of the coaxial cable has opened up remarkable possibilities. One of the first, naturally enough, was to originate supplementary programming available only to a particular system's subscribers. In addition to picking up off-the-air TV signals, about 40 percent of the existing cable systems offer their own automatic programming. About one-fifth of the existing systems also provide local live programming such as sports, city council meetings, and entertainment programs. As cable systems are coupled with computers to exploit their switching and storing abilities, subscribers will be able to send, receive, and retrieve at will vast quantities of information by punching out specific, coded requests on small, push-button consoles next to their sets. The simple days of passive television as we now know it will then have ended. The "boob tube" will have become a video sender-receiver with which we

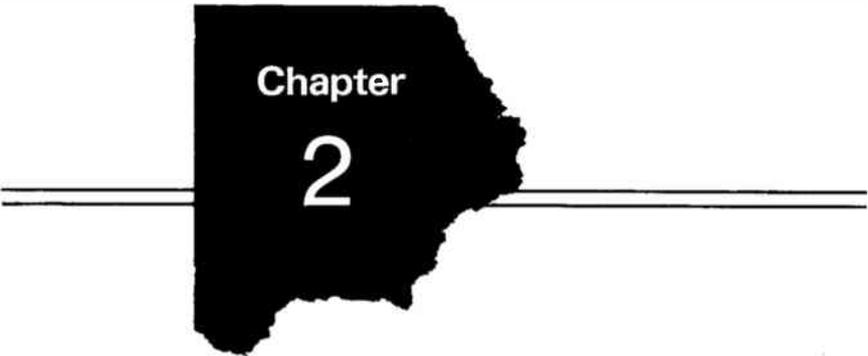
can, from our homes, enter the warehouses of man's knowledge, speak and be heard, see and be seen.

Edwin Parker, a professor of communications at Stanford, and Donald Dunn, a professor of engineering economic systems there, have proposed the creation of a "national information utility" that would use cable communications' potential to the fullest (*Science*, June 30, 1972):

The social goal of such an information utility could be to provide all persons with equal opportunity of access to all available public information about society, government, opportunities, products, entertainment, knowledge, and educational services. From the subscriber's perspective such a system would look like a combination of a television set, telephone, and typewriter. It would function as a combined library, newspaper, mail order catalog, post office, classroom, and theater.

This is no distant dream; these services, they claim, could be brought to most U.S. homes by 1985. Barry Head's article suggests that whether we get the benefits of this technology—then or ever—depends largely on you.





Chapter

2

Increasing Control of the Mass Media

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EXTERNAL CONTROLS: CITIZEN REVIEW

A NATIONAL NEWS COUNCIL

The United States is now passing through an era marked by divisive, often bitter, social conflict. New groups have coalesced to assault the privileges of the established; new ideas have arisen to challenge the validity of the old. Stridency and partisanship, militancy and defiance are in the air.

Reporting the news has always meant telling people things they may not want to hear. In times of social conflict, this task is all the more difficult. Skepticism turns to cynicism. Detachment is too often perceived as hostility. The clamor to "tell it like it is" too often carries with it the threat to "tell it like we see it, or else." The Greeks were not alone in wanting to condemn the bearer of bad tidings.

Disaffection with existing institutions, prevalent in every sector of society, has spread to the media of public information—newspapers and magazines, radio and television. Their accuracy, fairness, and responsibility have come under challenge. The media have found their credibility questioned, their freedom threatened, by public officials whose own credibility depends on the very media they attack and by citizens whose own freedom depends on the very institutions they threaten.

A free society cannot endure without a free press, and the freedom of the press ultimately rests on public understanding of, and trust in, its work.

The public as well as the press has a vital interest in enhancing the credibility of the media and in protecting their freedom of ex-

A task force of the Twentieth Century Fund prepared this proposal, which was published in *A Free and Responsive Press: The Twentieth Century Fund Task Force Report for a National News Council*. Copyright 1972 by the Twentieth Century Fund, New York.

pression. One barrier to credibility is the absence in this country of any established national and independent mechanism for hearing complaints about the media or for examining issues concerning freedom of the press. Accordingly, this Task Force proposes:

That an independent and private national news council be established to receive, to examine, and to report on complaints concerning the accuracy and fairness of news reporting in the United States, as well as to initiate studies and report on issues involving the freedom of the press. The council shall limit its investigations to the principal national suppliers of news—the major wire services, the largest “supplemental” news services, the national weekly news magazines, national newspaper syndicates, national daily newspapers, and the nationwide broadcasting networks.

As a result of economic changes and technological advances, these few giant news organizations, with their unprecedented news gathering resources, now provide the majority of Americans with most of their national and international news. The Associated Press and United Press International, the two principal wire services, supply material to 99 percent of all daily newspapers as well as to most radio and television stations. Complementing these facilities are the major nationwide radio-television networks, the national weekly news magazines, national newspaper syndicates, nationwide daily newspapers (the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Christian Science Monitor*), and the “supplemental” news services, increasingly comprehensive wire services sold to large and small newspapers by organizations such as *The New York Times* and, jointly, *The Washington Post* and *The Los Angeles Times*.

This concentration of nationwide news organizations—like other large institutions—has grown increasingly remote from and unresponsive to the popular constituencies on which they depend and which depend on them. The national media council proposed by this Task Force will serve its purpose most effectively by focusing on the major national suppliers.

Publishers and broadcasters are justifiably suspicious of any proposal—no matter how well intended—that might compromise editorial independence, appear to substitute an outsider’s judgment for that of responsible editors, ensnare newsmen in time-consuming ex-

planations, or lend itself to the long-term undermining of press freedom. The press of the United States is among the best in the world and still improving, but it fails to meet some of the standards of its critics, among them, journalists. Moreover, a democratic society has a legitimate and fundamental interest in the quality of information available to it. Until now, the citizen who was without benefit of special office, organization, or resources had no place to bring his complaints. Until now, neither the public nor the national news media have been able to obtain detached and independent appraisals when fairness and representativeness were questioned. The proposed council is intended to provide this recourse for both the public and the media.

The Council is not a panacea for the ills of the press or a court weighing complaints about the responsibility of the press. With its limited scope and lack of coercive power, the Council will merely provide an independent forum for public and press discussion of important issues affecting the flow of information.

Editors and publishers may fear that a media council will stimulate public hostility; some even suspect that it might curtail rather than preserve their freedom. The core of the media council idea, however, is the effort to make press freedom more secure by providing an independent forum for debate about media responsibility and performance, so that such debate need not take place in government hearing rooms or on the political campaign trail. The Task Force unanimously believes that government should not be involved in the evaluation of press practices. The Task Force also recognizes that there is concern about the relationship of press council procedures to the confidentiality of news sources. It is convinced that the founders must address themselves to the issue of confidentiality in the charter and the Council must respect and uphold essential First Amendment rights by maintaining confidentiality of news sources and of material gathered in news production in its proceedings.*

*Hereafter asterisk indicates point on which Richard Salant abstains. [Ed. note: Task Force member Richard Salant is president of CBS News.]

The idea of a national council is not new. Sweden and Great Britain have had press councils for many years and one recently was set up in New Zealand. Britain's council, composed of private citizens and journalists, most closely resembles what the Task Force proposes.† Although the British council has not achieved all of its objectives in the past decade it has won substantial acceptance.

In the United States, a number of communities and one state—Minnesota—have in recent years established press councils. Some are no longer active; all appear to have been constructive regardless of their longevity, and experience has brought increasing accomplishment and decreasing mortality.

Significantly, the most recent and ambitious undertaking, Minnesota's, was initiated by a newspaper association. This development suggests that as in Britain, opposition may be converted to neutrality and even support, as experience and objective observation dispel myths about the aims and operations of press councils.

Although the American Society of Newspaper Editors and other associations have failed to implement proposals for journalistic "ethics" or "grievance" machinery, investigations by this Task Force indicate that a substantial number of editors, publishers, and broadcasters will participate in a council experiment. As an editorial in the November 28, 1970, issue of *Editor and Publisher* observed: "News-

†Immediately after World War II, Britain was shaken by political and social dissonance similar to that of the United States today. Press mergers, closings, and allegations of sensationalism and slanting of news generated public concern and debate in and out of Parliament. The result of this debate was a Royal Commission investigation. The report of the commission recommended, among other measures, the creation of a private press council, to hear and act on complaints about the press and to speak in defense of press freedom when appropriate. Broadcasting (then only the government-sponsored BBC) was excluded from the recommendation.

Newspaper proprietors deliberated at length and delayed action for months; then agreed to a council with no public members. In 1963, after further Parliamentary threats and another Royal Commission report, the present successful citizen-journalist council was established.

Twenty of the Council's twenty-five members are chosen by eight publisher and journalistic staff organizations; the remaining five are public members elected for fixed terms by the Council. The chairman is also a public member. (Lord Devlin, one of Britain's most prominent judges was the Council's first public chairman.) The secretariat is composed of three professional journalists. The Council's only power lies in the publicity given its findings. Its expenses—slightly more than \$70,000 a year—are borne entirely by national press organizations.

"Foreigners who study the British Press Council usually come away in a mixed mood of admiration and bafflement," according to Vincent S. Jones, former executive editor of the *Gannet Newspaper Editors*. "It ought not to work, they feel, but somehow it does."

paper editors and publishers will never stand in the way of organizing such councils, but very few of them will be prime movers in setting them up.”

The most frequently advanced proposal—a comprehensive nationwide press council on the British model—is impractical, if not undesirable, in the United States. The vastness and regional diversity of the United States, the number of individual publications and broadcasting stations, and problems of logistics and expense all militate against the formation of a comprehensive nationwide council. The weighing of one journalistic practice in New England against another in Arizona would present an impossible task. Nevertheless, individual newspapers and radio-television stations may find it useful to participate in regional, state, or local councils that are either now in existence or yet to be formed. This Task Force encourages the establishment of such councils. Several authorities have suggested that if such a comprehensive council eventually is formed, it will most likely evolve “from the ground up,” possibly as a federation of local or regional councils. We urge that such councils be formed.

Accordingly, the Task Force makes the following recommendations for the establishment of a national council:

1. The body shall be called the Council on Press Responsibility and Press Freedom.
2. The Council’s function shall be to receive, to examine, and to report on complaints concerning the accuracy and fairness of news coverage in the United States as well as to study and to report on issues involving freedom of the press. The Council shall limit its review to news reporting by the principal national suppliers of news. Specifically identified editorial comment is excluded.
3. The principal national suppliers of news shall be defined as the nationwide wire services, the major “supplemental” wire services, the national weekly news magazines, national newspaper syndicates, national daily newspapers, nationwide commercial and noncommercial broadcast networks.
4. The Council shall consist of fifteen members, drawn from both the public and the journalism profession, but always with a public chairman. Both print and broadcast media shall be represented. No member shall be affiliated with the principal nationwide suppliers of news.*
5. A grievance committee, a subcommittee of the Council, will meet between eight and twelve times a year to screen public complaints. When appropriate, the committee and Council staff will engage teams of experts to investigate complaints.
6. The Council shall meet regularly and at such special meetings as shall be required. Its findings shall be released to the public in reports and press releases. Routine activities will be handled by a permanent

staff, consisting of an Executive Director and professional assistants. The Executive Director should have significant journalistic experience.

7. Complaints about coverage by the designated national suppliers of news shall be handled according to procedures similar to those of the British and Minnesota press councils. Thus, the procedures will include a requirement that any complainant try to resolve his grievance with the media organization involved before the Council may initiate action on a complaint. Complainants will be required to waive the right to legal proceedings in court on any matter taken up in Council proceedings.
It is expected that most complaints will be settled without recourse to formal Council action.*
8. Individuals and organizations may bring complaints to the Council. The Council may initiate inquiry into any situation where governmental action threatens freedom of the press.
9. Action by the Council will be limited to the public reporting of Council decisions. The Council will have no enforcement powers.
10. Where extensive field investigation is required, the Council may appoint fact-finding task forces.
11. The Council's executive offices shall be at a location designated by its members. Regardless of the ultimate location, the Council shall consider emphasizing its national character by scheduling at least some meetings on a rotating basis throughout the country.
12. The Task Force shall appoint a founding committee which will select the Council's original members, incorporate the Council, adopt its constitution, and establish the initial budget.
13. Terms of office shall be three years (with terms of charter members to be staggered on the basis of a drawing of lots); members shall be limited to two consecutive terms. Members must resign from the Council if they leave the vocational category which was the basis for their selection. On retirement of a Council member, the Council shall appoint a nominating committee made up of representatives from foundations, the media, and the public. The Council shall make the final selection from the choices presented to it.
14. The founding committee shall incorporate the Council and establish the initial budget for a minimum of three to six years. It is suggested that the annual budget will be approximately \$400,000.*
15. The Task Force appoints Justice Roger Traynor, former chief justice of California, head of the founding committee and chairman of the Council.
16. The Council's processes, findings, and conclusions should not be employed by government agencies, specifically the Federal Communications Commission, in its decisions on broadcast license renewals. Failure to observe this recommendation would discourage broadcasters from supporting or cooperating with the Council.

The national media council proposed here will not resolve all the problems facing the print and broadcast media, nor will it answer

all of the criticisms voiced by the public and by the politicians. It will, however, be an independent body to which the public can take its complaints about press coverage. It will act as a strong defender of press freedom. It will attempt to make the media accountable to the public and to lessen the tensions between the press and the government.

Any independent mechanism that might contribute to better public understanding of the media and that will foster accurate and fair reporting and public accountability of the press must not be discouraged or ignored. The national media council is one such mechanism that must be established now. [Ed. Note: it is now operating.]

PRESS COUNCILS IN AMERICA

Alfred Balk

The first nationally publicized proposal to establish a press council in America came from the Commission on Freedom of the Press in 1947. Funded in 1943 by publisher Henry R. Luce and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the Commission was chaired by Robert M. Hutchins, president of the University of Chicago. Members—none were journalists—included Zechariah Chafee of Harvard, Harold Lasswell of Yale, poet and former Assistant Secretary of State Archibald MacLeish, theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, economist Beardsley Ruml, and historian Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. Among its numerous recommendations was the “establishment of a new and independent agency to appraise and report annually upon the performance of the press.” The body was to be “independent of government and the press . . . be created by gifts . . . [and] be given a ten-year trial, at the end of which an audit of its achievement could determine anew the institutional form best adapted to its purposes.”

Former Senator William Benton of Connecticut proposed a similar body for radio and television in 1951, but recommended its creation by an act of Congress, with commission members to be appointed by the President. Other proposals followed.

Alfred Balk was editor of *Columbia Journalism Review* and wrote the background papers for *A Free and Responsive Press: The Twentieth Century Fund Task Force Report for a National News Council*. Copyright 1972 by the Twentieth Century Fund, New York. This article was reprinted from Mr. Balk's background report.

- In 1961, John Lofton of Stanford's Institute for Communication Research suggested an institute to monitor and report on press performance.
- In 1963, University of Minnesota Journalism Professor J. Edward Gerald asked that a national council be formed and supported by journalism's professional and educational associations.
- In 1967, journalist and media critic Ben H. Bagdikian recommended that individual universities serve as press councils for their respective states.
- A 1968 meeting, convened by the National Institute of Public Affairs in Washington, outlined a plan for a national council of distinguished laymen to oversee monitoring of both broadcasting and print media.
- In 1970, a Task Force of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence called for a national media study center "with a financing mechanism independent of the political processes; and with clearly delineated powers of monitorship, evaluation, and publication, but without sanction."

National press councils or grievance committees also have been proposed by the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the Association for Education in Journalism, and the National Conference of Editorial Writers. None of these proposals has been accepted.

According to Professor William L. Rivers of Stanford University, co-editor with William B. Blankenburg of *Backtalk: Press Councils in America* (San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1972), press councils at the local level were first suggested in the 1930s by Chilton R. Bush, head of the Department of Communication at Stanford. Though Bush promoted the idea among California publishers, there was little response until after World War II. In 1946, Raymond L. Spangler, editor of the Redwood City, California, *Tribune*, set up an advisory council of community leaders which met for about three months, and in 1950, William Townes, publisher of the Santa Rosa *Press-Democrat*, established a Citizens' Advisory Council to represent community interests such as labor, education, agriculture, city government, and business. This group lasted until Townes left the paper.

In 1951, *Editor and Publisher* said of the Council:

On the practical side this particular newspaper reports that council meetings revealed several important stories that had not been covered. And council members felt free to visit the newspaper offices thereafter, something many of them might not have thought about previously. This is an experiment in getting closer to the community which strikes us as valuable. The good points outweigh the bad, and if conducted properly and regularly can only result to the benefit of the paper.

The idea of local press councils again received national publicity in 1963 when Barry Bingham, Sr., publisher of the Louisville

Courier-Journal and *Times*, proposed to the national convention of Sigma Delta Chi that local press councils be created. But no action resulted, even in Louisville.

It was not until 1967 that the local council idea received systematic trial. The Mellett Fund for a Free and Responsible Press, named for former Washington *Daily News* editor Lowell Mellett and administered by the Newspaper Guild, decided that the \$40,000 in proceeds from a Mellett stock bequest to the Guild could most productively be used in local press council experiments. As president of the Mellett Fund, Ben Bagdikian wrote in *Backtalk: Press Councils in America*:

The local press council appealed to the Fund for a number of reasons. First, it seemed eminently suited to American papers, which are local; whereas a national council would have to look at 1750 papers or a large sample of them. Second, it had never before been tried as independent projects carefully designed and recorded to produce a body of experience available to the whole trade. Third, a small number of projects could have a multiplied effect if results caused other publishers and other committees to make spontaneous efforts of their own. And fourth, we hoped we could afford it.

The ground rules were:

1. The local council would have no power, and no impression of power, to force change in the local paper. It could study, discuss, or vote, always with the publisher as a member of the group. But the paper retained discretion over its own contents.
2. The local council would not be organized by the paper. The Fund required that any proposal have the cooperation of the paper involved but the researcher would select council members, and members would understand that while they had no power over editing the paper, they were gathered as equals with the publisher in council proceedings.
3. The design implementation, and reporting of the council experience would be in the hands of a university researcher. Once the Fund was satisfied that the researcher was qualified and his plan met basic requirements, the Fund exercised no control over the experiment or over the researcher's report at the end of the year.
4. A major objective of the enterprise was to be a detailed analysis of the experience of the researcher, the results to be given the widest possible dissemination.

Under Mellett Fund auspices, press councils were established in Bend, Oregon; Redwood City, California; and Sparta and Cairo, Illinois. In addition, race relations advisory councils were set up in Seattle and St. Louis. *Backtalk: Press Councils in America* is the official—albeit somewhat sketchy—report on all of the local experi-

ments except for Seattle. That project is discussed in a 1969 report, "Seattle Communication Council of Media Leaders and Black Citizens," by Lawrence Schneider, who presided over the experiment while an assistant professor of journalism at the University of Washington.

William Rivers and William Blankenburg selected the members for the Bend and Redwood City councils. They also acted as staff directors and worked out procedures in consultation with the members.

The Mellett Fund councils had mixed results. Robert W. Chandler, editor of the Bend, Oregon, *Bulletin*, hailed the Bend council: ". . . it has created a defense mechanism for the press. It has been a power for good from my standpoint."

Indeed, in a six-page facsimile fact sheet which he sends to persons who inquire about the press council there, Chandler says: "I am a missionary on the subject; I think press councils (or better yet, media councils including radio, TV, and local magazine, if they exist) are good things for the community and the cooperating media."

Redwood City *Tribune* editor Spangler, now retired, says, "It was a very friendly experience for us. You know, editors tend to panic when they get three letters on the same subject. I think it served a purpose."

The Redwood council, however, was discontinued when Mellett financing, and the assistance of Rivers and Blankenburg, ended. According to David N. Schutz, editor of the *Tribune*, there are no plans to revive it.

"The Council here stopped operating primarily because the . . . experiment was for one year," he says. "However, we would not have recommended its continuance had the matter come to a vote. My basis for this reaction is that we seem to have accomplished little with the Council."

In the downstate Illinois town of Sparta, a Mellett Fund press council was initiated by journalism professor Kenneth Starck of Southern Illinois University, with the active cooperation of editor and publisher William Howe Morgan. Morgan was enthusiastic about the council experience and concurred with members' wishes to establish the council on a permanent basis. After the Mellett Fund experiment, the Sparta council reorganized, expanding membership to include high-school students, setting membership terms of three years, and scheduling quarterly meetings.

Press council advocate Norman E. Isaacs has referred to the Cairo, Illinois, experiment as "the only outright failure" among the Mellett Fund councils. Starck, in his report in *Backtalk*, acknowledges its difficulties, citing the racial clashes, but rejects Isaacs' characterization of the council as a "failure."

In a letter to the *Columbia Journalism Review* (Winter 1970-1971), he wrote:

The Council did bring together blacks and whites . . . who remained active throughout its life. Two militant blacks were excluded from council membership—a stipulation by every person who was interviewed concerning council membership, including blacks who agreed to serve. This obviously was a flaw in council composition.

Second, the council, despite frequent and heated discussion, survived the year-long experimental period and decided in favor of a permanent organization. Open warfare in the streets of Cairo negated that decision.

Third, several positive changes did take place, presumably as a result of council sessions. A content analysis of issues of the Cairo *Evening Citizen*, conducted without the knowledge of officials of the newspaper, disclosed that it did not respond to some requests. . . .

The Cairo group probably should not be classified as a press council. It was created to deal with conditions that seemed similar to those that the Mellett Fund race relations advisory councils addressed in Seattle and St. Louis. The Seattle experiment, involving both print and broadcast media, was stimulated by Lawrence Schneider of the University of Washington; the St. Louis group by Earl Reeves, professor of political science at the University of Missouri.

In both cities, there were series of regular informal meetings involving media editorial executives and members of the minority-group community. The main purpose was to exchange ideas and allow minority-group representatives to describe their problems and grievances against the media—to open up channels of communication. Media members of the Seattle group unanimously endorsed the idea and expressed regret that meetings had terminated. After the Mellett grant expired, the group operated for a year on its own. But Schneider was unable to continue, and no other moderator was found. In St. Louis, where separate meetings were held with representatives of each media organization, media evaluations were unenthusiastic, but Professor Reeves concluded that the result had, on the whole, been constructive.

Elsewhere, similar race-relations advisory activities have been

tried; among them the Boston Community Media Committee. This project was initiated in 1966 by basketball star Bill Russell, Boston *Globe* editor Thomas Winship, and other Bostonians. The Boston Community Media Committee has continued, expanding into such activities as recruitment and training of nonwhites for media employment, and creation of journalism curricula at high schools in predominantly black neighborhoods.

The Mellett Fund's example has stimulated establishment of several other press councils. One, in Littleton, Colorado, serves two weeklies: the Littleton *Independent* and the Arapahoe *Herald*. In 1946, Houstoun Waring, former principal owner and now editor emeritus of the papers, originated the Colorado Editorial Advisory Board to bring together newsmen from several Colorado papers and specialists in economics, political science, foreign affairs, and other subjects. He also established an Annual Critics' Dinner at which ten leading citizens described how they would run the Littleton publications. Upon learning of the Mellett Fund experiment, Waring and Garrett Ray, now editor and principal owner of the papers, decided to establish a council. Ray and Waring attend all council meetings and, through columns and editorials, apprise their readers of suggestions and criticisms by the council.

In February 1971, another council, established by the Hawaii *Tribune-Herald*, began operations in Hilo on the island of Hawaii. Named the Hawaii *Tribune-Herald* Press Advisory Council, it was initiated by the newspaper's newly promoted general manager, Leo Weilmann, formerly of the Pomona, California, *Progress Bulletin*.

Executives of at least two state newspaper associations also have suggested consideration of new councils in their states: John H. Murphy, executive vice-president of the Texas Daily Newspaper Association, proposed some form of council in a 1970 memo to TNDA members; and the North Dakota Newspaper Association, at its 1972 annual meeting, formed a committee to study establishment of a council in the state.

In Canada, three provinces now have councils: Ontario, Quebec, and Alberta. The most ambitious effort, in Ontario, was organized under leadership of Beland Honderich, publisher of the Toronto *Star*. Chairman is A. Davidson Dunton, former editor of the Montreal *Standard*, former chairman of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), and former president of Carleton University in Ottawa.

Two of the most ambitious U.S. press council efforts—in Minnesota and Honolulu—were discussed in ensuing chapters of the Task Force report.

INTERNAL CONTROLS: PROFESSIONAL REVIEW

"REPORTER POWER" TAKES ROOT

Edwin Diamond

One of the most significant and underreported social experiments of 1969 took place in the small northern California community of Willits. There, forty-three-year-old George Davis, a football coach who describes himself as "a small man with nothing to lose," fielded a football team each Saturday using the principle of participatory democracy; the players themselves voted on who should be in the starting lineup. The team lost its first four games of the season but rallied and ended in a tie for the league championship. This record, of course, might have been as much due to talent as to democracy. Still, the implications of the Davis experiment are clear; in an era marked by the pervasive and passionate questioning of all authority, even the football coach—that traditionally rigid hierarchical figure—is trying to bend with the times.

In American news media most communications caliphates are more like Vince Lombardi than George Davis—they are big men with a lot to lose, so to speak—and so the principle of electing editors or announcers has not yet been established. But a sampling of attitudes in a number of city-rooms, magazine offices, and broadcast studios indicates that day may not be far off. In various cities journalists have banded together to impress their professional beliefs and occupational misgivings upon management.

At the Gannett papers in Rochester, N.Y., editorial staff members have begun sitting in with the papers' editorial board on a rotating basis. In Denver, a new Newspaper Guild contract signed in mid-March 1970 establishes an ethics committee and a human rights committee that will meet regularly with management. The human rights committee plans to take up the question of minority employment (women as well as blacks) at the *Post*; the three-member ethics committee, which will meet with three representatives of management, wants to discuss such hoary *Post* practices as trade-outs—editorial puffs written about an advertiser to fill out a special section. And in Providence, R.I., a Journalists Committee has held several meetings with management about specific staffing and policy changes

Edwin Diamond contributes to leading magazines on a regular basis. His observations on "Reporter Power" were published in the Summer, 1970 *Columbia Journalism Review* issue on "The Coming Newsroom Revolution." They are reprinted here with the permission of *Columbia Journalism Review*.

on the *Journal* and *Bulletin*. The Committee acted after surveying a sizable portion of the editorial staff, then compiling the survey and mimeographing it for distribution.

Guild contract negotiations are still grimly contested in the news media, as are labor contracts in most business enterprises. But the new benefits that journalists have begun to seek go far beyond the usual guild bargaining points of wages and hours. The new grievances involve, first of all, moral—almost theological—concerns. When the Association of *Tribune* Journalists was formed by reporters at the Minneapolis *Tribune* in February 1970, for example, it carefully stated that the group was not a collective bargaining unit but an agent for bringing “our best thoughts into a dialogue with management.” There had been the usual grumbling at the *Trib* about shortages of staff and space, but there was a new element in the talk. As an association member later explained, “There was a feeling on our part of loss of respect. We were being treated like army privates and the editors were officers; we were to do what we were told and like it and no one gave a damn if we thought our orders were sane or insane.”

The *Tribune*'s enlisted men and women moved decisively to assert “rights of participation” in the choice of their junior officers: when two *Trib* assistant city editors announced that they planned to leave the paper, the local Guild unit adopted a resolution stating that “reporters, photographers, and copydesk editors should advise and consent to management’s nominations.” The next day management met with the Guild and said that while it was not giving up its prerogatives it was willing to take the staff’s nominations into account. It is a small step for the *Trib*, but a giant leap for American journalism—which more and more is moving toward the model of *Le Monde* and other European publications.

Similarly, the men and women who produce programs for public television have formed an association concerned not with residuals but with, among other subjects, the social content of programs and the racial hiring practices of their industry. And reporters in several cities have founded journalism reviews.

The concerns that have stimulated these various activities are immediately recognizable as the concerns that have dominated much of the news covered by media men and women in recent years. Journalists who have followed the fight of parents to decentralize schools, the demands of students to have a say in the investment policies of the universities, and the blacks’ and radical whites’ challenge to the established institutions of society, have now begun to

think about applying to their own lives principles of community control, participatory democracy, and collective action.

The development of this new consciousness is fairly recent. Ten or fifteen years ago, unions battled to win wage increases and to protest mergers, but the way a publication or station was run—from the color scheme of the newsroom walls to the overall editorial policies—remained the prerogative of the owner. The journalist's attitude was, typically, acquiescent; after all, was it not management's bat and ball—and ball park (although in broadcasting, the air *does* belong to the public and the station owner has only the loan of it)?

With affluence, the new temper of times, and the seller's market for young talent, this attitude has changed. Media executives now know (and graduate school studies show) that the brightest young people, on the whole, are not going into journalism, and that even those who are graduated from journalism schools often choose public relations work over reporting jobs. Even more alarming to an editor or news director with proper regard for talent is the attrition rate of good young newsmen and women after two or three years in the business. Money and bylines alone are no longer sufficient inducements; if executives want to attract and keep good young people, they must be attentive to or at least aware of their opinions. As often as not, a good university-trained reporter who is now in his or her late twenties picketed for civil rights while in high school, spent a freshman summer in Mississippi or Appalachia, and sat in at the Dean's office during senior year—or covered these events for the school paper. Now they are turning reformist toward their own profession.

Recent unrest at the *Wall Street Journal* is a case in point. The *Journal* reached its present eminence in part by hiring good young people right out of college, training them, and giving them the time and the space to develop long, informative reports and trend stories. Now, says an older hand at the paper, "these younger people are much more activist-minded and more willing to needle management." During the Vietnam Moratorium Day in October 1969, several younger reporters wanted to march on Broad street, a block from Wall, with at least one sign saying WALL STREET JOURNALIST FOR THE MORATORIUM. Management's position was that it didn't mind the marching but didn't think the wording of that one sign was proper because it might "raise questions about the *Journal's* objectivity in the reader's mind."

A confrontation on Moratorium Day was avoided—according to one witness, the sign was carried but not held up. But the young

activists then dispatched a petition to management asking for a clarification of the *Journal's* "position" on what they could do with their private lives. In response, executives Warren Phillips and Ed Cony issued a memorandum noting that "we must be concerned not only with avoiding bias in our news columns but also with avoiding the appearance of bias." They concluded: "It is the individual's obligation to exercise sufficient judgment to avoid such embarrassment." The younger reporters also have expressed their concern about what the *Journal* does on the editorial page; when the *Journal* ran an editorial that seemed to blame New York City's telephone troubles on allegedly slow-witted welfare mothers hired to operate switchboards, a newsroom caucus told management that reporters didn't want to be associated with a paper that had such mossback views.

The *Journal's* radical "cell" remains largely an *ad hoc* group springing to life when an issue presents itself. At the Minneapolis *Tribune*, however, the new consciousness of younger journalists has manifested itself in a formal organization. During the Fall of 1969, by all accounts, the *Tribune* had a morale problem compounded by a high turnover and some admitted paranoia on the part of the staff. A group of reporters began meeting on Sunday mornings—for a while they were known as the Underground Church—to see if anything beside complaining could be done. The Underground Church members repeated the usual litany of city-room complaints—the need for more phones, better files, more out-of-town exchanges—but they also were concerned with such traditional domains of management as the size of the travel allowance, the company's fiscal and budgetary procedures, and the circulation breakdown by area. More important, the Underground Church challenged the *Tribune's* news judgment, most particularly on those issues that have polarized so much of the country. One young reporter drew up the following indictment:

The *Trib's* sins tend to be those of omission, rather than commission. We sent no one to the Chicago Conspiracy trial despite repeated requests from staffers who wanted to go. We sent no one to Washington last November with the thousands of Minnesotans who participated in the Vietnam Moratorium. We do have a D.C. bureau which handled Moratorium coverage but we did not, like our rival paper, the *Star*, see fit to send anyone on the buses of demonstrators from our state. . . . The November Moratorium was our right-hand, front-page lead story, with a front-page picture of masses of marchers going along peaceably. The story by Chuck Bailey of our D.C. bureau devoted the first five paragraphs to general comments on the demonstration. The next six paragraphs were on the violence that occurred there. Then followed twelve paragraphs on the speeches, color, etc. We used only the official 250,000 figure for the number of participants and did not mention any higher estimates.

On the second front page only one of the five pictures showed a peaceful scene (Coretta King marching). One was rioters getting tear-gassed, another a draft-card burning, another an American flag being carried upside down, and the fourth a flag-burning which turned out, on close inspection, to be counter-demonstrators burning a Vietcong flag. According to our own figures, one-250th of the people at that demonstration got at least three-fifths of the pictures on the second front page and about one-fourth of the main story. . . .

We do, of course, often do a good job breaking a story. Give us a cyclone or a postal strike or the Governor saying he won't run again, and we're all over it. We get the sidebars and the reactions and the whole thing. But in trying to explain what the hell is happening in this society in any larger way—perspective, context, whatever you want to call it—the *Trib* just ain't there."

The Underground Church soon realized it could go in two possible directions: the reporters could start a publication modeled after the *Chicago Journalism Review* which would regularly monitor the local press' performance on stories like the November Moratorium, or they could try to work within the organization by establishing a "dialogue" with management. The Church chose the [latter] course, and plans for a *Twin Cities Journalism Review* were put on the back burner. Early this year, John Cowles, Jr., president of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune Co. (and also the majority owner of *Harper's* magazine), and Bower Hawthorne, vice president and editor of the *Tribune*, were invited to meet with some of the staff and discuss the paper's direction. Hawthorne, meanwhile, had invited all staff members to his own meeting to discuss the paper—the two invitations apparently crossed in the interoffice mail. The meetings took place—"by this time we were communicating like hell," one reporter recalls wryly—and the dissidents formally organized into the Association of *Tribune* Journalists.

The managing editor, Wallace Allen, drew up an extensive questionnaire which was distributed to some 100 staff members; forty-seven returned their forms. Allen's own summary of the responses reflects the low opinion the workers had for the paper and the management. Five of the nineteen "impressions and conclusions" he drew from the replies are especially noteworthy:

—You want a great deal more information about company direction, through direct and personal communication with management up to the highest level.

—Some of you feel strongly that staff members should play a part in policymaking and decision-making. You do not wish to run the newspaper but you would like to be consulted on what is done and informed in advance of both major and minor decisions.

—You feel that news policy and direction are not being handed down fully or clearly. You have only a vague idea—or no idea—of what we are trying to do and where we are trying to go.

—You feel that our approaches to covering the news and the ways we present it are not up to date. You want to see change and progress in an orderly, responsible but exciting way.

—Many of you feel that the *Tribune* was a progressive and exciting newspaper until about six months or so ago. You indicate that the letdown may have come from confusion in management's mind about news direction when it discovered the silent majority. You feel management switched direction in an attempt to respond to changing social conditions but switched in ways that revealed ignorance of basic issues.

Allen's efforts at communications apparently had a calming effect on the staff, which by and large adopted a "wait and see" attitude. As of late Spring 1970, the Association continued to meet every other week or so and was reviving plans for the *Twin Cities Journalism Review*.

The Association of Public Television Producers, another group of journalists who went "above ground" out of a deep concern about their professional lives, has also become engaged in management matters. Men and women on every level in public television are worried about the continued unfettered operation of noncommercial TV in the United States, especially because the new Corporation for Public Broadcasting has to go to Congress each year for funds. The Association came forward during Congressional hearings last year to discuss alternative plans for financing public TV; its spokesman, Alvin Perlmutter, a National Educational Television producer, told the Pastore Committee that he personally favored financing PTV by a tax on the profits of the commercial networks rather than the present arrangement in which public TV is dependent on the goodwill of 535 Congressmen. Perlmutter was rewarded with a lecture from Senator Pastore, advising him not to bite the hand that is feeding him. More recently, the Association publicly protested the decision of some local public TV stations not to show the NET documentary *Who Invited US?* a highly critical study of U.S. foreign policy. Like the reporters at the *Minneapolis Tribune*, the public TV producers want to see certain stories run—and they are prepared to challenge past assumptions about whether the people who have the bat and ball can make all the rules of the game.

The women's movement at *Newsweek* also has been willing to try its case in public. The conditions that the *Newsweek* women found objectionable—segregation of women into the scut work of research, the lack of writing opportunities (fifty male writers to one woman), and the general atmosphere of exclusion—had for years

The Providence journalists committee

One day in July 1969, Nick Mottern, thirty-one-year-old labor reporter for the Providence *Journal*, was sitting at his typewriter pondering the number of newsmen who had left the paper and the dissatisfaction that many colleagues had voiced about their work. He turned to a colleague at the desk behind him and said, "Why don't we do something about things here?" They invited other reporters for the morning *Journal* and its sister paper, the evening *Bulletin*, to meet in a cafeteria downstairs. Out of that meeting came a Journalists Committee, which surveyed staff concerns and began meeting with editors. It also compiled a twenty-one-page mimeographed pamphlet titled "Proposals for the Improvement of the Providence *Journal* and the evening *Bulletin*." Among its points:

The Providence *Journal* has held a relatively high reputation for competent journalism, but the . . . Committee believes that it is not doing enough to meet the needs of its readers, that it is not living up to its reputation . . . ; the size and organization of the news staffs do not allow the newspapers to go far enough beyond the reporting of events and reaction to events to tell the people of Rhode Island what they need to know to improve their lives and their state. . . .

In our talks with the editors, it became apparent that they believe the staple of the newspapers to be their coverage of major and minor events, governmental activity, public statements, and social news. We recognize the importance of this type of coverage, and we do not recommend that it be abandoned. We do believe that changes must be made to permit more in-depth and investigative reporting. . . .

Rhode Island is a stronghold for the Mafia. To think that its ability to flourish here is not made possible by the cooperation of government and business is naive. It is also naive to believe that the Mafia does not make the state more susceptible to forms of corruption not directly related to organized crime. . . . We believe there are sufficient projects to keep an investigative reporting team busy indefinitely. Some are:

- Conflict of interest in the General Assembly.
- The Providence Police Department.
- The financial affairs of Progress for Providence.
- The structure of state political parties and where they get their money.
- The relationships of prominent persons to the underworld.
- The underworld influence at Rhode Island race tracks.
- A study of the credentials and activities of judges and an examination of their decisions for evidence of conflicts of interest.
- Interlocking business directorates.
- The operation of credit unions in the state.
- The connections of unions to the underworld.
- An examination of governmental construction contract awards that would include an investigation of bidding and dead-line enforcement procedures. . . .

Consumer affairs receives spotty coverage, but it is a subject of high interest to every reader. Government has begun to recognize the political necessity and advantage of working for the consumer, and we believe it is in line with the newspapers' interest and responsibility to do likewise. . . . A recent *Journal* story with extremely high reader interest was Michael Madden's dissection of the local funeral business. Stories that might be developed include:

- The varying costs of auto repair and body work.
- Safety of appliances.
- Costs of medicine.
- Food preparation and handling in restaurants.
- Food clubs and group buying.
- Utility costs.
- Analysis and comparison of insurance plans.
- Health, reducing and physical fitness clubs.
- Service costs on appliance repair.
- Costs of basic legal services. . . .

We propose that a post be established on the *Bulletin* for a consumer affairs reporter and that a *Journal* reporter or reporters be assigned on a continuing basis to stories in this area. . . .

In order to give the city editor more time for planning and working with reporters, we suggest that the bulk of the reading of advance copy be done by the assistant city editor and that the review of press releases and related work be done by a reporter or copy editor. . . .

The committee requests that members of various staffs be allowed to attend meetings held between the editors and the publisher in order to understand better the operation of the newspapers and to offer the viewpoint of the staffs in discussions of news policy. These representatives would be selected by their fellow staff members for a specified period. . . .

Some changes have resulted from Committee activities, says Charles H. Spilman, *Journal* managing editor. They include more stories with bylines, modifications in reporter training procedures, and regular staff meetings. "But," he confesses, "nothing of a major nature." He adds: "I think the activities have been valuable."

Some of Spilman's reporters are less enthusiastic. Mottern has resigned from the paper, and the Journalists Committee, reiterating concern about "the quality, the values, the standards, the judgments, the honesty, and the integrity of these newspapers," in April began publication of an eight-page local review called *The Journalists Newsletter*, described as "the first of what we intend to be a continuing series of critical reports on the newspapers we work for." Copies were distributed free to selected individuals and organizations.

existed unopposed except by one or two editors. In the last year or two, however, many of the young women had been covering the black revolution and student unrest. As reporters they had listened to the rhetoric of "power to the people"; they had been "used" by militants who staged news conferences and other media events to get across their messages. When the *Newsweek* women decided to press their collective claims they arranged a media event: they timed the release of their complaint to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Washington to coincide with the Monday morning newsstand appearance of the *Newsweek* cover story "Women in Revolt." They called a news conference and phoned contacts at other news organizations to insure full coverage. Then they appeared in force, well groomed and intelligent, flanking their lawyer, a young, attractive black woman named Eleanor Holmes Norton. Their widely covered action had the desired effect, galvanizing the top echelon of *Newsweek* into a long series of meetings with the women and winning from management pledges to open the entire editorial hierarchy to women.

The editor may justifiably grumble that the women should have come to his office first, but the women believe it was the public nature of their action that produced results. Their experience replicates that of a Minneapolis *Tribune* reporter who now believes the "only power that we staff members really have in these matters is the power to embarrass management." This power also was demonstrated in March 1970 when a group called Media Women flooded into the office of the *Ladies' Home Journal's* editor and publisher, John Mack Carter, to stage the first "liberation" of a mass magazine. The resulting publicity may not have immediately hurt the *Journal's* advertising revenues or circulation, but it certainly affected that evanescent quality known as aura—and it made many readers who heretofore had not paid much attention to the feminist cause conscious of the magazine's assumptions.

For the time being at least, the tactics of "liberation" have been the exception rather than the rule. If there is a pattern in developments around the country, it is the tactic of internally rather than publicly making the case for a larger staff role in policymaking. Thus, some sixty New York *Post* activists (over as well as under thirty) have been meeting with the *Post's* publisher, Mrs. Dorothy Schiff, to force a break from the penurious policies and lackluster journalism of the past. The reporters have asked for more specialist beats, a larger travel budget, more black and Puerto Rican staff, and more

coverage of minority groups. At the New York *Times* a loose confederation of reporters and editors have also met to discuss a long list of grievances, some of them water-cooler complaints but others centering on the *Time's* coverage of politics, race, the Chicago Conspiracy trial, and the Black Panthers. Some of the *Times* reporters are chafing under what they consider the harsh yoke of Managing Editor A.M. Rosenthal and his bullpen editors, and one step being considered calls for the selection or election—in the *Le Monde* and Minneapolis models—of a top editor.

And in Philadelphia, the senior editors of the *Bulletin* have been conducting regular Monday afternoon “seminars” with some fifteen of the younger—and more activist-minded—staff reporters. The weekly seminars began in March 1970 after managing editor George Packard had heard complaints from staff members that story suggestions and opinions about news coverage were not “trickling upward.” A typical meeting allows equal time for a senior editor to explain his particular operation (news desk, photo assignments, etc.) and for reporters to ask questions or otherwise respond. The trickle—some say, torrent—of underclass feelings loosed by the seminars has already resulted in some changes in the way the *Bulletin* handles racial identifications in stories. *Bulletin* editors are also opening up channels so that younger reporters can get story ideas into the paper's new “Enterprise” page, and no one seems more satisfied with these developments than Packard himself.

A number of issues could transform these informal internal discussions into overt action groups. Working reporters have been made visibly nervous by recent efforts to subpoena reporters' notes, raw files, and unused film [See CJR, Spring, 1970]. The Wall Street *Journal* “cell” and the Association of *Tribune* Journalists, among others, have formally protested to their managements about cooperating in such government fishing expeditions. More significantly, two groups of journalists, cutting across corporate and media lines, have banded together on the subpoena issue. One group consists of some seventy black men and women journalists who placed an ad to announce their intention to oppose the Government's efforts (the Government's first target in efforts to obtain reporters' notes was a black journalist for the New York *Times*, Earl Caldwell).

The second group, called the Reporter's Committee on Freedom of the Press, consists of both black and white newsmen, and J. Anthony Lukas of the New York *Times* has been one of its early organizers. The Reporter's Committee met early in March at the Georgetown University Law Center in Washington. The discussions—attended by men from the Washington *Star*, the Washington *Post*,

Time, *Newsweek*, the *Los Angeles Times*, NBC, and CBS—reflected some of the feelings of staff men that interests of management and employees may not always be congruent in the matter of subpoenas. Rather than rely on lawyers of their individual companies and corporations—who by and large have been uncertain trumpets in recent months—the Georgetown group wants to explore the legal thickets of the subpoena issue directly with law schools and scholars. Already, the group is cooperating with the Georgetown Law Center on an information center and clearing house, and with Stanford University on a legal study of the whole area of confidential material.

Two other issues could also serve to “radicalize” the working press. One issue is race. Black reporters in the San Francisco area and in New York City have organized their own associations, partly to get together to talk about matters of common interest and occasionally to speak out with a collective voice. The other radicalizing issue is the war in Indochina. Shortly after Mr. Nixon ordered American troops into Cambodia, more than 150 *Newsweek* employees met to debate whether they should bring pressure on their magazine to come out against the war; one form of action considered was an anti-war advertisement in *Newsweek*. At the New York *Daily News* more than 100 editorial employees attempted to place just such an ad in their paper, but were refused space by the paper even though they had collected \$1,100 to pay for it. The *Daily Newsmen* promptly took their ad to the *New York Times*, where it was accepted—double embarrassment for the *News*’ management. [Editor’s Note: The May, 1971 issue of *Chicago Journalism Review* reported that “nearly all” of the reporters and editors of the *Chicago Sun-Times* and *Chicago Daily News* supported Richard E. Friedman against Mayor Richard Daley. The papers of Marshall Field V endorsed Daley but complicated negotiations with management led to both the *Daily News* and *Sun-Times* carrying ads prepared by newsmen opposed to Daley. *Chicago Today* allowed thirty-one staffers to use a page opposite the editorial page for a rebuttal to its endorsement.]

Media activists have a great deal in their favor, including management’s fear of a talent drain and its abhorrence of adverse publicity. Ultimately, too, they can count on the *amour propre* of the ownership: the proprietors have a selfish interest in listening. John Cowles, Jr., for example told his *Tribune* reporters that it wasn’t at all pleasant to hear, in his words, that he was “the captain of the *Titanic*.” Perhaps a “dialogue” can achieve a new arrangement of authority that recognizes the best qualities of passion, spontaneity, and social concerns of the younger journalists while preserving the established professional virtues of fair play and balance.

THE SAGA OF A NEWSPAPER OMBUDSMAN

Ben H. Bagdikian

When you put 15 cents in a vending machine in *The Washington Post* newsroom, you get anonymous cola in a paper cup bearing the legend, "Accidents Don't Just Happen."

Recently *The Post* and I parted on the issue of the role of the ombudsman, or at least on the role of this particular ombudsman. Accidents will happen, but in the spirit of the paper cup some of them may be avoidable in the future.

Ombudsmanship on American papers ought to be tried and expanded, an opinion I think *The Post* shares. *The Post* deserves credit for being the first paper to put a man to work not just to correct errors but to comment publicly and critically on his own paper in his own paper. There were problems, obviously. But not everything written in this article is a total explanation of what happened at *The Post*. Nor was everything suggested below a problem at *The Post*.

First of all, the idea is slightly crazy—an institution paying someone to criticize it in public. An honest paper would fire a drama critic paid by the theater, yet a paper's own press critic gets his salary from the target of his criticism. But there isn't much choice. The amount of significant local press criticism is small, despite the growing local journalism reviews. And even these reviews are not seen by the average reader.

So you begin with the assumptions that a paper's self-criticism is an enterprise filled with pitfalls, inherent contradictions and explosive possibilities, but worth pursuing.

One confusion needs clarifying. The job was called "ombudsman" but it was not in the conventional sense of an adversary representing the public with power to obtain redress of grievances. There was some of this in the complaint handling function but all the ombudsman did was agree or disagree with the complainer and let the appropriate editor know. He was not an active adversary in operations with power to make changes. In the rest of his function he was more the independent commentator on performance of the press.

Ben H. Bagdikian moved from assistant managing editor for national affairs at *The Washington Post* to ombudsman for one year. His experiences there formed the basis for this article. He currently is national correspondent for *Columbia Journalism Review*. This article appeared in *The Bulletin of the A.S.N.E.*, October 1972, and is reprinted with permission of the publisher.

Perhaps the first requirement of a paper thinking of hiring an in-house press critic is to be clear in its own mind what its ultimate standards and values are. If there is confusion or conflict about these, anything the in-house critic writes, or even his existence, gets caught in the insecurities and confusions of the power struggles that are inevitable in that kind of situation.

The critic needs guaranteed space in his paper. At first this seems contrary to the usual rules of a paper taking responsibility for what its own staff people write. But there is a tradition for latitude for syndicated columnists on grounds that they are understood to be expressing personal judgments which the paper does not necessarily share. It is even more important for the ombudsman to have guaranteed periodic space. If he doesn't, it puts the editors in the difficult position of deciding what commentary about their product they will print and what they will omit.

A basic problem is the relationship of the press critic to the management and to the working staff. He cannot be loyal to management, either in his public declarations nor in newsroom relations. And he can't involve himself in decision-making on stories or policy since he speaks with a unique voice—in any discussion of a future story or policy some editors will win and some will lose, but if the ombudsman's contribution is ignored he is in the position of second-guessing the decision in print later on. This makes his presence and his words unfairly powerful. He should stand clear of it all.

Any large paper that addresses itself to current issues and controversy will have not only the usual complaints about inaccuracies but on its judgment and politics as well. Some of this is invaluable to the in-house critic because there are some errors worth commenting on, either because they are important or else they illustrate something in the practice of journalism that is illuminating to the public and useful for the trade.

But a real critic has to take time to read not only his own paper with care—which in a major paper takes a long time—but also other papers, magazines and the growing journalism literature. So a paper of any size wishing to do a complete job should have one person handle all complaints, with the inevitable research that requires and someone else to write the press criticism. The complaint person ought to pass on the most interesting grievances to the ombudsman but go on to handle them himself. I spent from 30 to 40 percent of my time listening to, reading letters about and investigating reader complaints. Checking a complaint that the paper has been unfair in reporting import-export policy for four years may be important but

it is time-consuming. It needs to be done as a fulltime job with a standing box for correction of factual errors and a reply to every complaint. But not by the press critic.

The relations of the press critic to the staff deserves a great deal of thought. The ombudsman is an extremely powerful man. By his private or public commentary he can hurt reporters' reputations or undercut editors' decisions. If he wishes to or if he isn't careful, he can undercut the authority of operating editors. Because public criticism of a reporter, for example, can be devastating to his standing with his sources and the readers—something analagous to due process ought to be followed.

For example, if the ombudsman is about to write about some reportorial transgression, the reporter and editor involved ought to be consulted and shown the intended column for any errors of fact or conception. If they object and the ombudsman still feels he's right, the reporter or editor ought to have the right of reply, preferably side-by-side on the same day with the critical column by the ombudsman.

Following this practice has many advantages. First, it's fair. Secondly, whatever the error of the reporter, if it isn't one so bad that it is cause for discharge, then he'll continue to be a reporter and his reply in the paper symbolizes to his sources and the readers that he is still in business at his old stand and that the paper has continuing confidence in him even though he may have made an error or the ombudsman thinks he has.

Because the power of after-the-fact criticism is so great, the ombudsman has to be careful that the staff does not start writing for him—or to avoid his public criticism—instead of for their own editors, thus undercutting the power and responsibilities of the operating editors.

To minimize this possibility, it would be ideal for the ombudsman to be out of the newsroom, even out of the building in an office of his own. This makes difficult the damaging practice of reporters trying out their stories or ideas on the ombudsman ahead of time to make sure they will not be criticized publicly afterward. This kind of practice would be fatal to responsible editing by line editors and totally confusing to the staff.

Finally, the press critic has such potential power within his own paper and because of this can seem threatening to so many people in the organization, there ought to be some way to diminish it. One way would be to hire a press critic on a one-year or two-year non-cancellable and nonrenewable contract.

Such a contract would protect the press critic while he is angering his superiors and it would also deter him from using his position to further his own ambitions within the organization. Neither of these things might occur—that is, irreversible anger by his superiors or empire-building by the ombudsman—but a strictly short-term, dead-end arrangement with the paper would prevent some of the suspicion of this. After all, if he wants to, the ombudsman can wield more power than the owner, the top editor and the entire editing hierarchy by his access to the public about their work. He needs protection both from their anger and from any temptation he might have to exploit this power for his personal ambitions. In any case, he'll be suspected of all these things and these suspicions will be reduced if he's serving a short term with no future for him in the paper.

Naturally, there are problems in such an arrangement. The press critic obviously ought to be someone with enough experience and knowledge so that his commentary is worth something. And if this is so, he may not be attracted by a one-year or two-year dead-end job.

On the other hand, hardcore press critics are crazy anyway and this might attract experienced professionals with enough confidence to start all over again someplace else after a year or two.

More practically, there are a few good journalism academics who would be good at this (not enough, but a few) and they could use sabbatical years for this. Or senior professionals from other papers could use a leave from their home paper to be an ombudsman at another in a different, noncompetitive city.

The idea of independent public self-criticism by newspapers, not just about small things but basics, is important and can be made to work. The problems of doing it without unnecessary bloodshed are no worse than the insoluble problems of getting a paper out every day, problems which somehow become soluble.

THE PERILS OF PUBLISHING JOURNALISM REVIEWS

Marty Coren

Four years ago, shortly after the tumultuous 1968 Democratic Convention, a group of angry Chicago journalists gathered at their favorite drinking place to complain about being turned into liars by their own newspapers' rewriting the history of convention week. As one complaint tumbled over another, someone suggested they do something—picket, meet with the editors, start a journalism review. Being reporters and writers, they picked the natural alternative and started the *Chicago Journalism Review*.

"It was an idea a few of us had been thinking about," said Ron Dorfman, editor of the review. "So four of us got together and we did it."

More and more since 1968, journalists have been getting together for similar purposes. At last count there were at least a dozen journalism reviews: in Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, Holyoke, Mass., Honolulu, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, Philadelphia, Providence, San Francisco, St. Louis, and St. Paul/Minneapolis. New reviews also have been discussed in such disparate locations as Albany, N.Y., Buffalo, Washington, D.C., and Anchorage, Alaska. And several reviews have died. They include the *AP Review*, an anonymously published sheet that folded after two issues due to fear of management retribution, and the *Oregon Journalism Review*, an outright casualty of media management pressure.

For the most part the reviews are small, fledgling efforts of sixteen to twenty-four pages. They vary in quality, structure, and scope. But they are remarkably similar in their origin and problems.

The history of the *Houston Journalism Review*, which I became involved with after arriving in Houston [in early 1972], is fairly typical. Houston has two daily newspapers (the *Post* and *Chronicle*), six TV channels, and diverse radio outlets. Though these media serve a booming metropolitan area, none could be described as really distin-

Marty Coren is a former reporter for the *Houston Chronicle* and the *Los Angeles Times*. He is press secretary to Bob Moretti, speaker of the California State Assembly. Reprinted from the *Columbia Journalism Review*, November-December 1972.

guished. The *Chronicle* hasn't changed much since Ben H. Bagdikian, in an article in the *Atlantic* six years ago, labeled it a "continuing and depressing demonstration of how not to operate a free paper in a free society." The *Post* doesn't offer much more, and most local broadcast stations have trouble seeing beyond the latest murder and traffic accident.

The *Chicago Journalism Review* has been a strong motivating factor in most local reviews, including Houston's. In 1969 the Chicago staff held a convention attended by sixty persons from several cities, and early in 1970, Ron Dorfman visited Houston—as he has visited other cities where reviews have spawned—to discuss a local counterpart. The idea lay dormant for two years, until a meeting at a reporter's home to consider a possible Guild election at the *Post*. After the meeting several *Chronicle* and *Post* reporters discussed alternative strategies for improving the media and fastened on the idea of a review.

Like other reviews, ours began with a series of covert meetings, because no one could forecast management's reaction. Our secrecy lasted until interviews began for the initial articles. Unfortunately, this secrecy meant that persons who might have helped weren't involved.

Not every journalism review has to begin in secrecy. In Baltimore, meetings for persons interested in a review were announced on cityroom bulletin boards of the *Sunpapers*. On the other hand, in Atlanta an internal memo circulated to six *Constitution* reporters found its way into management hands and eventually led to the firing of its author. How to proceed can be decided only after careful consideration.

By the second meeting in Houston, more than twenty-five people were interested in participating in the review. Most support came from staff members of the *Post* and *Chronicle* and two radio stations. There also were participants from a TV station and a university journalism school. We made a conscious effort early to seek representatives of all the media, thus avoiding a mistake made by several reviews. The *Philadelphia Journalism Review*, first conceived as an in-house critique of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, has had trouble expanding; and St. Paul journalists started the *TCJR*, the Twin Cities journalism review, without seeking help from colleagues in their twin city of Minneapolis. "If we had to do it over again, we would work harder in the beginning to involve people from the Minneapolis papers and other media," says Robert Protzman, a St. Paul *Dispatch* reporter who helped found *TCJR*.

After enough committed people are assembled, the major and continuing crisis is money. Of all the local reviews, only Chicago, New York City's (*More*), the *Review of Southern California Journalism* (Los Angeles), the *St. Louis Journalism Review*, and the *Hawaii Journalism Review* are assured of publishing more than the next couple of issues. Houston, Twin Cities, *Buncombe* (Baltimore), Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Denver's *The Unsatisfied Man* can see only one or two issues ahead. *Thorn*, in the Connecticut River Valley, and the *Journalists Newsletter* in Providence are on the ropes, though they both expect to get another issue out somehow.

A few of the reviews have solved or eased their monetary problems by alliances with universities, press clubs, and Society of Professional Journalists chapters. The *Review of Southern California Journalism* has touched all of these sources with some success. *RSCJ*, established to fill the void of media criticism in the Los Angeles area, is affiliated with the Society of Professional Journalists chapter of California State College at Long Beach. The students raise some of the money, and foundation grants, press clubs, and professional chapters of Society of Professional Journalists provide more. In exchange for grants, the review gives free subscriptions. Editor Jim Davis expects subscriptions to become more important later.

Buncombe, the review in Baltimore, is associated with the local branch campus of Antioch College. Staff members managed to produce their first issue without any funds by including it in *The Paper*, a Baltimore weekly. Simultaneous with *Buncombe's* organizing, Edgar Feingold, an adjunct professor at Antioch College, was able to obtain \$1,000 to finance student participation in the review. The student participation never materialized, but Antioch contributed anyway. *Buncombe* incurred an additional expense when it attempted to mail its second issue under Antioch's nonprofit postal permit and Postal officials refused to accept it. After a delay, the issue got mailed with \$60 worth of 8-cent stamps.

The *Hawaii Journalism Review*, which is distributed free, has been supported by small contributions from individuals and several large donations from Hawaii businesses. The *Review* lists all of the contributions and their sources. The *Review* also has the backup support of the Honolulu press club, which has promised to underwrite five issues if all funds are depleted.

Most money raised comes from small contributions. To get our Houston review off the ground, more than thirty people contributed from \$1 to \$25. In St. Paul, the local Newspaper Guild unit promised \$300 if *TCJR's* founders could raise \$900; they did it by throwing "one hell of a party" for journalists, politicians, civil rights workers,

and others. More than 200 people paid \$3 each to attend, and many also made contributions or subscribed—raising \$1,000. *TCJR* now is thinking of another fund-raiser, with the subscription charge included in the head tax. The *San Francisco Bay Area Journalism Review* has sponsored a rock concert and a picnic—but, says review editor Dexter Waugh, the events were insufficiently organized and “\$300 was the most we ever raised.”

Not all requests to the Guild have proceeded as well as that in St. Paul. Supporters of *The Unsatisfied Man*, for example, packed the Denver Newspaper Guild with enough people to elect their own board of directors. The board then unanimously approved a grant for *TUM*. But the action so angered many members that a referendum was held and the grant was withdrawn, with *TUM* gaining nothing more than the ill will that accrues from a messy fight.

The *Chicago Journalism Review* and *RSCJ (More)* have received tributors before publishing, and in its best fund-raising year has received \$20,000 in grants—many in the form of loans not expected to be repaid. This procedure was followed because a two-year struggle with the Internal Revenue Service was required to get a federal tax exemption, even with the help of established law firms in Chicago and Washington.

The *Chicago Journalism Review (More)* [and *RSCJ*] have received money from the Fund for Investigative Journalism, a Washington-based foundation which makes grants to writers with investigative book or article ideas and an assured publisher. Supporting journalism reviews is a new activity to which the Fund plans to allocate \$15,000 in the next few months, but no guidelines have been established for disbursements, beyond general considerations such as the quality of the review, the need in its geographical area, and the appeal of proposed articles. According to Julius Duscha, director of the Washington Journalism Center and the Fund board member who will supervise the grants, the reviews that present “fair journalism” will be given preference.

Previous grants from the Fund have gone to individuals for expenses incurred in the writing of specific articles. James Boyd, Fund director, is now discussing with attorneys whether money can be disbursed directly to a journalism review. In any event, he says, a review should be a nonprofit body to be eligible for any foundation’s funds.

Most reviews have indicated their intention of applying for nonprofit status if they have not done so. The major exception is *(More)* in New York. According to publisher William Woodward 3d, *(More)*

is established as a profit-making corporation not because it expects to make money but because it believes this fosters independence. "Two of the three biggest reviews (Chicago and the *Columbia Journalism Review*) have some type of tax shelter," Woodward says. "Under the shelter of the Government you lose the ability to say a lot of things. The university shelter is a disaster—too academic. A review should be a Ralph Nader type vehicle, slamming it to the press." Woodward says that if (*More*) should ever turn a profit it would be reinvested in the review, but he doesn't expect this to happen. "We hope to get close enough to the break-even point so that we can pick up enough support to continue. We may have to run for a tax shelter, too," he said.

Most reviews' survival depends on subscriptions. The *Philadelphia Journalism Review* needs 1,500 annually to be self-supporting; it has about 1,000. The *Houston Journalism Review* needs about fifty new subscriptions with each issue to publish the next. The *Chicago Journalism Review*, which has a circulation of about 6,000, needs 12,000.

Most reviews send out free copies in the hope of obtaining subscriptions. Lawyers, politicians, advertising and PR men, contractors, and builders have been among prime targets. Almost every review reports that half of its subscribers come from out of state—among them, other journalism reviews, journalism schools, and libraries.

Chicago has been very successful with newsstand sales, with the cover cartoons by Bill Mauldin a key factor. (*More*) has had trouble getting a newsstand distributor. In Berkeley, when the first issue of the *San Francisco Bay Area Review* featured a cover drawing of a policeman, news vendors declined to handle it. In Connecticut, several newsstands refused *Thorn* because it criticizes newspapers—the newsstands' principal means of support.

In general, the smaller reviews suffer from a lack of business experience. I became the business manager and treasurer of *HJR* without ever taking a business or accounting course and without any previous business experience. Fortunately, I had plentiful free advice. I also didn't have a lot of money to spend. Chicago review staff members, by going to an expensive typesetter and printer, mailing everything first class, and in general "not knowing what we were doing," managed to spend \$1,700 on the first issue, says associate publisher Bob Kamman. "It should have cost about \$200."

Most of the reviews spend far less. The first issue of the *Houston Journalism Review* cost \$280, including mailing. Later

editions cost more than \$400 before mailing. Twin Cities staff members spent \$250 on their first issue and more than \$500 on each of the next two. Philadelphia, which produced an eight-page first issue for \$60 now spends \$450 per issue. The first issues are cheaper because they are smaller, fewer copies are printed, and volunteers do the typesetting free on borrowed equipment. Unfortunately, it is the typesetting that doubles the cost of later issues. Because most reviews utilize an offset format, staff members can save significant sums by doing their own layouts, pasteups, and addressing.

Until six months ago, Bob Kamman reports, the Chicago review, because of lax management, spent twice as much money as it should have. "For example," he says, "no one knew about withholding tax. We ran up penalties of \$2,000 a year because we didn't know we had to file forms." *CJR*, of course, had more money to lose than the other reviews. Its budget for 1972 is expected to be \$22,000 less than the \$65,000 spent in 1970, without cutting back on product.

The issue of accepting advertising is yet to be resolved by several reviews. Review circulations are usually too low to attract many advertisers. Another concern is credibility. In Houston we refrained from an exchange advertisement with the *Texas Observer* to avoid being identified with its political viewpoint. Journalism reviews that do take advertising say that they are aware of possible credibility questions and are not intimidated. In San Francisco, one editor, Dexter Waugh, says there is "some feeling" that advertising might be a conflict but "the function it serves is more important."

Editorial structure, like production, varies with each review. Chicago has two fulltime paid staff members and one parttime. They meet with their editorial board once a month. *TUM* in Denver started with a permanent managing editor but wore him out in three months. *TUM* then tried to rotate the editorship but had trouble because broadcasting employees are unfamiliar with the print side of journalism. Finally *TUM* settled for a permanent combined production and copy editor and another editor to assign stories and procure copy. Houston devised a rotating system of three editors: after each issue one editor retires; his or her successor is nominated by the three editors subject to approval of the "group." In Philadelphia, the group does not select editors but allocates responsibility for various jobs to whoever will do the work.

Most reviews' mastheads identify editors and participants. But this leads to problems when media managements blame any employees so listed for critical stories about them. Early in the history of the *Chicago Journalism Review*, after several articles critical of the

Daily News the paper threatened to demote reporter Henry DeZutter, who then was serving as *Review* editor, unless DeZutter resigned from the *CJR* board. The threat galvanized 250 Chicago editorial employees to sign statements that they were editors of the next issue. In subsequent issues, to diffuse responsibility, *CJR* expanded its editorial board and listed members in alphabetical order.

At the same time, reviews have not shied from identifying many contributors with bylines. Most reviews insist on bylined articles to enhance credibility. The major exception is the *St. Louis Journalism Review*, which offers the option of a byline. "We are a relatively small city and people felt their employment would be in jeopardy," says Ted Gest, a member of the editorial board. The penchant for secrecy subjected early issues of the *St. Louis review* to justifiable criticism that management's side of stories was lacking. To avoid that, there now is a policy that management must be given an opportunity to comment. That blew the secrecy—a problem resolved by another policy that writers not write about their own employers. As often as not, management's side in *St. Louis* has been "no comment."

Not all the reviews have been able to maintain a policy of not writing about one's employer, even if they want to. "We have such a small staff that the person who works at a place often has to write the article," says *TUM* editor Cary Stiff. "We are not hesitating to write about our employers," says Robert Protzman of *TCJR*. In *Houston*, the informal policy has been against writing about one's employers, but this has been breached. Most reviews that allow this acknowledge that the writer is risking antagonizing his boss and his fellow employees.

This already has proved to be the case in several cities, including *Houston*. Of five city staff reporters of the *Houston Chronicle* listed on the masthead of the first *HJR*, one has been fired, two have been forced to resign, and a fourth has given notice. It is difficult to determine who has been fired due to review activities and who has merely been a normal part of the paper's abnormally heavy turnover. The journalism review had little to do with my departure; the same is true of the reporter who has given notice. The other reporter who resigned, however, had been shifted from a day general assignment post to the dead-end night shift immediately after he wrote a critical *HJR* piece about the city editor.

Another reporter, Al Reinert, whom city editor Zarko Franks has called a "highly intelligent young man and a good reporter," was fired because of his "attitude." No one has defined to Reinert what this means, but Franks is quoted in *HJR* as saying "you don't bite

the hand that feeds you, you don't foul your own nest." The general feeling on the *Chronicle* staff is that Reinert was fired for two incidents. The first was writing a lengthy *HJR* piece on coverage of the campaign for lieutenant governor of Texas, which featured a runoff between Houston *Post* Executive Editor William P. Hobby and John Connally's younger brother Wayne. Reinert's report antagonized *Chronicle* editor Everett Collier, a strong backer of Connally. (In my six months on the Houston *Chronicle*, the only time I ever spoke to Collier he talked of the Connally campaign as a "we" operation; the only story I did there concerning Connally had to be shown to Collier before it went to the city desk.)

Reinert again angered Collier when he pressed to get a story into the paper about two blacks being barred from the Old Capitol Club after they had been invited for drinks by a club member. One of the blacks is a woman state representative-elect who was in the company of several white elected officials. All of them left the club. Reinert, who witnessed the incident, spent the next day trying to get the *Chronicle* to run the story. The *Chronicle* did not carry a story until two days later—after other local media already had reported the incident. This was detailed in the next issue of the journalism review, with the point that Collier is a member and Franks a frequent visitor to the Old Capitol Club.

In Philadelphia, of the seven members of the original *PJR* board of directors, only one person remains in the same position he had before the review began. Two of the board members have been fired, two demoted, one person quit the *Inquirer* under pressure, and one person resigned from the *PJR* board. As with the *Chronicle*, not all these cases can be attributed to journalism review activity. In the case of Donald Drake, however, the connection is direct. Drake, thirty-seven, has won several science writing awards and has been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize three times by the *Inquirer*. In the February issue of *PJR* he criticized media coverage of the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Philadelphia this year, lamenting that the media—including his own paper and himself—had given the violent activities of a few radical hecklers more prominent play than the substantive issues of the convention. Such coverage, he said, prostituted the role of the press, meaning that he himself had been a "whore for the press." Subsequently, Drake was told by *Inquirer* Executive Editor John McMullan, the paper could not have a whore covering an important beat like science; Drake was demoted to general assignments under supervision of the city editor.

In Atlanta in 1970, reporter Mike Bowler of the *Constitution* circulated a memo to six colleagues calling for establishment of a journalism review in Atlanta. In the text he enumerated reasons for his dissatisfaction with Atlanta journalism, including a sentence stating that the *Constitution* would not touch Rich's Department Store "with a million-pica pole." Two weeks later Bowler was fired, purportedly not for suggesting a review but for gross insubordination in suggesting the paper would sell out to an advertiser.

Bowler, a member of the *Constitution's* newsroom union, took the case to arbitration, and twenty-two months later received what he calls a "good news—bad news decision." The good news was an order that he be reinstated with back pay, and the arbitrator's comment that "Mr. Bowler had a right to circulate that memorandum to his fellow employees." The bad news was an additional comment of the arbitrator, Hugo L. Black Jr.: "Let me say at the outset that, if Bowler had been discharged for writing and publishing to outsiders the material of his included in the *Atlanta Journalism Review* subsequent to his discharge, I would have sustained the discharge summarily." The material referred to as the *Atlanta Journalism Review* appeared as an insert in the *Columbia Journalism Review* [July/Aug., 1971], which was prepared with Bowler's assistance after he was fired by the *Constitution*.

Although Black's comments on Bowler's case may not apply to other areas, the remarks scarcely can help the cause of journalism reviews. The interpretation of "loyalty" still seems to be in the hands of the employers. Unfortunately, it is the less progressive employers like the *Chronicle* that are most conservative in their definitions.

Even without resorting to firings and demonstrations, newspapers have ample means of retribution. A reporter can be passed over for a good assignment or for promotion. "I know when certain key jobs come up, I'm going to be overlooked," says Robert Protzman of St. Paul. Other reviews' staff members concur, though they emphasize it is difficult to put the onus entirely upon participation in a media review. Members of the reviews often are involved in Guild activities or employee committees and generally are younger and more outspoken than others. Protzman believes the *Dispatch* reporters who helped organize *TCJR* "were already branded." Participation in a review, however, does intensify the difficulties.

Much depends upon the individual employer. The *Houston Post* has remained calm about its employees working for *HJR*, even to the point of promoting one of the most active participants. Los Angeles *Times* editor William Thomas told *RSCJ* editor Jim Davis that he

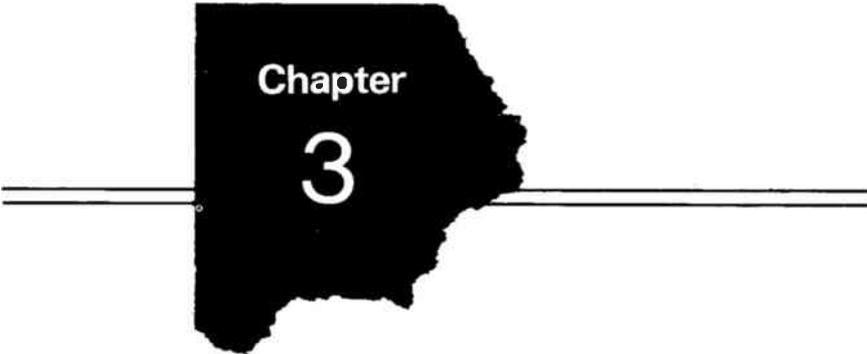
does not object to *Times* staff members writing for the review. Other media executives have like views.

Fairness and accuracy also afford a great deal of protection. "We're approaching the review very straight," says Protzman of the Twin Cities effort. "We're trying to be righteous, moralistic, clear, and pure." "In order for a journalism review to go, you can't be another leftish sheet," adds Lewis Z. Koch of the *Chicago Journalism Review*.

As a review comes out issue after issue with fairness, accuracy, and increasing toughness, it gains a reputation and credibility that all but the most recalcitrant managements acknowledge. "Abe Rosenthal of the New York *Times* wouldn't talk to us for four months," said (*More*) publisher Woodward of the *Times*' managing editor. "Now he is the guy who picks up the phone." The same reaction has been reported by several of the other reviews, especially the larger ones.

In spite of the risks, the hard work, the money problems, journalism reviews across the country continue to multiply, and their sponsors think they are worth the effort. None can claim an accomplishment as striking as the *Chicago Journalism Review's* coverage of the events following the killing of two Black Panther leaders in 1969, but each makes some claim to having improved its area's journalism. Protzman thinks *TCJR* has helped reduce the number of morbid and clichéd survivor stories that inevitably follow any disaster. St. Louis review members think they pushed local papers away from entirely ignoring the news contributions of their competitors. The editor of the *Review of Southern California Journalism* believes an article on restaurant criticism is leading to some improvement. The *Hawaii Journalism Review* may have been the force that pushed Honolulu papers into properly labeling advertisements that resemble editorial material. And so on.

Equally important are various intangible effects. Merely by their existence, the reviews provide a forum for reporters who previously had none. By pointing up organizational deficiencies traceable to some publishers' policies, they strengthen the bargaining power of editors who want to persuade the publishers to change. Also, they are a sign of growing professionalism—a willingness to confront shortcomings in media performance and credibility. As Donald Drake of Philadelphia says, "The reviews keep a dialogue going on matters of philosophy and ethics that tend to be lost in day-to-day operations. In the long run, this may be more important than the small gains such as stopping the papers from identifying blacks in crime stories."



Chapter

3

**Increasing Protection
for Sources of News**

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THE FEDERAL SHIELD LAW WE NEED

Fred P. Graham

Jack C. Landau

[In June, 1971], the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the First Amendment does not grant newsmen a privilege to withhold from grand juries either confidential information obtained during legitimate newsgathering activities or the source of that information. In addition to this specific 5 to 4 holding in the *Caldwell-Pappas-Branzburg* cases, Justice Byron R. White implied even broader limitations against the press by repeatedly stating, in one form or another, that reporters have no more rights than "all other citizens":

We see no reason to hold that these reporters, any more than other citizens, should be excused from furnishing information that may help the grand jury in arriving at its initial determinations. . . . Newsmen have no constitutional right of access to the scenes of crimes or disaster when the general public is excluded, and they may be prohibited from attending or publishing information about trials if such restrictions are necessary to assure a defendant a fair trial before an impartial tribunal.

What is important about these statements is that the issue of press access to public disasters or public trials was extraneous to the *Caldwell* case; and in fact the statements appear to be erroneous as a matter of public record.

1. A great many "other citizens" have privileges not to testify before grand juries. There are more than 300,000 attorneys who may, in all federal and state courts, invoke the attorney-privilege to protect confidential information from clients which might solve a case of heinous murder or treason; about 300,000 physicians who may withhold confidential information about crimes under certain conditions in federal and state courts; and several hundred thousand clergymen who have a recognized privilege, in one form or another, in federal and state courts to protect confidential information obtained from penitents. (The priest-penitent issue, however, is somewhat murky because there has never been a Supreme Court case in that area.)

2. So far as we know, newsmen may not be prohibited from attending public trials. In fact, the only Supreme Court cases on the

Fred P. Graham is a Washington correspondent for CBS News. Jack C. Landau is a Supreme Court reporter for *Newhouse Newspapers*. Both men are members of the steering committee of the *Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press*. Reprinted from *Columbia Journalism Review*, March-April 1972.



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"...COPY BOY...!"

subject state that newsmen must be admitted and that they may not be held in contempt of court for publishing public trial events.

3. It has never been decided that a representative of the public—in the person of the news media—is not guaranteed some access to public disaster areas. It is true that public officials would have a strong argument against admitting 1 million persons to a disaster area in New York City. But the current concept is that the public “has a right to know” and that, while the number of visitors may be restricted, to guarantee a flow of information the public is entitled to be represented by a reasonable number of journalists.

The point here is that Justice White felt so strongly about the *Caldwell* case that he interpreted issues against the news media which were not even litigated and made statements of constitutional policy which, consciously or unconsciously, appear to misrepresent existing constitutional law to the detriment of the media. It is therefore imperative for journalists to realize that, while they must continue activity in the courts—meeting every censorship challenge head-on—they must seek a redress of their grievances at the legislative level—an invitation, no matter how gracelessly offered, by Justice White in *Caldwell*:

Congress has freedom to determine whether a statutory newsman’s privilege is necessary and desirable and to fashion standards and rules as narrow or as broad as deemed necessary to address the evil discerned and equally important to refashion those rules as experience . . . may dictate.

Congressmen responded by introducing twenty-eight bills granting various types of newsmen’s privileges in the last session and twenty-four bills within the first fortnight of the new session. Hearings were held on some of these bills last fall by a Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee chaired by Rep. Robert W. Kastenmeier of Wisconsin. Both Rep. Kastenmeier and Sen. Sam Ervin of North Carolina, who chairs the Constitutional Rights Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, [continued holding hearings].

The Kastenmeier hearings were perhaps more educating for the press than for Congress. The news media displayed a disturbing lack of unity (with various organizations supporting different bills); a disheartening public exhibition of intramedia rivalry between a book author representative who accused TV of producing “warmed-over” documentaries, and a broadcasters’ representative who declared, “I see the authors didn’t mention Clifford Irving” (both comments were edited out of the formally published committee hearings); and a failure to present convincing factual evidence of the necessity for new legislation.

In an effort to consolidate the media position, Davis Taylor, publisher of the Boston *Globe* and chairman of the American Newspaper Publishers Assn., invited major media-oriented organizations to participate in an Ad Hoc Drafting Committee to prepare a bill which could be used as a model. The committee included representatives of the ANPA, the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the Newspaper Guild, the National Assn. of Broadcasters, the Society of Professional Journalists, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, the New York *Times*, *Newsweek*, ABC, CBS, and NBC. The ANPA has endorsed the whole bill; many other groups support only various portions of the bill or have not yet taken a formal position. The operative language of the bill is:

Section 2: No person shall be required to disclose in any federal or state proceeding either

1. the source of any published or unpublished information obtained in the gathering, receiving or processing of information for any medium of communication to the public, or
2. any unpublished information obtained or prepared in gathering, receiving, or processing of information for any medium of communication to the public.

Because there are so many bills and they vary so widely, the following discussion will only briefly note particular bills—mainly the ANPA absolute privilege bill introduced in this session and the Joint Media Committee qualified privilege bill, and the Ervin bill (both of which were introduced in the last session). The Ervin bill is the most restrictive of those that appear to have some chance of widespread support.

Problem One: Which members of the “press” should qualify for a federal “shield law” privilege which at least protects the source and content of “confidential” information? (Underground newsmen? Freelance news writers? Lecturers? Researchers? Book authors?)

Pending suggestions: The narrowest commonly used definition is contained in several state shield laws which grant only protection to “newspaper, radio, or television . . . personnel.” All of the pending Congressional legislation is considerably more expansive, ranging from bills which protect “persons directly engaged in the gathering of news” to the broadest possible definition of “any person who gathers information for dissemination to the public.” This would appear to include even dramatists and novelists.

Comment: This threshold question—of who should receive shield law protection—poses most disturbing moral, political, and legal problems which could easily fragment the media.

Those who argue for the broadest definition—describing researchers and would-be authors as members of the press—present a strong historical and constitutional case that the First Amendment was written against a background, not of multinational communications and great news empires, but of individual letter writers, Committees of Correspondence, and citizen pamphleteers. Justice White, in the *Caldwell* opinion, emphasized the historical validity of a broad definition for members of the press by noting that the “liberty of the press is the right of the lonely pamphleteer who uses carbon paper or a mimeograph machine.” The Authors League, in its testimony, stressed that many major political scandals of recent years have been unearthed by individual authors working alone, rather than by investigative reporters for major newspapers, magazines, or TV networks. In effect then, a broad definition—including authors, researchers, and freelancers unconnected to any established news organizations—would, in many ways, make the newsman’s privilege virtually coordinate with the freedom of the speech protection of the First Amendment and would mean, in practical terms, that any person interested in public affairs could probably claim shield law protection.

Those who argue for a narrower definition favor limiting the privilege to persons connected with recognized news organizations. They argue that the author-researcher definition is so broad as to create the privilege for virtually any person interested in public events. Such a broad definition might invite many fraudulent claims of privilege, perhaps even “sham” newspapers established by members of the Mafia (as Justice White hinted); would alienate Congress and the Courts; and would give opponents of a shield law their most powerful political argument against creating any privilege at all. Furthermore, they argue that while the legendary individual author from time to time does engage in muckraking on a grand scale in the most hallowed traditions of Lincoln Steffens, the great majority of investigative reporting is conducted by employees of established news organizations. It is they who are going to jail and it is they who need the coverage more than any other identifiable group.

Suggested solution: While politics and pragmatism would dictate limiting the privilege to news organization employees, morality and history would dictate that the greatest possible number of journalists be covered without attempts to include all purveyors of information and opinion. Therefore we suggest that the bill grant the privilege to “recognized members of the press” and permit the courts to decide who should and should not qualify. The bill should specif-

ically state that the privilege covers the underground and minority press (the true heirs of the eighteenth century pamphleteers), the student press, and at least previously published "legitimate" freelance nonfiction writers.

Case examples: The Justice Department has claimed recently that Thomas L. Miller, a writer for the Liberation News Service and other underground publications, is not a "news reporter" and should not be accorded any of the protections under the Justice Department Subpoena Guidelines for members of the press. The District Attorney for Los Angeles County has claimed that William Farr should not qualify for the newsman's privilege in California because at the time he was asked to disclose his confidential sources he was not regularly employed by any news organization. He obtained the information sought while he was a reporter for the Los Angeles *Herald-Examiner* but then left its employ.

Problem Two: Which proceedings should be covered by a shield law (grand juries, criminal trials, civil trials, legislative investigations, executive agencies)?

Pending suggestions: These range from the narrow coverage in the Ervin bill, which would grant the privilege only before federal grand juries and criminal trials, to the broadest coverage, which would protect a news reporter before any executive, legislative, or judicial body.

Comment: There is general agreement among the press as to which government proceedings should be covered—all of them. If a newsman is protected only from testifying at a criminal trial, his testimony can still be coerced by a legislative body or by an executive agency which has the contempt power, such as state crime investigating commissions. Furthermore, it seems unfair to deny to a criminal defendant confidential information which might help to acquit him but at the same time give the information to a state legislative committee which may have no better purpose than to further some ambitious Congressman's stepladder toward the governorship.

Suggested solution: News reporters should be privileged before all judicial, executive, and legislative proceedings.

Case examples: While the current subpoena problem originated with federal grand juries (Earl Caldwell), and with state grand juries (Paul Pappas and Paul Branzburg), the infection is spreading. Joseph Weiler of the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* and Joseph Pennington of radio station WREC were called before a state legislative investigating commission. Dean Jensen, Stuart Wilk, and Miss Gene Cunningham

of the Milwaukee *Sentinel* and Alfred Balk of the *Columbia Journalism Review* (in a case involving an article in the *Saturday Evening Post*) were asked to disclose confidential sources during civil hearings before federal district courts. William Farr resisted a county judge's personal investigation into violations of his Manson trial publicity order. Three St. Louis area reporters appeared before a State Ethics Committee which appears to be some kind of executive committee authorized by the state legislature to investigate state judges. Brit Hume of the Jack Anderson column and Denny Walsh of *Life* resisted libel case subpoenas.

Problem Three: What types of information should be protected?

a. Confidential sources of published information (e.g., Earl Caldwell was asked to disclose the confidential source of material published in the *New York Times*. William Farr was asked the confidential source of a Manson trial confession published in the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*)?

b. Confidential sources of unpublished information (e.g., TV news reporter Paul Pappas was asked what occurred inside Black Panther headquarters; CBS News was asked the identity of the person in New York who supplied a Black Panther contact in Algiers in connection with a *60 Minutes* story on Eldridge Cleaver)?

c. Unpublished nonconfidential information (e.g., Peter Bridge was asked further details of his nonconfidential interview with a Newark Housing Commission member; CBS News was asked to supply outtakes of nonconfidential interviews in *The Selling of the Pentagon*; the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* was asked for unpublished photos of a public antiwar demonstration)?

d. Published nonconfidential information (e.g., Radio station WBAI in New York City was asked for tapes of published interviews with unnamed prisoners involved in the Tombs riot; WDEF-TV in Chattanooga was asked for the tapes of a published interview with an unnamed grand juror)?

Pending suggestions: The narrowest commonly accepted protection is contained in several state shield laws which protect only the "source" of "published" information, giving no protection, of course, to the confidential source of background information never published and no protection to the unpublished confidential information itself. All the pending Congressional bills protect both the *source* and the *content* of "confidential" information whether or not the information is published. Interestingly, all the Congressional bills also protect the source and content of "nonconfidential

(Continued on p. 103.)

The subpoena log: a compilation of cases

■ Following is a compendium of recent court cases and other developments affecting the free flow of news to the public, compiled by the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press (Legal Research and Defense Fund). The Reporters Committee will supply case citations, legal briefs, court opinions, and other details upon request to Suite 1320, 1750 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20006; or by phone to Jack C. Landau (202) 298-7080. The Committee also supplies legal advice, research, representation, and funding to individual reporters and to press organizations either on an emergency short-term or litigative long-term basis.

Attempts to require news reporters to disclose the source or content of confidential or other unpublished information, by court subpoena, by legislative or executive subpoena, or by police arrest or search warrants.

COURT SUBPOENA:

Earl Caldwell of the New York *Times* refused to disclose to a federal grand jury the confidential source of published information about the Black Panthers. The Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 last June that the Constitution does not grant a newsman's privilege.

Paul Pappas of a New Bedford, Mass., TV station refused to disclose to a county grand jury confidential information he obtained during several hours' stay inside a black militant group's headquarters. The Supreme Court ruled against him, 5 to 4 in the *Caldwell* decision.

Paul Branzburg of the Louisville *Courier-Journal* refused to disclose to a county grand jury his confidential source of information about local drug abuse. The Supreme Court held against him, 5 to 4 in the *Caldwell* decision. Branzburg moved to Michigan; Kentucky authorities say they will seek extradition.

TV news reporter Stewart Dan and cameraman Roland Barnes of WGR-TV, Buffalo, refused to tell a grand jury what they witnessed inside the Attica prison during the riot. The case is now on appeal. Dan and Barnes claim they would not have been admitted inside the prison if the inmates thought that the newsmen would testify before a grand jury.

Reporter Robert Buyer of the Buffalo *Evening News*, who was also in the prison during the riot, did testify on the grounds that he and other newsmen were asked inside the prison because the inmates wanted the press to tell their side.

News reporter James Mitchell of Station KFWB in Los Angeles was served with a subpoena by the county grand jury to disclose the confidential source of information about corrupt bail bond practices. The subpoena was quashed in December, partially due to the strong public reaction because of the then-jailed William Farr.

Reporter William Farr of the Los Angeles *Herald-Examiner* refused to disclose to a county court judge the confidential source who supplied him

with a confession obtained by the prosecution in the celebrated Manson-Tate murder case. The Supreme Court denied his state court appeal; he filed a federal habeas corpus proceeding; in January, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas ordered Farr freed from jail after forty-six days, pending the appeal of his federal case. Farr, who was working as a public relations consultant when subpoenaed to disclose his source, now works for the *Los Angeles Times*.

Thomas L. Miller, a freelance writer for Liberation News Service and several underground papers, refused to disclose confidential information about political dissidents before a federal grand jury in Tucson, Ariz. The Justice Department claimed he was not a news reporter and not entitled to any protection either under the Justice Department guidelines or the Constitution. In December, the Court of Appeals ruled Miller was a member of the press; it is unknown whether there will be an appeal.

Peter Bridge of the now-defunct Newark *News* declined to tell a county grand jury unpublished details of an interview with a Newark Housing Commissioner who alleged she had been offered a bribe. He was jailed for three weeks in October. The New Jersey courts ruled that the state newsman's privilege law protecting sources did not protect Bridge because he had named his source.

Milwaukee *Sentinel* reporters Gene Cunningham, Dean Jensen, and Stuart Wilk were ordered to disclose, in a federal civil rights hearing, the confidential source of information linking the chairman of the county board of supervisors to contractors doing business with the county. The U.S. Court of Appeals stayed the order; the Supreme Court declined review.

Alfred Balk, who had written freelance for the now-defunct *Saturday Evening Post*, refused to disclose, in a federal civil rights case hearing, the confidential source of information about blockbusting in Chicago. In December, the U.S. Court of Appeals upheld Balk [later] editor of *Columbia Journalism Review*, by ruling that it would not extend the *Caldwell* decision; an appeal is planned.

Samuel Popkin, Harvard professor and writer on Vietnam affairs, refused to tell a federal grand jury about any confidential discussions he may have had with Daniel Ellsberg involving the Pentagon Papers. The Court of Appeals upheld a contempt order against him; the Supreme Court denied review; Popkin was jailed from Nov. 21 to Nov. 29; he was released after pleas issued by the Harvard community to its alumnus, Atty. Gen. Richard G. Kleindienst. As a lecturer and writer, Popkin asserted freedom-of-the-press protection.

Managing editor Robert A. Pierce, city editor Thomas N. McLean, and reporter Hugh Munn of the Columbia, S.C., *State*, refused to give a local district attorney (solicitor) confidential sources of information about abuses in the county jail. Pierce repeated the refusal before the grand jury in September; no contempt was filed.

News reporter Harry Thornton of WDEF-TV in Chattanooga refused to disclose the identity of a grand juror who accused the grand jury of conduct-

ing a "whitewash" of a local judge. He was held in contempt and jailed for several hours in December, then released on bond; the appeal is pending.

Reporters Sherrie Bursey and Brenda Joyce Presley of the *Black Panther* newspaper refused to disclose to a federal grand jury confidential information about the internal management of the newspaper. The Court of Appeals upheld the reporters in October; it is unknown whether the Government will appeal.

Baltimore *Evening Sun* reporter David Lightman was held in contempt for refusing to disclose to a county grand jury the source of information about drug abuse at a seashore resort. The Maryland courts said that Lightman could not invoke the state newsman's privilege law because he obtained the information by posing as a casual shopper, and not by informing his source that he was a newsman; the case is pending in the U.S. Supreme Court.

Reporters Jack Nelson and Ronald J. Ostrow and Washington bureau chief John F. Lawrence of the Los Angeles *Times* were subpoenaed to produce confidential tape-recorded information obtained from a key witness in the Watergate bugging trial. Lawrence, who had possession of the tapes, was held in contempt and jailed briefly on Dec. 19, 1972; the contempt order was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals, which ruled the *Caldwell* decision applies to trials; the tapes were released to the court after the witness released the reporters from their promise to keep the information confidential.

Reporter Brit Hume, formerly of the Jack Anderson column, was ordered to disclose in a libel case the confidential source of information about an attorney who allegedly removed files from the United Mine Workers offices. The U.S. District Court declined to grant him a newsman's privilege; the case is pending in the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Reporter Denny Walsh of the now-defunct *Life* magazine refused to disclose in a libel case the confidential source of information linking St. Louis Mayor Alfonso J. Cervantes to gangsters. The Court of Appeals said Walsh was protected because Cervantes had not proved "malice"; it dismissed the complaint; in January, the Supreme Court denied review.

BY LEGISLATIVE OR EXECUTIVE SUBPOENA:

Reporter Joseph Weiler of the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* was threatened with contempt for refusing to disclose to a state legislative investigating committee the confidential source of information about abuses at a home for retarded children. The legislature refused to issue a show cause order in December, and the case appears to be terminated.

Reporter Joseph Pennington of radio station WREC in Memphis, threatened with contempt of the legislature, disclosed the name of a woman he said was his source of information about abuses at a home for retarded children. The woman denied being the source; she was fired; the legislative committee recommended to the state attorney general that either Pennington or the woman be indicted for perjury.

Reporter Robert Boczkiewicz of the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* was told in June he could be held in contempt if he refused to disclose to a State

Ethics Committee investigation, while under subpoena, the confidential source of information alleging improprieties involving a state supreme court judge; the Committee dropped its demand when the source released the reporter from his confidentiality promise.

BY POLICE ARREST OR SEARCH WARRANT:

The student *Stanford Daily* in Palo Alto, Calif., was searched by police with a search warrant seeking photographs to identify demonstrators; as part of the search, police sifted through confidential files; the U.S. District Court condemned police in October.

Editor Arthur Kunkin and reporter Gerald R. Applebaum of the Los Angeles *Free Press* (90,000 weekly) were required to disclose the confidential source of information about state narcotics undercover agents. They had to defend themselves against charges of receiving stolen property (i.e., a list of narcotics agents and other documents relating to an investigation of the UCLA campus police department given to the newspaper by a source); the California Supreme Court is deliberating their appeal.

ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN COPIES OF PUBLISHED INFORMATION:

(Local law enforcement and the FBI have frequently obtained the original negatives of film from newspapers and television stations in order to identify demonstrators and other persons whose identity would be difficult to discern using the newsprint photo or a reproduction of the picture as actually televised. There do not appear to be any litigated cases yet. The development of voiceprint machines poses a similar problem with tape recordings.)

Radio station WBAI declined to submit to a trial subpoena for original tape recordings of interviews with prisoners involved in the Tombs Prison riot in New York City. WBAI claimed that the originals could be used to identify prisoners who wanted to remain anonymous. Station manager Edwin A. Goodman was briefly jailed in March, 1972; the New York District Attorney eventually dropped the subpoena.

In the Harry Thornton case (see above) station WDEF supplied the trial judge with the original tape of the interview with an anonymous grand juror under a subpoena threat; apparently the tape could not be used to identify the grand juror.

STORIES CANCELLED BECAUSE A CONFIDENTIALITY PRIVILEGE COULD NOT BE OFFERED:

CBS News set up an interview with a woman who said she would disclose how she cheated on welfare if her identity could be masked during the interview and if CBS would promise not to reveal her identity; CBS declined to make the promise and the interview was cancelled.

ABC News declined an opportunity to conduct filmed interviews of the Black Panthers in their Oakland headquarters because the network reportedly believed it was unable to make a firm promise of confidentiality.

Attempts by courts to enjoin reporting of and comment on public proceedings.

A Los Angeles County Superior Court judge issued a ban last August against the news media's reporting any facts about a murder case except facts elicited in open court. The Los Angeles *Times* appealed the ban; an appellate court stayed the gag order temporarily; there is no decision on the appeal.

A Texarkana, Ark., judge held *Texarkana Gazette* editor Harry Wood in contempt for violating an order which barred the media from publishing a jury verdict in a rape case; the Arkansas Supreme Court voided the conviction in October.

A Snohomish County Superior Court judge held Seattle *Times* reporters Sam Sperry and Dee Norton in contempt for reporting details relating to admissible evidence in the jury's absence during a criminal trial. The trial judge had barred the media from reporting any facts except those elicited in open court before the jury; the Supreme Court of Washington voided the convictions in June, 1971.

An Oakland, Calif., trial court judge cleared his courtroom of all spectators and the press during argument over the admissibility of evidence in a murder trial. The judge said the jury might disobey his orders and read news accounts of the hearing, conducted out of the jury's presence in December.

A San Bernardino, Calif., judge ordered the local media not to publish the names of certain witnesses at a trial. The newspapers obeyed the ban and appealed; the trial ended in convictions; in December, an appeals court ruled the censorship order void.

New York media were ordered not to report information about the upcoming trial of the alleged Mafia-type Carmine Persico. The New York *Times* broke the order, but the New York *Post* obeyed the ban. The judge dropped the matter but then conducted the Persico trial in secret, barring the public and the press; Persico was acquitted; in March, 1972, the New York Court of Appeals ruled that the court should have been open.

Baton Rouge *State Times* reporter Larry Dickinson and *Morning Advocate* reporter Gibbs Adams were held in contempt of court for reporting testimony of an open civil rights case hearing in federal court. The contempt was overturned by the U.S. Court of Appeals, which also ruled that a newspaper must obey invalid censorship orders while they are being appealed; the contempt was reimposed in October; the case is pending on appeal.

Attempts by courts to stop the news media from carrying personal opinion about events of public interest.

In the Harry Thornton case (see above), a local judge claimed that it is a crime under the Tennessee grand jury secrecy oath law for a member of a grand jury to give the press his personal opinion about the operation of the grand jury system, i.e., the grand jury investigation was a "whitewash."

In the Samuel Popkin case (see above), the Justice Department claimed that it could force Popkin to disclose to a grand jury his personal opinions about the Pentagon Papers affair; the U.S. Court of Appeals voided that

section of the contempt order on the grounds that personal opinion is protected from inquiry under the First Amendment.

Activist Steve Hamilton served forty days in a California State Rehabilitation Center last March for violating a pretrial publicity order and giving to the press his side of the Berkeley riots; Hamilton claimed he had the right to waive his right to a fair trial because he wanted to answer political accusations by Gov. Ronald Reagan and Alameda county authorities about the riots. Hamilton appears to be the second person in recent history who has been jailed for communicating with the press; the Supreme Court declined review.

The Watergate criminal trial: The U.S. District Court issued a broad pretrial injunction against any comment about the bugging trial by "witnesses" and "prospective witnesses." Democrats charged that the order interfered with freedom-of-speech rights to make the Watergate issue a controversy in the campaign. The judge later modified the order to cover the defendants and "all persons acting for or with them" (whatever that means). The original order was interpreted as covering Alfred Baldwin 3d, who did give a five-hour interview to Los Angeles *Times* reporters Jack Nelson and Ronald J. Ostrow. That interview became the center of the attempt (noted above) to obtain the tape recordings; however, the trial judge never alluded to the order in the hearings to turn over the tapes.

Attempts to censure reporting about government operations.

Dr. Daniel Ellsberg is accused, among other charges, of "stealing" government property—i.e., the Government-compiled facts contained in the Pentagon Papers. The indictment and the supporting briefs stand for the proposition that government-compiled facts about the operations of government agencies and about the decision-making process of government officials are owned by the Government, a theory that counters the traditional concept in this country that government *information* belongs to the citizenry. This case also means that the New York *Times* could be indicted for receiving "stolen property," i.e., the Pentagon Papers.

An editor and a reporter for the Los Angeles *Free Press* (see above) have been convicted on charges of receiving stolen property. The property was a list of civil service employees, some of whom were acting as undercover narcotics agents. The list was copied from a list in the state attorney general's office and given to the newspaper for publication. This is the state version of the Ellsberg prosecution.

William Farr (see above) was called upon to disclose the source who supplied him a confession obtained by government officials in the Manson murder case. While several commentators have noted the sensationalism of obtaining and publishing the confession, it should also be noted that—suppose, for example—the confession implicated an influential citizen who was not indicted, or that the confession was obtained by torture; one could make the argument that the press should be free to report about the operations of government officials performing official functions.

Leslie Whitten, a reporter for the Jack Anderson column, was arrested

by the FBI in late January on a charge of receiving stolen government property—the contents of documents others had removed from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Reporters—rather than publishers—held in contempt of court orders barring publication.

The Reporters Committee takes the position that publishers, not reporters, legally control what is published and, therefore, the proper contemnors of orders barring publication of news stories are publishers. In this connection, the Committee cites the above cases of (1) the *Seattle Times*, (2) the *Baton Rouge State Times*, and (3) the *Baton Rouge Morning Advocate*; (4) the *Texarkana* case poses a problem because Mr. Wood, as executive editor, may exercise enough management control to be personally liable for what is published in the *Gazette*; (5) a similar problem is posed by the *William Farr* case; a reading of the in camera transcript leaves the impression that had Farr's newspaper declined to publish the Manson case confession, then the judge would have dropped the matter as *quid pro quo*; in that case, of course, a management representative of the *Herald-Examiner* should have been in jail rather than Farr.

State laws protecting newsmen have been interpreted narrowly to force disclosure of confidential sources and unpublished information.

A California appeals court ruled that William Farr was not entitled to the protection of the state shield law because the state legislature had no power to invade the "inherent and vital power of the court to control its own proceedings."

The trial judge in the William Farr case ruled that the state shield law did not protect Farr because—at the time he was served with the subpoena seeking his confidential source—he was employed as a public relations consultant and not a newsman.

The Kentucky courts ruled that Paul Branzburg was not entitled to the protection of the state shield law because his sources ceased to be sources but became "criminals" when they demonstrated how they produced hashish.

The Maryland courts ruled that David Lightman was not protected by that state's shield law because he obtained his information as a casual shopper and not by announcing he was a newsman.

The New Jersey court ruled that Peter Bridge was not entitled to that state's shield law protection because he had disclosed his source.

F.P.G., J.C.L.

information," which could even protect TV outtakes or a reporter's notes of a Presidential speech ("nonconfidential information").

While the broadcasters generally support the printed media's desire to protect "confidential" sources and information, the real TV interest in the shield law debates will center on the nonconfidential information problem, from both a practical and philosophical point of view. The classic cases cited by the TV news executives concern the difficulties of television cameramen covering riots, dissident political demonstrations, and student disorders—"nonconfidential" events whose film records could be used by the FBI or local law enforcement to identify participants for criminal prosecution. TV executives and, to a lesser extent, news cameramen recite incidents of stonings by demonstrators, breaking of cameras, and destruction of equipment because demonstrators believed that journalists were collecting evidence for the police. The TV news executives argue that their news operations are not an "investigative arm of the Government" and that their cameramen must be able to represent to hostile demonstrators and to the general public that the only film the FBI will see is the film that is actually shown on the tube. But this raises a logical dilemma: Is a film outtake of a public demonstration to be given the same protection from subpoena as a "confidential" source in the Watergate bugging scandal?

Television also has a practical financial objection to permitting its film to be subpoenaed. It is expensive and time-consuming to run through reel after reel of film, an objection similar to that of newspapers whose morgues have been subpoenaed.

Suggested solutions: It is our suggestion that the shield law privilege might be bifurcated like the attorney-client privilege: There could be an "absolute" privilege to refuse to disclose the source or content of confidential information; there could be a "qualified" privilege to refuse to disclose nonconfidential information—such as outtakes of a public demonstration. The outtakes would be available only if the Government demonstrates an "overriding and compelling need."

This two-level absolute-qualified privilege would be similar to the privileges available to attorneys. Attorneys may refuse to disclose the content of confidential communications from their clients and in some cases even the identity of their clients. However, attorneys have only a limited privilege to refuse to turn over nonconfidential "work product" evidence—such as an interview with a witness to a crime who is now unavailable. There are three advantages to offering to a

news reporter or cameraman the absolute-qualified privileges held by attorneys.

First: The press is not asking Congress to create a novel or unique concept by establishing a specially privileged class of citizens. In fact the press is merely saying that confidentiality is as important for the performance of newsgathering as it is for the performance of legal representation; and to deny the press a privilege which Congress has granted to an attorney would be saying that the right of the public via the press to learn about the Bobby Baker or Watergate scandals is to be accorded less protection than the right of a member of the public, via his lawyer, to be represented in a land transaction or a patent case.

Second: The attorney-client relationship is so well established that a whole new body of law would not have to be developed for the multitude of unanswered questions which naturally arise with establishment of a new and untested right. (How is the privilege asserted? Who has the burden of proving it is properly invoked? etc.)

Third: As of July, there will be in effect new federal rules of evidence which grant new federal confidentiality privileges to the attorney for his client, to the policeman for his informer, to the priest for his penitent, and to the psychiatrist for his patient. With regard to timing, it might be advisable for the press to obtain its privileges in connection with the new federal rules.

Problem Four: Should there be any specific exceptions to the privilege to refuse to reveal confidential and nonconfidential information or sources? (Libel suits? Eyewitness to a murder? Information about a conspiracy to commit treason?)

Pending suggestions: The Congressional bills vary. The Joint Media Committee qualified privilege bill would permit confidential and nonconfidential information to be obtained if "there is a compelling and overriding national interest." The Ervin bill would not protect information which "tend[s] to prove or disprove the commission of a crime." The CBS bill would permit the confidential information to be disclosed "to avoid a substantial injustice." The Pearson bill would force disclosure of confidential information to prevent a "threat to human life." The ANPA absolute privilege bill permits no exceptions.

Comment: Most of the bills would not have protected Earl Caldwell because the grand jury in the *Caldwell* case was allegedly investigating a threat by Eldridge Cleaver to assassinate the President. Once the Congress suggests that newsmen may protect confidential information except for national security or libel or felonies or to

prevent injustices, the media will end up with a bill which is full of procedural loopholes, moral dichotomies, and legal inconsistencies.

Furthermore, judges have proved ingenious in discovering ambiguities in statutes in order to force reporters to testify in situations that would boggle the nonlegal mind. Paul Branzburg was ordered to name his source of a drug abuse story despite a state law protecting reporters' sources! The Kentucky courts ruled that he saw the sources making hashish and thus they became "criminals" and not news sources. A California law protects reporters' sources, but a Los Angeles judge waited until William Farr temporarily became an ex-newsman and then ordered him to talk; the California legislature promptly passed a new law protecting former newsmen. The moral is that shield laws should be as broad and tight as words will permit, or judges will find ways to evade the intent of the statutes.

Critics of the unqualified privilege often fall back on a stable of horrors ("what if a kidnaper had your child and a reporter knew where"?) to argue for leeway to compel testimony in extreme situations. But some states have had unqualified laws for years and no such incident has ever occurred. Either a reporter believes that it is his duty to talk or he feels so strongly against disclosing the information that no judge or turnkey could break his silence.

Of all the qualified bills, the Joint Media Committee bill is closest to the absolutist approach. Its exception for the "national interest" would place a heavy burden on the Government or a private litigant—a burden that would appear to be satisfied in those rare situations similar to the Pentagon Papers litigation.

The conceptual difficulties of attempting to cover all confidential and nonconfidential information under the same broad legal standards have persuaded us that the privilege perhaps could be tailored to the major problems of confidential and nonconfidential information rather than attempting to make a series of subjective evaluations for certain types of crimes or proceedings. Libel presents an unusual situation; in other testamentary confidentiality situations such as the attorney-client privilege, if the client refuses to waive the privilege then he is subject to an automatic default judgment as the penalty for invoking the right.

Suggested solutions: Attorneys, clergymen, and psychiatrists cannot be forced to violate the confidences of their clients, penitents, and patients, even upon a showing of an investigation into espionage or murder. In fact, how many attorneys know that their own clients or other persons are guilty of heinous crimes but are protected by the attorney-client privilege? It seems grotesque to ac-

cuse a news person of being an unpatriotic citizen because he has a privilege to refuse to disclose confidential information of a serious crime, when attorneys (50 percent of the Congress are lawyers), physicians, and clergymen are considered upstanding citizens if they invoke their privileges to refuse to divulge the same criminal information to a grand jury or a trial. Therefore it is suggested that any exemptions for confidential information be drawn as narrowly as possible and that there be a heavy burden of proof for forced disclosure of nonconfidential information.

Problem Five: Should the shield bill apply only to newsmen involved in federal legislative, executive, and judicial proceedings? Or should the bill cover newsmen involved in attempts by state government agencies to obtain confidential sources and information?

Pending solutions: All of the Congressional bills apply to federal proceedings. The ANPA bill would cover both federal and state proceedings.

Comment: No single issue divided the ANPA Ad Hoc Drafting Committee more than the question of federal-state coverage. While lawyers all agree that Congress can cover federal proceedings there is serious disagreement—both on constitutional and political grounds—as to whether the press should aggressively push for state protection in the federal bill.

If statistics were the only issue, then the media would all agree that Congress should cover state proceedings because the subpoena problem is much more serious now in the states and counties than in federal jurisdictions. Ever since Atty. Gen. John N. Mitchell promulgated his Justice Department Subpoena Guidelines in July, 1970, the Justice Department, which had issued a large number of subpoenas to the press in the prior eighteen months, has issued only thirteen subpoenas. The celebrated cases today are mostly state cases: William Farr, Peter Bridge, Harry Thornton, David Lightman, James Mitchell, Joseph Weiler, Joseph Pennington.

Furthermore, there are only eighteen state shield laws in effect and they offer varying degrees of coverage. A federal-state law would fill the void in the remaining thirty-two states, thus eliminating the necessity of new legislation in these states and of corrective legislation in most of the existing states whose laws offer less protection than the ANPA bill. A subcommittee of the Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Law is now working on a model reporters' privilege law. But even if the commissioners eventually approve a model statute, it might be years before any substantial number of state legislatures adopt it.

Then there is the potential legal impact of the *Farr* decision in the California courts. They held that the state legislature has no power under the state constitution to pass a shield law which invades the inherent constitutional power of the state courts to protect their own integrity by forcing news reporters to disclose confidential information. What this means potentially is that California and perhaps other states must pass a state constitutional amendment—rather than a shield law—to give complete protection to news reporters involved in many types of contempt proceedings.

There are, however, serious constitutional and political problems with a federal-state shield law. Constitutionally, the ANPA bill attempts to give Congress two different methods to intervene in state court and legislative proceedings. First: It notes that news is in commerce and therefore the ANPA bill uses Congress's power to control "interstate commerce." Second: It notes that, under the Fourteenth Amendment, Congress has the power to pass legislation protecting rights guaranteed in the First Amendment. While Congress has used its power to protect federally guaranteed rights by passing the Civil Rights Acts of 1965 and 1968, Congress has never attempted to pass legislation implementing the Bill of Rights.

It is believed that Sen. Ervin, who controls the influential Constitutional Rights Subcommittee, would strongly oppose any attempts to interfere in state court and legislative proceedings by invoking either the federal commerce power or the Fourteenth Amendment. In addition, while the Justice Department has recently indicated it would support shield law legislation applicable to the federal government, a federal-state law would certainly incur strong opposition from state prosecutors. Furthermore, a federal-state law might attract Justice Department opposition because it apparently would contradict President Nixon's concept of federalism, which emphasizes the independence of the states from the federal government. Then there is the Southern congressional bloc, which would strongly support Sen. Ervin's hostility to reenforcing the federal preemption concepts used in the civil rights laws.

Suggested solution: The federal government is only one of fifty-one jurisdictions. In fact, when one remembers that the *Farr-Bridge-Thornton* cases were processed in the county courts, there are the federal government; fifty states; and some 3,000 county court jurisdictions. Under the Justice Department guidelines, there is a lessening danger from the federal government. Therefore, we consider it absolutely essential that, despite the political difficulties of this position, the shield law protect every news reporter in the nation—not just those who, by happenstance, are involved in federal proceedings.

Assuming that the media can agree on which bill they want, can the press persuade Congress to pass the legislation? Three years ago, the newspaper publishers succeeded in obtaining passage of the Newspaper Preservation Act with its exemption from the antitrust laws, over the public opposition of the then antitrust chief, Richard McLaren. Two years ago, the broadcasters, within forty-eight hours, were able to muster enough support to protect CBS president Frank Stanton from being held in contempt of Congress, over the objections of Rep. Harley Staggers, who was attempting to obtain nonconfidential outtakes of *The Selling of the Pentagon*. The conclusion is quite simple: What the media owners want from Congress, the media owners get from Congress. The only question that remains is whether the First Amendment is of as much concern to the media owners as was exemption from the antitrust laws.

SHIELD LAW FOR NEWSMEN: SAFEGUARD OR A TRAP?

John S. Knight

Can a reporter be compelled by government to reveal the identity of confidential sources of information or the content of unpublished information?

Most newspaper editors and the television networks say "No," since Article I of the Bill of Rights specifically states: "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom . . . of speech, or of the press . . ."

Yet the Supreme Court decided last June by a 5-4 vote in the Caldwell case that the sources of a reporter's information are not and cannot be held confidential.

The Caldwell decision has given rise to any number of state and local judicial actions which have held reporters in contempt of court for refusing to disclose confidential information to grand juries. Several newsmen have been jailed, and the subpoena process is currently being applied against the *Washington Post* in the Watergate case.

Members of the Fourth Estate, well aware of the Nixon administration's hostility toward the press, are pressing Congress to enact a shield law which will protect the reporter's position of confidentiality. Some 18 state legislatures have already passed laws which pro-

John S. Knight is editorial chairman, Knight Newspapers, Inc., and a 1968 Pulitzer prize winner for editorial writing. This editorial was published in March, 1973, and is reprinted with the permission of the author.

vide some form of protection. Similar bills have been before the Congress since 1929, but as Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. says, "To write legislation balancing the two great public interests of a free press and the seeking of justice is no easy task."

Sen. Ervin, an authority on constitutional law who has been attempting to draft legislation to protect the free flow of information, finds it a bothersome assignment indeed.

On the one hand, Ervin declaims, "there is society's interest in being informed—in learning of crime, corruption or mismanagement. On the other, we have the pursuit of truth in the courtroom. It is the duty of every man to give testimony. The Sixth Amendment specifically gives a criminal defendant the right to confront the witness against him, and to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor."

Yet we find in a separate concurring opinion by Supreme Court Justice Lewis Powell a statement that the court may not in the future turn deaf ears upon newsmen if the government can be shown to have harassed the newsmen, or has otherwise not acted in good faith in the conduct of its investigation or inquiry.

But Justice Byron R. White, writing for the majority, stated: "Until now, the only testimonial privilege for unofficial witnesses that is rooted in the federal Constitution is the Fifth Amendment privilege against compelled self-incrimination. We are asked to create another by interpreting the First Amendment to grant newsmen a testimonial privilege that other citizens do not enjoy. This we decline to do."

The net effect of the court's decision in the Caldwell case was to leave it to the Congress to determine the desirability and the necessity for statutory protection for newsmen. And that is where we are now.

For one, I confess to some ambivalence on this question. Can Sen. Ervin draft a law which, as he says, "will accommodate both the interest of society in law enforcement, and the interest of society in preserving a free flow of information to the public?"

Or, will the enactment of any law—qualified or unqualified—invite Congress to tamper with the law as it serves its pleasure in the future? Vermont Royster of the *Wall Street Journal* sees "booby-traps" in this procedure, since "for what one Congress can give, another can take away, and once it is conceded that Congress can legislate about the press, no man can know where it might end."

The mood of the press is quite understandable. For here we have the Nixon administration's palace guard—a grim and humorless lot—in a posture of open hostility to the press and attempting to

hinder the free flow of information with every device available to them.

We also have the courts, “traditionally unhappy” as Sen. Ervin says, “about evidentiary privileges which limit judicial access to information, and by and large refusing to recognize a common-law right of reporters not to identify sources or to disclose confidential information.”

So the key question remains: Will the press and the public interest best be served by a congressional shield law holding confidentiality to be inviolate—a law which as Royster points out could be changed and diluted by a future Congress?

Or had we better stick with the First Amendment, under which a free press has survived for nearly 200 years without any law to make newsmen a class apart? Why not stand with the courageous history of the press, and continue to wage battle against all attempts at censorship by the courts and intimidation by a hostile administration?

Sen. Ervin now thinks he has devised a third-draft bill which “strikes a reasonable balance between necessary, if at times, competing objectives.” Yet what Congress gives, Congress can take away. Neither the senator nor the proponents of any protective law for journalists address themselves to this crucial point.

The more I study this question, the more I am persuaded that, since the First Amendment has nurtured the freest press of any nation, reporters, editors and publishers should not petition Congress but rather continue to contest all erosions of press or public freedom and be prepared to defend their convictions at any cost.

Our precious freedoms of speech and publication are guaranteed by the Bill of Rights which has served us well throughout our history. Freedom is not something that can be assured by transitory legislation, worthy as the intent may be.

When Congress is involved, there lies the risk—as Royster has said—that it might start legislating about the freedom of the press even in the guise of protecting it. This could be a dangerous precedent.

I readily concede that what I have written above represents a modification of what I had previously believed, and that it is open to challenge from my journalistic colleagues who hold a contrary view.

Before the press potentates pursue too enthusiastically the case for a shield law, they would be well advised to ask themselves whether the remedy they propose will ultimately sustain or destroy press freedom.

BIG-TIME PRESSURES, SMALL-TOWN PRESS

Robert Boyle

Pottstown, Pa.—The bee stings in Washington and the pain is felt in Pottstown, too. The Government clamps Les Whitten, Jack Anderson's aide, in jail for eight hours, and the clanking jail door is heard round the world. Pottstown Council holds a secret meeting, and when it's uncovered, the news about it is confined to Pottstown. Censorship, government controls and secrecy aren't limited to people like Anderson. The small-town newsman is also feeling the sting.

Certainly, officials in Washington aren't telling officials in Pottstown not to cooperate with the press. But when the Government hides things from the national press, and when Government officials make snide remarks against the press, small-town politicians feel that they, too, should follow the leader and they institute roadblocks to limit freedom.

The label a politician or an official wears doesn't matter. Pottstown is a swing community in a solid Republican county. But both Democrats and Republicans alike have started attacking the press.

Small-town police departments suddenly are setting themselves up as censors. They become "unavailable" when the press calls them. Justices of the peace are starting to determine what cases to give to the press and what cases to hold back.

One Pottstown justice of the peace tried to stop a *Mercury* reporter from using a pencil and notebook at a hearing because they were "recording devices." Use of a recording device is banned in justices of the peace courts. It took a ruling from the county solicitor before the reporter could use his pencil and notebook again.

School boards have been using the "executive sessions" ploy more and more. The public and press are barred from executive sessions. Board members decide at these sessions what course of action to follow, and then simply approve the action at a regular meeting.

The simple news story, too, is getting more difficult to come by. Recently there was a small fire in the Army officers' club of Valley Forge General Hospital. Damage amounted to \$750. The *Mercury* tried to get an item on the fire and the story would have amounted to a paragraph or two.

Robert J. Boyle is editor of the Pottstown (Pa.) *Mercury*. This column appeared on the Op-Ed page of the *New York Times*, March 24, 1973. Copyright 1973 by the New York Times Company. Reprinted by permission.

But the Army refused to give any information until the “news release cleared the channels.”

In Pottstown, a community of 28,000 some 35 miles from Philadelphia, the council meetings always have been open and above board. But late last year, council held a secret meeting. It wasn’t advertised, the press wasn’t alerted, and those who attended were told to keep it secret. The action taken at the meeting affected the entire community.

The council voted, in secret, to get rid of the police chief, Dick Tracy. As God is my judge, that’s his name. A group from council, including the Mayor, was selected to secretly tell the chief to look elsewhere for a job. He was told it would be in his best interest to keep the decision secret.

“Keep your mouth shut and we’ll make it seem as if it is your choice to leave,” he was told. “Open it and it’ll make it rougher for you to get another job.”

He kept his mouth shut.

But one of the participants of the secret meeting discussed it at a local bar. He was overheard and the newspaper, *The Mercury*, was tipped.

Chief Tracy was confronted with the story and confirmed that he was told to leave. He eventually did. He wasn’t a bad cop. With a name like that he couldn’t be. But he was ousted because he refused to play small-town politics. He refused to fix parking tickets, he refused to let old-time politicians run the department and he was strict. He got the axe because he wouldn’t play ball.

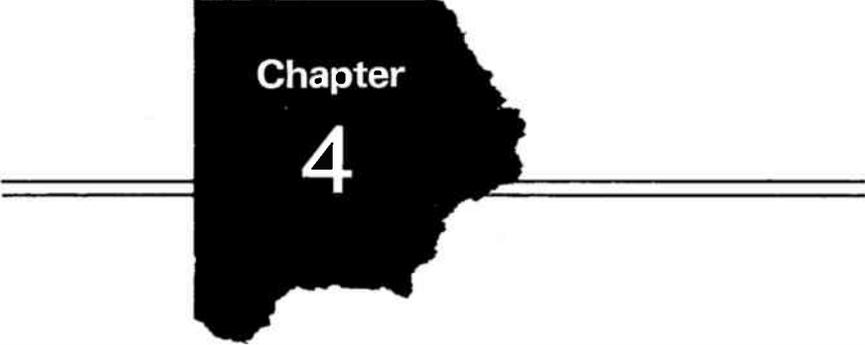
The Mercury headlined the story of the secret meeting. And the community was disturbed for several weeks. Later *The Mercury* investigated and revealed conflict-of-interest possibilities on some council proposals.

In nearby Collegeville, a community of 5,000, the newspaper there, *The Independent*, was creating a stir in a nine-part exposé on the Pennsylvania state prison at Graterford. *The Independent* doesn’t make much of a splash statewide but ripples from it reached the state capital at Harrisburg. The word went out that no one from the state prison was to talk to *The Independent* publisher, John Stewart. Because he uncovered and published some sordid facts about Graterford he was put on the “no comment” list.

If you multiply the troubles *The Mercury* and *The Independent* are having in their small areas by the number of smaller papers across the country then you must recognize the press is being hamstrung nationally and on all levels.

Remarks by the Vice-President and the President may be targeted at papers such as *The Washington Star*.

But they're also hurting the smaller papers. By design or not, those officials in Washington who are anti-Anderson, anti-*The Times*, anti-*The Post*, are also anti-*The Mercury* and *The Independent*. They're antipress. Antifreedom.



Chapter

4

Increasing the Relevance
of Reporting Practices

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THE NEW JOURNALISM: HOW IT CAME TO BE

Everette E. Dennis

It was a time when old values were breaking down; new knowledge exploded all around us; people worried about drugs, hippies, and war. We talked of violence, urban disorder, turmoil. New terms like polarization, credibility gap and counter-culture crept into the language. It was during *this* time, somewhere between 1960 and 1970, that the term "new journalism" also began to appear in the popular press. Almost as rapidly as the term became a descriptive link in the vernacular, it was used and misused in so many contexts that its meaning was obscured. First accepted and used by its practitioners, the term found its way into older, more established publications by the mid-Sixties. *Time* called former newsman-turned author Tom Wolfe "the *wunderkind* of the new journalism," while *Editor & Publisher* described Nicholas von Hoffman of the *Washington Post* as an "exponent of the new journalism." And there were others: Lillian Ross, Jimmy Breslin, Norman Mailer, Truman Capote, Gay Talese, and Pete Hamill, all were designated "new journalists" by one medium or another. At the same time a number of different forms of communication, from nonfiction novels to the underground press, were being labeled "new journalism."

By 1970 few terms had wider currency and less uniformity of meaning than new journalism. Yet one wonders whether this curious mix of people, philosophies, forms and publications has any common purpose or meaning. To some the term had a narrow connotation, referring simply to a new form of nonfiction that was using fiction methods. Other critics were just as certain that new journalism was an emerging form of advocacy in newspapers and magazines which previously had urged a kind of clinical objectivity in reporting the news. Soon anything slightly at variance with the most traditional practices of the conventional media was cast into the new journalism category.

While the debate over definition droned on, it began to obscure any real meaning the term "new journalism" ever had. The scope and application of new journalism was not the only point of contention,

Everette E. Dennis is assistant professor in the Journalism and Mass Communication Department, Kansas State University. He is coauthor with William L. Rivers of *Other Voices: The New Journalism in America*, 1973, and editor of *The Magic Writing Machine*, 1971, from which this selection was taken. Permission to reprint was granted by the School of Journalism, University of Oregon.

though. Some critics looked peevisly at the jumble of writers, styles, and publications and suggested that “there is really nothing very new about the new journalism.”

And it was true. One could trace every form and application of the new journalism to an antecedent somewhere, sometime. The underground press, for example, was said to be a twentieth century recurrence of the political pamphleteering of the colonial period. “And isn’t the alternative press simply muckraking in new dress?” And on it went.

Although much of the criticism of new journalism has concentrated, unproductively I believe, on whether or not it is new, no attempt will be made here to resolve this question. Perhaps we should think of the new journalism as we do the New Deal or the New Frontier. No one argues that using these terms means one believes there was never before a deal or a frontier. So it is with the new journalism.

What began as a descriptive term for a kind of nonfiction magazine article has been mentioned previously. As one who is viewing these journalistic developments I know that a number of dissimilar forms are called “new journalism.” This is the reality of the situation. I will not argue with this commonly used and loosely-constructed definition of new journalism, but will look instead at its various forms, outlets, content and practitioners. Much of what is regarded as new journalism can be judged only by the most personal of standards. It is, after all, a creative endeavor of people seeking alternatives to the tedium of conventional media.

Carl Sandburg used to say every generation wants to assert its uniqueness by crying out, “We are the greatest city, the greatest nation, nothing like us ever was.” If this is so, one might conclude that every generation will have its own “new journalism” or at least that it will regard its journalistic products as new. Creative journalists have always tried to improve upon existing practices in writing and gathering news. The history of journalism chronicles their efforts. But even when one accepts the notion of each generation having its own new journalism, the decade of the Sixties still stands out as an unusually productive and innovative period.

Magazines and newspapers, having felt the harsh competitive challenge of the electronic media, realized that the public no longer relied upon them for much entertainment in the form of short stories and longer fiction. As the public demanded something new, the *new nonfiction*, an attempt to enliven the traditional magazine article with descriptive detail and life-like dialog, emerged.

Newsmen who tired of the corporate bigness of metropolitan dailies and their unwillingness to challenge establishment institutions, founded their own papers. We will, they said, offer an *alternative* to traditional journalism, the chain papers and their plastic personnel.

Other newsmen, who stayed with the conventional papers, were arguing against the notions of balanced news, objectivity, and stodgy use of traditional sources of news. They sought and were granted opportunities for open *advocacy* in the news columns.

The alienated young constructed a counter-culture which would reject most of the underlying assumptions of traditional society. Needing communications media that were equally alienated from the straight world, they created the *underground* press which was, as one writer said, "like a tidal wave of sperm rushing into a nunnery."

Still other journalists found the impressionistic newsgathering methods of the media to be crude and unreliable measures. They would apply the scientific method and the tools of survey research to journalism, thus seeking a *precision* before unknown in media practice.

Any look back at the Sixties and the swirl of journalistic activity has the appearance of a confused collage of verbal and visual combatants, seeking change in the *status quo* but not knowing quite what or where in all that was happening; a concern for form, for style often seemed to supersede content. John Corry, who worked with the *New York Times* and *Harper's* during this period, offers this recollection:

It happened sometime in the early 1960's and although no one can say exactly when, it may have begun in that magic moment when Robert Frost, who always looked marvelous, with silver hair, and deep, deep lines in his face, read a poem at the inauguration of John F. Kennedy, and then went on to tell him afterwards that he ought to be more Irish than Harvard, which was something that sounded a lot better than it actually was. Hardly a man today remembers the poem, which was indifferent, anyway, but nearly everyone remembers Frost, or at least the sight of him at the lectern, which was perhaps the first sign that from then on it would not matter so much what you said, but how you said it.

With similar emphasis on form, Tom Wolfe recalls his first encounter with the new journalism: "The first time I realized there was something new going on in journalism was one day in 1962 when I pick up a copy of *Esquire* and read an article by Gay Talese entitled 'Joe Louis at Fifty.' " * Wolfe continues, " 'Joe Louis at Fifty' wasn't like a magazine article at all. It was like a short story. It began with a scene, an intimate confrontation between Louis and his third wife:

*Wolfe's memory betrayed him. The correct citation is Gay Talese, "Joe Louis—The King as a Middle-Aged Man," *Esquire*, June, 1962.—Ed.

'Hi, sweetheart!' Joe Louis called to his wife, spotting her waiting for him at the Los Angeles airport.

She smiled, walked toward him, and was about to stretch up on her toes and kiss him—but suddenly stopped.

'Joe,' she snapped, 'where's your tie?'

'Aw, sweetie,' Joe Louis said, shrugging. 'I stayed out all night in New York and didn't have time.'

'Ah, night!' she cut in. 'When you're out here with me all you do is sleep, sleep, sleep.'

'Sweetie,' Joe Louis said with a tired grin, 'I'm an ole man.'

'Yes,' she agreed, 'but when you go to New York you try to be young again.'

Says Wolfe, "The story went on like that, scene after scene, building up a picture of an ex-sports hero now fifty years old."

Talese, who gained little recognition until the late Sixties, in the introduction to *Fame and Obscurity* cautions those who deceptively regard the new journalism as fiction:

"It is, or should be, as reliable as the most reliable reportage although it seeks a larger truth than is possible through the mere compilation of verifiable facts, the use of direct quotations, and adherence to the rigid organizational style of the older form."

To Talese the new journalism "allows, demands in fact, a more imaginative approach to reporting, and it permits the writer to inject himself into the narrative if he wishes, as many writers do, or to assume the role of detached observer, as other writers do, including myself."

In the search for a definition of new journalism, Tom Wolfe explains "it is the use by people writing nonfiction of techniques which heretofore had been thought of as confined to the novel or the short story, to create in one form both the kind of objective reality of journalism and the subjective reality that people have always gone to the novel for." Dwight MacDonald, one of Wolfe's severest critics, disagrees, calling the new journalism "parajournalism," which he says, "seems to be journalism—the collection and dissemination of current news—but the appearance is deceptive. It is a bastard form having it both ways, exploiting the factual authority of journalism and the atmospheric license of fiction. Entertainment rather than information is the aim of its producers, and the hope of its consumers."

Dan Wakefield finds middle ground suggesting that writers like Wolfe and Truman Capote have "catapulted the reportorial kind of writing to a level of social interest suitable for cocktail party conversation and little-review comment. . . ." He continues:

Such reporting is "imaginative" nor because the author has distorted the facts, but because he has presented them in a full instead of a naked manner, brought sight, sounds and feel surrounding those facts, and connected them by comparison with other facts of history, society and literature in an artistic manner that does not diminish, but gives greater depth and dimension to the facts.

Each of the other forms of new journalism mentioned previously (alternative, advocacy, underground and precision) have also sparked vigorous criticism, related both to their content and their form. If there is one consistent theme in all the criticism, it is probably the McLuhanistic "form supersedes content." The real innovative contribution of the new journalism has been stylistic. This theme will be expanded later as we examine examples of new journalism.

The theory of causality is of little use in chronicling the development of new journalism. Most of the innovations in form and approach have occurred simultaneously. Some were related to each other; some were not. The new journalism is an apparent trend in American journalism which involves a new form of expression, new writers and media, or an alteration in the patterns of traditional media. It has been suggested that this trend can be traced to the early 1960's and is related to (a) sociocultural change during the last decade, (b) a desire by writers and editors to find an alternative to conventional journalism, and (c) technological innovations such as electronic media, computer hardware and offset lithography.

Rarely has any decade in American history seen such drastic upheaval. Beyond the immediate surface events—rioting, student unrest, assassinations, and war—lies a pervasive youthful alienation from traditional society and the beginnings of a radical rejection of science and technology. Calls for a new humanism were heard. Young people, rejecting the materialistic good life, sought new meaning through introspection, drugs, and religion. The decade witnessed the beginnings of what some would call a counter culture: "a culture so radically disaffiliated from the mainstream assumptions of our society that it scarcely looks to many as a culture at all, but takes on the alarming appearance of a barbaric intrusion."

The new journalism, especially the new nonfiction and the writing of underground editors, seemed to respond to youthful needs. The practitioners of reportage attempted to bring all of the senses to bear in their journalistic product—with special attention to visual imagery. Thus Norman Mailer gave us sight, sound, and inner thoughts as he sloshed through great public events and issues. It is probably too early to determine how much the social upheaval and

its resulting influence on the young affected the organizational and perceptual base that the new journalists would use. Writers like Jimmy Breslin and Studs Terkel would go to the periphery of an event, calling on a spectator instead of a participant to summarize the action. Tom Wolfe thought the automobile and the motorcycle were better organizing principles than war or race relations. Ken Kesey, the central figure in Wolfe's *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, introduces the reader to the Age of Acid, while a small town in western Kansas is a vehicle with which Truman Capote orchestrates a nonfiction novel about violent crime and its effects.

Journalism would also be influenced by television. Technological change in communications has always meant new functions for existing media. With television bringing electronic entertainment into our homes, we had less need for the *Saturday Evening Post's* short stories. The ratio of fiction to nonfiction in magazines would change as would the nature of the package of the newspaper. The days when newspapers serialized books blended into the distant past. Even the traditional comic strip seems at times to be threatened. Television changed the programming habits of radio, just as it changed magazines and newspapers.

The technological innovation of greatest importance to the new journalism was probably offset printing. It suddenly became possible to produce a newspaper cheaply, without having to invest in typesetting equipment or presses. The rapid reproduction of photo-offset meant that a single printer could produce dozens of small newspapers and that the alternative or underground paper could be produced rapidly at limited cost. Offset also allowed for the inclusion of free-hand art work without expensive engravings, thus permitting efforts of psychedelic artists to merge with the underground journalists.

Although "new journalism" is used most often to describe a style of nonfiction writing, the definition has been further expanded to include alternative journalism and advocacy journalism. Although the reiteration of these terms may be following the fads, they do provide some shades of meaning which contribute to an understanding of the richly expansive scope of new journalism. These descriptive categories are offered more as a tool for analysis than a definitive up-to-the-minute classification of the rapidly proliferating output of the new journalists. Through an examination of a few of these new journalistic developments it is hoped that there will be fuller appreciation and awareness of what may be an important trend in the evolution of the mass media.

A Schematic Look at the New Journalism

<i>Form</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Practitioners</i>
The new nonfiction also called reportage and parajournalism	Newspaper columns Books Magazine articles	Social trends Celebrity pieces The "little people" Public events	Tom Wolfe, Jimmy Breslin, Gay Talese, Norman Mailer, Truman Capote, others.
Alternative journalism also called "modern muckraking"	Alternative newspapers New magazines	Exposes of wrongdoing in establishment organizations, attacks on bigness of institutions	Editor and writers for <i>San Francisco Bay Guardian</i> , <i>Cervi's Journal</i> , <i>Maine Times</i> , <i>Village Voice</i> .
Advocacy journalism	Newspaper columns Point-of-view papers Magazines	Social change Politics Public issues	Jack Newfield, Pete Hamill, Nicholas von Hoffman, others.
Underground journalism	Underground papers in urban areas, at universities, high schools, military bases	Radical politics Psychedelic art The drug culture Social services Protest	Editors and writers for LA, New York and Washington <i>Free Presses</i> , <i>Berkeley Barb</i> , <i>East Village Other</i> , many others.
Precision journalism	Newspapers Magazines	Survey research and reporting of social indicators, public concerns	Editors and writers the Knight Newspapers, other newspapers, news magazines.

Reportage

In the early 1960's it occurred to Truman Capote, who already had a reputation as a writer of fiction, that "reportage is the great unexplored art form." While it was a metier used by very few good writers or craftsmen, Capote reasoned that it would have "a double effect fiction does not have—the fact of it being true, every word of it true, would add a double contribution of strength and impact." Some years after Lillian Ross used a nonfiction reportage form in the *New Yorker*, Capote and other writers had experimented with reportage in magazine articles. *Picture* (1952), a nonfiction novel by Miss Ross, had been hailed as a literary innovation. "It is," one critic said, "the first piece of factual reporting to be written in the form of a novel. Miss Ross' story contains all the raw materials of dramatic fiction: the Hollywood milieu, the great director, the producer, the studio production chief and the performers." Another of the new nonfiction reportage innovators was Gay Talese, whose articles in *Esquire* "adapted the more dramatic and immediate technique of the

short story to the magazine article,” according to Tom Wolfe. Wolfe says it was Talese’s “Joe Louis at Fifty” that first awakened him to the creative potential of reportage.

Some of the best early examples of the new nonfiction, in addition to the writing of Miss Ross and Talese, are articles by Wolfe collected in an anthology with an unlikely title: *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine Flake Streamline Baby* (1965). Wolfe, like Talese, used scenes, extended dialog, and point of view. A few years later Wolfe described this period of his life as a time when he broke out of the totem format of newspapers. He had worked as a reporter for the *Washington Post* and *New York Herald Tribune* but later found magazines and books a better outlet for his creative energies. Another new journalist, Jimmy Breslin, was able to practice the new journalism in a daily newspaper column. Breslin, whom Wolfe calls “a brawling Irishman who seemed to come from out of nowhere,” is a former sportswriter who began using a reportage style in a column he wrote for the *New York Herald Tribune*. Breslin breathed life into an amazing assortment of characters like Fat Thomas (an overweight bookie) and Marvin the Torch (an arsonist with a sense of professionalism). Breslin met many of his characters in bars and demonstrated conclusively that the “little people of the street” (and some not so little) could say eloquent things about their lives and the state of the world. More important, Breslin brought the expectations and intuitions of these people to his readers in vivid, almost poetic style. In doing so, he as much as anyone else added the nonauthority as a source of information to the concept of new journalism.

Truman Capote tried the experimental reportage form on two articles in the *New Yorker* (one on the “Porgy and Bess” tour of Russia and the other on Marlon Brando) before writing his powerful *In Cold Blood* (1966). As Capote describes it: “I realized that perhaps a crime, after all, would be the ideal subject for the massive job of reportage I wanted to do. I would have a wide range of characters, and more importantly, it would be timeless.” It took Capote nearly seven years to finish the book which he himself described as “a new art form.”

Contributing yet another variation on the new nonfiction theme during the 1960’s was Norman Mailer, who like Capote, had already established himself as an important fiction writer. To new journalism reportage Mailer contributed a first-person autobiographical approach. In *Armies of the Night* (1968), an account of a peace march on the Pentagon, Mailer ingeniously got inside his own head and presented the reader with a vivid description of his own perceptions

and thoughts, contrasting them with his actions. This was a variation on the approach Talese had used earlier in describing the thoughts of persons featured in his articles and books. He called this description of one's inner secrets "interior monolog."

Examples of nonfiction reportage, in addition to those previously mentioned are: Breslin's *The World of Jimmy Breslin* (1968), Miss Ross' *Reporting* (1964), Talese's *The Kingdom and the Power* (1969), and *Fame and Obscurity* (1970), Wolfe's *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1969), *The Pump House Gang* (1969), and *Radical Chic and Mau-mauing the Flak Catchers* (1970). Frequent examples of new nonfiction reportage appear in *Esquire*, *New York* and other magazines.

Alternative Journalism

While Tom Wolfe would like to keep the new journalism pure and free from moralism, political apologies and romantic essays, increasingly the term "new journalism" has been broadened to include the alternative journalists. Most alternative journalists began their careers with a conventional newspaper or magazine but became disillusioned because the metropolitan paper often got too big to be responsive to the individual. Certain industries or politicians become sacred cows, the paper gets comfortable and is spoiled by economic success. At least this was the view of one of the most vigorous of alternative journalists, the late Eugene Cervi of Denver. In describing *Cervi's Rocky Mountain Journal*, he said,

We are what a newspaper is supposed to be: controversial, disagreeable, disruptive, unpleasant, unfriendly to concentrated power and suspicious of privately-owned utilities that use the power with which I endow them to beat me over the head politically.

Alternative journalism is a return to personal journalism where the editor and/or a small staff act as a watchdog on conventional media, keeping them honest by covering stories they would not have touched. The alternative journalists are in the reform tradition. They do not advocate the elimination of traditional social, political, or economic institutions. In their view the institutions are all right, but those who run them need closer scrutiny.

Little has been written about the contribution of the alternative journalists who have established newspapers, newsletters, and magazines which attempt to provide an alternative to conventional media. "The traditional media simply are not covering the news," says Bruce Brugmann, editor of San Francisco's crusading *Bay*

Guardian. Brugmann, a former reporter for the *Milwaukee Journal*, asserts that the kind of material produced by his monthly tabloid is "good, solid investigatory journalism." The *Bay Guardian* has been a gadfly for San Francisco, attacking power companies, railroads, and other establishment interests. One crusade of long standing is a probe with continuity of the communications empire of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which Brugmann calls "Superchron." The *Bay Guardian* is a lively tabloid with bold, striking headlines and illustrative drawings which are actually editorial cartoons. *Cervi's Journal*, for years a scrapping one-man operation, is being continued by the late founder's daughter. Cervi, sometimes called the LaGuardia of the Rockies, was a volatile, shrill, and colorful man who, while providing news of record to Denver's business community (mortgages, bankruptcies, etc.), fearlessly attacked public and private wrongdoing. *Cervi's Journal* has taken on the police, local government, business, and other interests. Unlike the *Bay Guardian*, which has been in financial trouble almost since its founding, *Cervi's Journal* seems to have found a formula for financial success.

Other publications operating in an alternative-muckraking style are *The Texas Observer* in Austin, *I.F. Stone's Bi-Weekly* in Washington, D.C., Roldo Bartimole's *Point of View* in Cleveland, and the *Village Voice* in New York City. All of these publications (including the *Village Voice*, which began as an early underground paper in 1955), are read by a middle and upper-middle class audience, although all espouse a decidedly left-of-center position on social and political issues. Brugmann and several of his fellow alternative editors agree that their function is to make the establishment press more responsible. While conveying a sense of faith in the system, the alternative press has little tolerance for abuse or misuse of power.

Also a part of alternative journalism are a little band of iconoclastic trade publications—the journalism reviews. Shortly after the Democratic National Convention of 1968 when newsmen and students were beaten by police in the streets of Chicago, a number of working journalists organized the abrasive *Chicago Journalism Review*, which confines most of its barbs to the performance of the news media in Chicago. Occasionally, other stories are featured, but usually because one of the Chicago dailies or television stations refused to run the story first. The journalism reviews are perhaps the most credible instrument of a growing inclination toward media criticism. The writers and editors of the reviews continue as practicing reporters for traditional media, at times almost daring their bosses to fire them for revealing confidences and telling stories out of school.

Other press criticism organs include *The Last Post* in Montreal, the *St. Louis Journalism Review*, and *The Unsatisfied Man: A Review of Colorado Journalism*, published in Denver.

A talk with the editors of the various alternative press outlets makes one wonder whether they wouldn't secretly like to put themselves out of business. As Brugmann puts it: "In Milwaukee, a *Bay Guardian* type of publication could never make it because the *Milwaukee Journal* does an adequate job of investigative reporting." Perhaps if the San Francisco media had such a record, the *Bay Guardian* would cease to exist.

Advocacy Journalism

The alternative journalist sees himself as an investigative reporter, sifting through each story, reaching an independent conclusion. He does not openly profess a particular point of view, but claims a more neutral ground. The advocacy journalist, on the other hand, writes with an unabashed commitment to a particular viewpoint. He may be a New Left enthusiast, a professed radical, conservative, Women's libber or Jesus freak. The advocacy journalist defines his bias and casts his analysis of the news in that context. Advocacy journalists, usually though not always, suggest a remedy for the social ill they are exposing. This is rarely the case with the alternative journalist who does not see the development of action programs as his function.

Clayton Kirkpatrick of the *Chicago Tribune* says advocacy journalism is really "the new propaganda." He continues, "Appreciation of the power of information to persuade and convince has been blighted by preoccupation and is a primary influence in the activist movement that started in Europe and is now spreading to the United States. It threatens . . . a revolution in the newsroom." John Corry, writing in *Harper's* says, "the most important thing in advocacy journalism is neither how well you write or how well you report, but what your position in life is . . ." Corry sees advocacy journalists as persons who are not concerned about what they say, but how they say it. The advocacy journalists "write mostly about themselves, although sometimes they write about each other, and about how they all feel about things," Corry says.

Advocacy journalism is simply a reporter expressing his personal view in a story. "Let's face it," says Jack Newfield of the *Village Voice*, "the old journalism was blind to an important part of the truth . . . it had a built-in bias in its presentation: Tom Hayden

alleges, while John Mitchell *announces*." In the old journalism, Newfield continues, "authority always came first. The burden of proof was always on minorities; individuals never get the emphasis that authorities get." Central to advocacy journalism is involvement. Writers like Newfield, who is an avowed New Leftist, are participants in the events they witness and write about. They debunk traditional journalism's concern about objectivity. "The Five W's, Who Needs Them!", declares an article by Nicholas von Hoffman of the *Washington Post*. Von Hoffman, a community organizer for Saul Alinsky's Industrial Areas Foundation in Chicago before joining the *Chicago Daily News*, has established a reputation as an advocacy journalist who shoots from the hip and calls shots as he sees them, according to *Newsweek*. His coverage of the celebrated 1970 Chicago conspiracy trial likened the courtroom and its participants to a theatrical production. Von Hoffman produces a thrice-weekly column, "Poster," which is syndicated by the *Washington Post-Los Angeles Times News Service*. In his search for advocacy outlets, Von Hoffman has written several books: *Mississippi Notebook* (1964), *The Multiversity* (1966), *We Are The People Our Parents Warned Us Against* (1968), and a collection of his newspaper columns, *Left at the Post* (1970).

Jack Newfield, who writes regularly in *New York* as well as in the *Village Voice*, has produced *A Prophetic Minority* (1966), and *Robert Kennedy: A Memoir* (1969), said to be the most passionate and penetrating account of the late Senator's life. Another of the advocacy journalists is Pete Hamill of the *New York Post*. Hamill, who seems at times to wear his heart on his sleeve, writes about politics, community problems, and social issues for the *Post* and a variety of magazines ranging from *Life* to *Ladies Home Journal*. He also writes regularly for *New York* where his concern for the unique problems of urban crowding show through in articles like "Brooklyn: A Sane Alternative."

Publications such as *Ramparts* and *Scanlan's* are examples of advocacy journalism. The *Village Voice* seems to fit into both the alternative and advocacy categories as do a number of other publications. Many of the social movements of the recent past and present needed organs of communication to promote their causes. Thus Young Americans For Freedom established what is regarded as a new right publication, *Right-On*. Jesus freaks have a publication with the same name. The Women's Liberation movement has spawned a number of newspapers and magazines. Ecology buffs also have their own publications as do the Black Panthers and other groups too numerous to mention.

The Underground Press

While the literature about underground journalism is growing rapidly—even in such staid publications as *Fortune*—a clarifying definition is rarely offered. Underground journalism has its psychosocial underpinnings in the urban/university counter-culture communities of the 1960's. The underground newspaper is a communications medium for young people who are seeking alternative life styles. Often these persons feel alienated from the message of conventional media. The *Los Angeles Free Press* is regarded as the first underground. Editor Arthur Kunkin explains, "the underground press is do-it-yourself journalism. The basis for the new journalism is a new audience. People are not getting the information they desired from the existing media. The *LA Free Press* is aimed at the young, Blacks, Mexicans and intellectuals." Kunkin says his paper is open to "anyone who can write in a comprehensible manner." He believes the underground press serves as a "mass opposition party." He urges his contributors to "write with passion, show the reader your style, your prejudice."

Some critics, however, are not as generous in their descriptions of underground journalism. Dave Sanford, writing in *New Republic* said:

There is nothing very underground about the underground press. The newspapers are hawked on street corners, sent to subscribers without incident through the U.S. mails, carefully culled and adored by the mass media. About three dozen of them belong to the Underground Press Syndicate, which is something like the AP on a small scale; through this network they spread the word about what is new in disruptive protest, drugs, sex. Their obsessive interest in things that the "straights" are embarrassed or offended by is perhaps what makes them underground. They are a place to find what is unfit to print in the *New York Times*.

Early examples of the underground press were the *East Village Other*, published in Manhattan's East Village, not far from that latter-day Bohemian, the *Village Voice*, the *Chicago Seed*, *Berkeley Barb*, *Washington Free Press*, and others. The undergrounds are almost always printed by offset. This "takes the printing out of the hands of the technicians," says editor Kunkin, a former tool and die maker. The undergrounds use a blend of type and free hand art work throughout. They are a kind of collage for the artist-intellectual, some editors believe. The content of the undergrounds ranges from political and artistic concerns (especially an establishment v. the oppressed theme), sexual freedom, drugs, and social services. Much of their external content (that not written by the staff and con-

tributors) comes from the Underground Press Syndicate and Liberation News Service.

In addition to the larger and better known undergrounds, there are underground papers in almost every sizable university community in the country. Most large cities have a number of undergrounds serving hippies and heads in the counter-culture community. Newer additions to the underground are the high school undergrounds and the underground newspapers published on and adjacent to military bases, both in the U.S. and abroad. Some critics foresee the end of the underground press, but the larger undergrounds are now lucrative properties. This, of course, raises another question about how long a paper can stay underground. Can a paper like the *Los Angeles Free Press* with a circulation of 90,000 stay underground? When does an underground paper become a conventional paper? These are among the many unresolved questions about the underground press. The undergrounds have been called the most exciting reading in America. Even David Sanford reluctantly agrees: "at least they try—by saying what can't be said or isn't being said by the staid daily press, by staying on the cutting edge of 'In' for an audience with the shortest of attention spans."

Precision Journalism

Perhaps the persons least likely to be classified as new journalists are the precision journalists, yet they may be more a part of the future than any of their colleagues in the new journalism ranks. Richard Scammon and Ben Wattenberg, authors of *The Real Majority*, a 1970 analysis of the American electorate, declare: "we are really the new journalists." They are concerned with an analysis of people that is as precise as possible. Or, at least as precise as the social survey research method allows. These men try to interpret social indicators and trends in prose that will attract the reader and are doing something quite new in journalism.

A leading practioner of precision journalism is Philip Meyer, a Washington editor for the Knight Newspapers. Meyer, who has written a book which calls for application of behavioral science methodology in the practice of journalism, conducted a much-praised study of Detroit Negroes after the 1967 riot. Meyer and his survey team interviewed hundreds of citizens of Detroit to probe the reasons behind the disorder. His study, *Return to 12th Street*, was one of the few examples of race relations reporting praised by the Kerner Commission. Meyer is a prolific writer with recent articles in publications ranging from *Public Opinion Quarterly* to *Esquire*. Whenever possible

he uses the methods of survey research, combined with depth interviews to analyze a political or social situation. For example, early in 1970 a series of articles about the Berkeley rebels of 1964 appeared in the *Miami Herald* and other Knight newspapers. An editor's note explained the precisionist's approach:

What happens to college radicals when they leave the campus? The whole current movement of young activists who want to change American society began just five years ago at the University of California's Berkeley campus. In a landmark survey, Knight newspapers reporters Philip Meyer and Richard Maidenberg located more than 400 of the original Berkeley rebels, and 230 of them completed detailed questionnaires. Of the respondents, 13 were selected for in-depth interviews. The results based on a computer analysis of the responses, are provided in a series beginning with this article.

Says Meyer, "When we cover an election story in Ohio we can have all the usual description—autumn leaves, gentle winds—but in addition we can offer the reader a pretty accurate profile of what his neighbors are thinking." The precision journalists combine the computer with vivid description. Meyer and his colleagues at the Knight Newspapers are also planning field experiments in which they will use the methods of experimental psychology to test public issue hypotheses in local communities. Of the future Meyer says, "We may never see a medical writer who can tie an artery, but a social science writer who can draw a probability sample is not unheard of."

"I like to think," Ben Wattenberg says, "that we are the new journalism—journalism which is not subjective but which is becoming more objective than ever before. We've got the tools now—census, polls, election results—that give us precision, that tell us so much about people. Yet, at precisely the time when these tools become so exact, the damn New Journalists have become so introspective that they're staring at their navels. The difficulty is that when you put tables in you bore people. Yet when I was in the White House, [he worked for L.B.J.] knowing what was going on, reading the new journalists was like reading fairy tales. They wrote political impressionism."

There are an increasing number of precision journalists—some of them are writers and editors who are integrating social science research into stories for news magazines and other mass circulation periodicals. They are, at present, the unsung heroes of the new journalism. Yet, their work is so boldly futuristic that they cannot long remain in the background. The work of precision journalists differs from the traditional coverage of the Gallup or Harris polls in the amount of information offered and the mode of presentation. The

precision journalists extract data, add effective prose and attempt to interpret trends and conditions of concern to people.

How It Came To Be

The various forms of new journalism—new nonfiction, alternative, advocacy, reform, underground and precision—all grew up in the 1960's. The reasons for these developments are not easily ascertained in the short run. However, there were coincidental factors—a break away from traditional news format and style; bright, energetic journalists on the scene; established literary figures who wanted to experiment with reportage; urgent social issues and the advancement of technology. But it was more than all this. There was a mood and a spirit which offered a conducive milieu for new journalism.

In the late Fifties and early Sixties those on the management side of the American press were worried. Enrollments in schools of journalism were not increasing at the same rate as other area of study in colleges and universities. This was only one manifestation of the tired, staid image of the American press. One editor on the speaking circuit in those days used the title, "You Wonder Where The Glamour Went," trading on a toothpaste advertising slogan in an address rebutting the notion that American journalism had lost its glamour. Such a defensive posture says something about the journalism of the day. It was true that youthful enthusiasm for journalism had waned considerably since the time when foreign and war correspondents had assignments any young person would have coveted. The glamour and excitement simply were not there. Journalism was increasingly being viewed as stodgy by many young people. Economic pressures had reduced the number of newspapers in the country. One-newspaper towns, without the lusty competition of another day, were becoming commonplace. Journalism—both print and broadcast—had taken on a corporate image. Personalities of days past gave way to teams of little gray men, and it was a foregone conclusion that starting your own paper was next to impossible. This image may not have represented the reality of the situation, but it was the dismal picture in the minds of college students at the dawn of the Sixties.

To many bright, young writers the form of journalistic writing itself seemed to constrict creativity. The inverted pyramid, which places elements of a news story in a descending order of importance, and the shopworn "five w's and the h" seemed to impose a rigid cast over the substantive issues and events of the day. Many writers, especially those like Wolfe and Breslin, found the traditional ap-

proach to journalism impersonal and dehumanizing, at a time when there was little debate in the trade journals about the concept of objectivity, an ideal to which every right-thinking journalist adhered.

The new journalists' assault on objectivity is displaced, press critic Herbert Brucker believes:

... critics of objective news are not as much against objectivity as they make out. What they denounce as objectivity is not objectivity so much as an incrustation of habits and rules of news writing, inherited from the past, that confine the reporter within rigid limits. Within those limits the surface facts of an event may be reported objectively enough. But that part of the iceberg not immediately visible is ruled out, even though to include it might reveal what happened in a more accurate—indeed more objective—perspective.

It is probably too early to assess all of the elements of the Sixties that set the stage for the development of the new journalism. Yet, one might cite as factors the verve and vitality of the early days of the Kennedy Administration, the ascendancy of the civil rights movement, the evolution of a counter-culture, the drug scene, the war in Southeast Asia, student unrest, riots, and urban disorder. The media were affected by these events.

Historian Theodore Roszak speaks of the uniqueness of the Sixties in *The Making of a Counter Culture*:

It strikes me as obvious beyond dispute that the interests of our college-age and adolescent young in the psychology of alienation, oriental mysticism, psychedelic drugs, and communitarian experiments comprise a cultural constellation that radically diverges from values and assumptions that have been in the mainstream of our society at least since the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century.

Reporters who covered the turbulence of the Sixties were wont to maintain traditional objectivity or balance, and few claimed to have the necessary detachment. At the same time the dissent abroad in the land pervaded the newsrooms so that by 1969 even reporters for the *Wall Street Journal*, the very center of establishment journalism, would participate in an anti-war march. Today, the traditional news format is under fire. Subjective decision-making at all stages of the reportorial process is evident. As one reporter put it: "Subjective decisions confront reporters and editors at the stage of assignment, data collection, evaluation, writing, and editing." "Who," the reporter asks, "decides what events to cover, which ones to neglect? When does the reporter know he has gathered enough information? What if there are fifteen sides to a story—instead of the two usually acknowledged by the theory of objectivity? Finally, writing and editing are purely subjective acts."

Certainly the turmoil over objectivity has touched conventional media and enhanced the climate for the new journalism. The critics, however, had justifiable concern about some of the practices of new journalists. The work of writers like Breslin involves a good deal of literary license. Some new journalists are simply not as concerned with accuracy and attribution as are their more conservative colleagues. Some say the new journalism is simply undisciplined, opinionated writing. But it is difficult to determine whether the new journalism threatens any semblance of fairness the media has developed in the four decades since the era of jazz journalism, when sensationalism and embellishment were in full force. Many who criticize the new journalism are simply not ready for the diversity now available in the marketplace. Even a writer like Jack Newfield, perhaps the most strident advocacy journalist in America, says many of the new approaches including his own must serve as part of a total continuum of information which would include many of the traditional approaches to news gathering and dissemination.

As others have pointed out, most of the new journalists developed their style after learning the more conventional newspaper style. They are breaking the rules, but they know why. Even the most forceful advocates of the new journalism praise the organizing principles of the old journalism, in much the same way that Hemingway hailed the style book of the *Kansas City Star*. They part ways on matters of substance and content, but in the early organizing stages, nothing, they say, is better discipline. The inverted pyramid and the fetish for objectivity may have been too rigid, but these methods do offer something in terms of succinct treatment and synthesis of complex, inter-related facts. Perhaps the ideas and actions of the Seventies are too complex for such simplistic treatment.

The new journalism offers rich detail and what Tom Wolfe calls "saturation reporting." The new journalism in all its forms is a more sophisticated kind of writing aimed at a more highly educated populace than that which gave life and readers to the old journalism. The new journalism is in its earliest stages of development. It has not yet arrived. It is not yet—and may never be—the dominant force in American journalism. Perhaps, like minority parties in American politics, it may suggest opportunities for innovation and thoughtful change. The media will do well to listen to the sounds of the new journalism and the resultant response of the new audience. It may be the stuff that the future is made of.

IS MUCKRAKING COMING BACK?

Carey McWilliams

The existence of a continuing—but cyclical—tradition of reform journalism may be taken for granted; ongoing, it seems to disappear at certain times only to surface later. There is general agreement on the major factors which gave rise to muckraking journalism in the first decade of this century: technological changes which made it possible to reach out for a new mass audience at reduced unit costs; the emergence of a large audience of high-school-educated Americans who were interested in public affairs but unable to relate to such magazines as *Harper's*, *Atlantic*, *Scribner's*, and *Century*—for “the cultivated classes.” More important, a mood of deep social concern and disaffection had emerged. The key to this mood and the political movement it brought into being was a feeling that “the system” itself might be somehow at fault. As Walter Lippmann pointed out, “The mere fact that muckraking was what the people wanted to hear is in many ways the most important revelation of the whole campaign. There is no other way of explaining the quick approval which the muckrakers won.”

There is also general agreement on the factors which brought about the decline of muckraking. For one thing, the movement of which it was a part tended to merge with the Progressive Party. More important, the entire Progressive Movement—muckrakers and all—was eclipsed by World War I.

The turn-of-the-century muckrakers, however, had their precursors. The articles by Charles Francis Adams on the Tweed ring and “Chapters of Erie,” which appeared in the *North American Review*, helped set the stage; John Jay Chapman’s *Political Nursery*, which he edited in New York in 1897-1901, was as shrewd and realistic about the sources of corruption as anything Lincoln Steffens ever wrote; and as Harvey Swados points out, much of what the muckrakers had to say was to be found in H.D. Lloyd’s *Wealth Against Common-wealth*, published in 1894.

A number of newspapers had conducted some aggressive muckraking campaigns before the turn of the century. In 1896, for example, Congress was set to consider the Funding Bill, an outrageous giveaway designed to add to the Southern Pacific’s plunder. Hearst

Carey McWilliams, editor of the *Nation* and for years an advocate of “reform journalism,” prepared these ideas for the Fall 1970 issue of *Columbia Journalism Review*, and along with the *CJR* gave his permission for republication.

decided to fight it and to this end asked Ambrose Bierce, who was then writing a locally celebrated column for the San Francisco *Examiner*, to go to Washington and direct the campaign against the bill. Bierce accepted with alacrity, and for nearly a year directed an unremitting attack on the Southern Pacific and C.P. Huntington.

In one sense, as Swados notes, sensational or "yellow" newspaper journalism was a parallel development, but much more superficial and not so sharply focused on social issues. Then, too, the newspaper has been a basically local institution, largely dependent on local advertising and restricted to a local readership. The issues that began to concern the public at the turn of the century were largely national, and we then had no truly national newspapers.

The muckraking magazines were a distinct journalistic innovation. Taking advantage of the new technology, they cut costs, dropped the price, and reached out for the big new readership that McClure and others knew existed. They got the readership, which in turn produced the advertising. (At the turn of the century a new nationwide mass market for certain products was just emerging.) But by 1912 the pattern was clear. Once the new mass magazines had demonstrated the existence of the market, other publications moved in and, in effect, took over the invention of the pioneer muckraking journalists. The initial reform impulse abated.

Harvey Swados points out that our country recuperates from the greedy decades "almost like a repentant drunkard recovering from a debauch by trying to examine the causes of his drinking bout and by making earnest resolutions to sin no more." The difference between the nation and the drunkard, he suggests, may lie in the fact that in its moods of sober self-criticism the nation really does redress many of the wrongs, really does help those who cannot help themselves, and does thereby renew its world image as a state concerned not solely or even primarily with self-aggrandizement, but much more importantly with dignity, freedom, and decent self-respect.

Swados could get an argument on this proposition from some of today's rebels and dissenters; nevertheless I share his feeling. *Time*, on Sept. 19, 1969, took much the same position. "For reasons that seem to be rooted in the public mood," it stated, "muckraking is a cyclic form of journalism. If a society is troubled, it suspects that something is wrong with its system or its leadership; a free press responds by finding out what that is." Conversely in periods of apparent prosperity and well being, reform journalism loses its appeal, and the muckraking journalist is regarded as a spoilsport or an old-fashioned curmudgeon. The situation changes when the public—

often a new public—becomes concerned over the course of events. The reform tradition never dies—there are always a few publications around to keep it alive—but it does seem to fade away at times.

The 1920s were such a period. As the great boom got under way, the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Collier's*, after the days of Norman Hapgood, celebrated the national virtues and pieties. As James Playsted Wood points out, the reform tradition was sustained during this decade by small-circulation magazines, in some respects more radical than the muckraking monthlies—namely, the *Nation*, *New Republic*, and one or two other publications. This was a familiar role for the *Nation*; again and again it has helped sustain the reform tradition when the cycle has turned against it.

We do not ordinarily think of Mencken or the *American Mercury* as part of the reform tradition, but as James Wood notes they were—at least during the 1920s. As the muckrakers had done before him, Mencken discovered a new audience, with new tastes, new interests, new attitudes. It is worth noting that like the *Nation* and the *New Republic*, the *Mercury* was not entirely dependent on advertising revenue. Like these magazines also, the *Mercury* cultivated a new group of writers and encouraged—across the country—a healthy skepticism. In some respects, *New Masses*, founded in 1926, also helped sustain the reform tradition.

After 1929 the scene changed. The first reactions to the stock market crash were shock, disbelief, and bewilderment. Then, rather slowly, a new current of concern and anger began to form. As the decade advanced, the world crisis began to mesh with the domestic, and pressures for change mounted. Old dogmas were questioned, and a thirst for new theories and a willingness to experiment emerged. The New Deal, of course, was a response to this mood. On the New Deal and the momentous happenings of the 1930s the press was divided—that is, owners and publishers were in general opposed to the New Deal and not inclined to rise to the challenge of the times, whereas the working press was sympathetic and did respond.

But it was not publishers alone who experienced a failure of nerve. In his *Autobiography*, published in 1931, Steffens not only said that the muckraking tradition was dead but that it had been a mistake. It had, he thought, stretched out the age of honest bunk and protracted the age of folly. He accused himself of having shared its illusions and of not realizing that muckraking was merely “a reflex of an old moral culture.”

But Steffens spoke too soon. In the early 1930s, as he was saying farewell to the muckraking tradition, Matthew Josephson

wrote a series of articles for the *New Yorker* about bulls and bears in the market. It occurred to Josephson that it might be worthwhile to turn back in time and examine their prototypes. *The Robber Barons*, directly in the muckraking tradition, was published in 1934 and has been selling steadily ever since. It was followed in 1938 by *The Politicos* and in 1940 by *The President Makers*, which extended the same analysis. Books, in fact, seem to have been the prime means by which the muckraking tradition was kept alive in the 1930s, as writers sought to muckrake American history or to give in-depth reports on the state of American life. *The Grapes of Wrath* (which grew out of a San Francisco newspaper series by Steinbeck) and *Factories in the Field* made the nation vividly aware of the social consequences of large-scale industrialized farming and brought the anti-labor activities of the Associated Farmers to public attention—without much help from the press.

In the *Nation* and *New Republic*, Carleton Beals, Heywood Broun, McAlister Coleman, Lewis Gannett, Louis Adamic, and others kept the muckraking tradition very much alive. Radio also played a key role in developing mass awareness of what was happening. Documentary films were important, as were photographs. The pamphlet, a neglected journalistic form, experienced a rebirth; the great labor organizing campaigns brought a flood of pamphlet material.

At the end of World War II we were, as William Barrett has written, “at the end of a long tunnel, there was light showing ahead, and beyond that all sorts of horizons opened.” But this bright vision was never realized; the Cold War intervened. Instead of muckraking, red-baiting journalism became the order of the day. Full of high promise, *PM*, launched in 1940, struggled valiantly, and was succeeded by the *Star*, which continued the struggle for a time and then collapsed. George Seldes carried on the old muckraking tradition brilliantly and courageously with his newsletter *In Fact*, started in the 1930s because of his feeling that the press had not responded to the needs and challenges of the 1930s. But Mr. Wood, writing in 1956, smugly reports the demise of the muckraking tradition in these words:

Magazine liberalism and iconoclasm have both declined in the years since World War II. The reasons in both instances are apparent. Most of the old idols have been smashed, and the clay feet of newer ones have not yet been identified. . . . Most of the immediate social gains have been gained, and newer causes either have not been invented or have not been formulated distinctly enough for journalistic clamor. . . .

We were confident we “had it made.” We had become so infatuated with the great god GNP that we could not see the poor and

underprivileged in our midst. It took independent investigators such as Michael Harrington, Dwight MacDonald, and Herman Miller to discover them. Even after the Montgomery bus boycott touched off the civil rights rebellion, the press still failed to zero in on the urban ghettos or to sense what was happening in them. For a decade or more it had, with notable exceptions, been "fighting communism" with an intensity that largely precluded concentration on domestic realities.

In these depressing years the small-media magazines once again kept the muckraking tradition alive. While the *Nation* devoted much space to a critical analysis of Cold-War policies, it also became increasingly concerned with domestic assaults on civil liberties which were the counterpart of these policies. We devoted major articles to the Ted Lamb case, the Oppenheimer case, the Remington tragedy, the Hiss case, and many similar situations.

At the same time the *Nation* pioneered in application of what might be called muckraking techniques to large-scale arms spending, first in Matthew Josephson's series on "The Big Guns" in 1956 and later with Fred J. Cook's "Juggernaut: The Warfare State" in 1961. We followed this with a special issue on "The CIA" in 1962—the first hard look at that institution. Previously, in 1958, we had devoted a special issue to another *verboden* subject, "The FBI." Aside from Max Lowenthal's fine book on the Federal Bureau of Investigation—which came out in 1950 and was in effect suppressed by FBI pressure—the press had failed to take an objective, critical view of the FBI. It had also failed to take a critical view of large arms spending or the CIA. After our special issues appeared the ice was broken, and many articles appeared on these subjects.

We demonstrated the acute need for old-style muckraking in a special 1956 issue—again by Fred Cook—on "The Shame of New York," the title of which reflects its parentage. This issue led directly to a very fine series in the New York *Herald Tribune*. We ran one of the first good articles on cigarette smoking and lung cancer, by Dr. Alton Ochsner, in 1953. We insisted, in 1957 and 1961, on giving attention to the wicked suggestion that perhaps a tax might be placed on advertising. We ran the first articles by Ralph Nader to appear in an American magazine, including his 1959 article "The Safe Car You Can't Buy."

The *Nation*, however, is not a news magazine. It is a journal of critical opinion. As a publication we are not well adapted to the needs of muckraking journalism. We have a small staff and meager resources. We have no full-time writers to assign to various subjects. We are unable to finance extensive research or investigation. It was

presumptuous of us to undertake such an issue as "Juggernaut: The Warfare State," or the other Fred Cook special issues. Not a penny of foundation money was used to finance these projects, although it would have been welcome. What we did was to build up files of materials—all kinds of materials—and then turn them over to the enormously gifted, hard-working Fred Cook, who is the living embodiment of the muckraking tradition in journalism. We did something else I think is important and which other small-circulation magazines also do. We brought along many young writers: Dan Wakefield, Gene Marine, Stanley Meisler, Jennifer Cross, J.L. Pimsleur, Robert Sherrill, and many others.

Today journalism faces a new situation. The scene began to change in 1960; slowly at first, but then it began to accelerate. No journal now has a monopoly on dissent. The change has come about as a result of the two components which have, in the past, ushered in new chapters in the cyclical history of reform journalism: new technology and new interests and concerns.

The myth of affluence was beginning to dissipate by the time President Kennedy took office. Nor was it long before a war had been declared against poverty. The acceleration of the war in Vietnam discredited "establishment" opinion. And the rebellion of blacks and students shattered the prevailing complacency. These new concerns created an enormous new market, so to speak, for a modern version of reform journalism.

In September, 1969, we ran an article by our Washington correspondent, Robert Sherrill, on "The Pendleton Brig," which illustrates the point. That article was widely quoted by the press and the wire services and was twice used by Mike Wallace on CBS. It brought a House subcommittee to Pendleton almost before you could say "brig." If that report had been published in September, 1967, it would not have attracted the same attention. We have published tougher articles by Sherrill that received less notice. Once again, as Lippmann pointed out years ago, it is active public concern about a subject that compels the press to pay attention to it. Today new concerns, new apprehensions, new interests have ushered in a new chapter in reform journalism.

The new technology has pivoted on the emergence of television as a major news source. From rather modest beginnings, TV news has become a huge enterprise. At the same time, TV has gotten more and more advertising that formerly went to newspapers and magazines—particularly the large-circulation picture magazines. Newspaper owners have bought into TV when and where they could and, to the

extent that they have succeeded, have taken a somewhat more relaxed view of the new competition. But magazines—notably those hardest hit—have begun to strike back. In general both newspapers and magazines have begun to feel that muckraking or investigative journalism is a useful means of countering network news.

Print media have certain inherent advantages in investigative reporting. Print constitutes a record that can be cited, quoted, filed, passed from hand to hand, and reprinted and distributed in large quantities. TV news is gone in a flash, and it is difficult to get transcripts of network programs. Also it is difficult to present complex situations, with facts and figures, on TV. For example, TV newsmen with whom I have spoken, including the producers of some excellent documentaries, concede that the medium has never done a truly effective expose of the military-industrial complex. All news is perhaps a form of entertainment, but the entertainment factor is much stronger on TV than in print.

There are other limitations on TV investigative reporting. No one in the industry needs to be reminded that TV is a licensed medium—Vice President Agnew's blast only underscores the point. The Fairness Doctrine does not present much of a problem, but the "personal attack" doctrine, as evolved by the FCC, is another matter. Under this doctrine if a TV documentary refers to someone in a derogatory manner the producer is obligated to seek out this person and offer him a chance—then and there—to respond to the statement. The mere fact that such an offer is made implies that the statement is, in some sense, derogatory. So if the person has something to hide, and is sophisticated, he will not accept the offer but will say, in effect, "run that sequence and I will sue you." This rule—which applies to documentaries, not to news—causes much distress to producers of documentaries that might be regarded as muckraking journalism. The inability of documentary producers to use concealed mikes or cameras is a further limitation.

Despite these inhibitions, some fine TV documentaries in the muckraking tradition have been made: *Biography of a Bookie*, *The Business of Heroin*, *Hunger in America*, *Health in America*, *Case History of a Rumor*, and NBC's hard look at Jim Garrison of New Orleans. But if there is a weakness in TV news it is in investigative journalism.

As it becomes increasingly difficult for the printed media to compete in "hard" news, it is not surprising to note a new interest by some newspapers in investigative reporting. Since February, 1967, *Newsday* has had an investigative team consisting of an editor

(Robert Greene), three reporters, and a file clerk, who also functions as secretary and researcher. Greene had experience on the staff of the Senate Rackets Committee before he came to *Newsday*; he knows investigative techniques. The team works as a unit. It has its own files and records and a separate office. In addition to many minor stories the team has turned out about three major reports a year—each about 3,500 words—running for five days. Word of *Newsday*'s enterprise has gotten around. When the American Press Institute at Columbia staged its second seminar on investigative journalism, attendance increased over the previous year.

The Associated Press also has set up a special assignment team, with ten reporters, under their own editor. One is a specialist in education, one in health and science; the others are all-purpose reporters. In 1969, AP reports, this team turned out 250 stories—that is, stories that were the product of investigative journalism.

One may hope that the new team of reporters at AP will remedy, to some extent, a weakness of wire service news. Again and again AP has failed to pick up excellent articles prepared by local reporters after much hard digging and investigation. Two examples are Sanford Watzman's fine series on defense procurement and renegotiation, which appeared in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, and Nick Kotz's excellent series for the Cowles papers on meat inspection. AP did distribute four or five key stories in the Kotz series but there were fifty or more in all. The *Nation* and *New Republic* were able to secure rewrites of some of the material, but it should have had, from the start, much wider national attention. I make it a business nowadays to scan the *Congressional Record* for series of this kind, which are often inserted by a senator or representative with a special interest in the subject. I learned of the Watzman and Kotz series in this way.

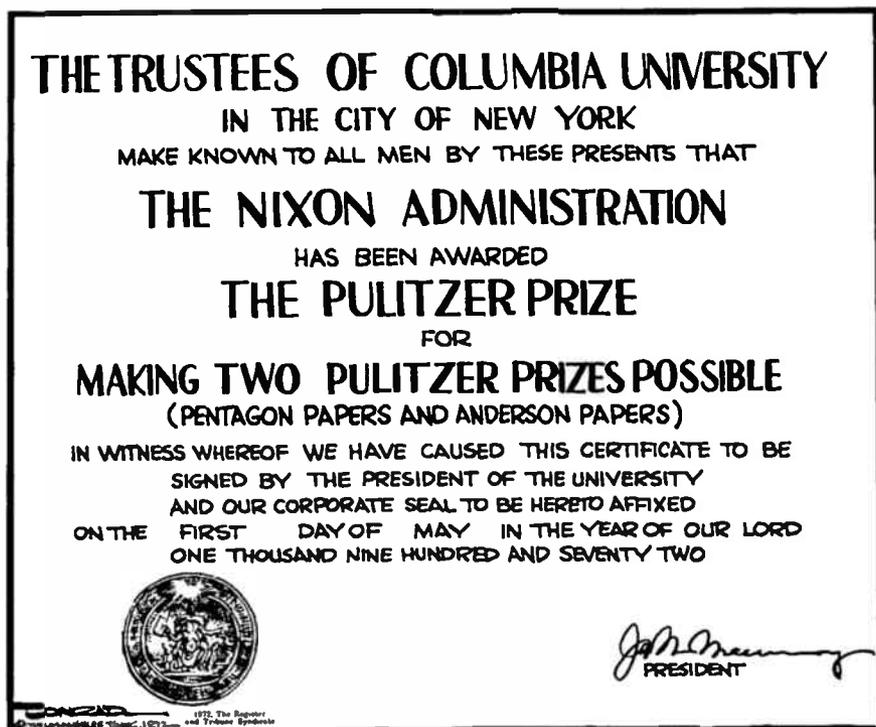
The "underground" press is, to some extent, trying to exploit what it regards as the general press' reluctance to engage in investigative journalism. Many offbeat journals, hard to categorize, belong in the muckraking tradition. They include I.F. Stone's indispensable newsletter; the *Chicago Journalism Review*, which has its counterpart in Montreal's *The Last Post*; *Hard Times*; Roldo Bartimole's *Point of View*, published in Cleveland; the *Bay Guardian* of San Francisco; and newsletters such as that of the North American Conference on Latin America. FM radio and documentary films have added something to the muckraking effort. And some investigative reporting in *Life* and *Look* has been first-rate—William Lambert's *Life* article about former Justice Abe Fortas, for example.

The book remains a major resource of reform journalism, as demonstrated by Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, Ralph Nader's *Unsafe at Any Speed*, and Joseph Goulden's remarkable study of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, *Truth Is the First Casualty*. (Indeed, it is instructive to read Frank Graham, Jr.'s *Since Silent Spring*, which documents massive and often personal attacks leveled against Miss Carson by a large part of the press. *Time*, for example, denounced her book as "an emotional and inaccurate outburst" and accused the author of "putting literary skill second to the task of frightening and arousing readers." But last fall, when the Government vindicated Miss Carson by banning DDT, *Time* reported complaints that the ban was inadequate.) Moreover, the paperback revolution has added a new dimension to the book's effectiveness. In Canada, after David and Nadine Nowlan prepared an eighty-page analysis of the Spadina Expressway, computerized typesetting and offset printing enabled reproduction of their book in three weeks, for a sale price of \$1.25 a copy.

From all this, it should be apparent that the muckraking or reform tradition is very much alive in American journalism. But there is not nearly enough of it. The problem is not with personnel. We have some superb investigative reporters: Jack Nelson, Nick Kotz, Sanford Watzman, Robert Sherrill, Bernard Nossiter, Fred Cook, Morton Mintz, Richard Harris, Tom Whiteside, and many more. The problem is how the available personnel are used. Good investigative journalism takes time, money, and commitment on the part of a publisher. If there is a personnel problem it exists at this level. A few more publishers like the late William T. Evjue would be welcome.

Business Week in a cover article reported that the day of the mass magazine as we have known it has passed; the "hot" magazines are those with a special relationship to their readers—that is, the selective-audience magazines, be the audience surfers, skiers, or single girls. What this means, an executive of J. Walter Thompson told *Business Week*, is "simply that print media, like everything else that is for sale, are gradually being moved into the traditional and modern marketing mold." In fact, some of the new selective-audience magazines are little more than means by which the publisher, who manufactures products related to the special interest of the magazine, can advertise these products. Newspapers, of course, could step into the breach. But will they? And how long will they be able to compete with TV for lucrative advertising accounts?

Another limitation is the libel laws, which, although they have been somewhat relaxed, still warn publications—particularly small-



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circulation publications—away from important subject matter. It has been my experience that individuals and corporations will threaten—and actually sue—small journals of opinion when they would hesitate to threaten or sue the *New York Times* for the same material. On occasion I have arranged for authors to testify before Congressional committees to get stories before the public simply because a publication such as the *Nation* cannot afford the luxury of winning a libel action. Recently we were sued for libel and the case was thrown out—but it cost us \$7,500 to win.

Despite these difficulties, muckraking journalism seems to be staging a comeback. Today we have foundations that will occasionally underwrite the kind of research and travel that investigative journalism often requires. New technologies continue to push the press toward more and better investigative reporting. And on the

horizon are a bewildering variety of greater technological possibilities of the kind Ralph Lee Smith discussed in the *Nation's* recent special issue, "The Wired Nation."

Leon Trotsky, like Lincoln Steffens, thought that criticism of existing institutions accomplished very little and that its chief function was to serve as "a safety valve for mass dissatisfaction." No doubt it does serve this function. But it is or should be a historical constant in any society that aspires to achieve a more rational social order.

Reform journalism can be effective. But its effectiveness has come to depend, now more than ever, on how searching it is and the extent to which it relates the part to the whole, the symptom to the cause. Reform journalists may not be "movers and shakers," but they do edge the world along a bit, they do get an innocent man out of jail occasionally, and they do win a round now and then—sometimes a significant round. A wealth of journalistic experience and much social wisdom is reflected in the title of George Seldes' book: *Never Tire of Protesting*. We never should.

CAN JOURNALISM SCHOOLS IMPROVE THE PRESS?

John Tebbel

While critics of the press have lately been running through litanies familiar since the colonial political authorities complained that the first newspaper in America embarrassed their foreign policy (and promptly shut it down), those professionally involved with the media have been speculating about how to improve performance in a time of challenge and widespread disbelief.

No one doubts that the performance of both broadcast and print journalism could and should be improved. The improvement, however, ought to come from professional concern and knowledge, and not through pressure by laymen who want to implant their own standards of news judgment. As one eminent editor has observed, few people outside the professions of law and medicine would have the presumption to tell lawyers how to argue a case or surgeons how to perform an operation, but every Tom, Dick, and Spiro appears to

John Tebbel, is a journalism professor with strong views regarding the role of the "J-school." This article appeared January 17, 1970 and is used with permission of *Saturday Review Inc.*, copyright 1970.

feel qualified to tell media people how to perform their jobs, even though many of these critics, from the White House on down, are unable to perceive any grammatical difference between “media” and “medium.”

When one looks at the real and not the imaginary faults of the press, the true meaning of that abused omnibus word “communications” becomes more apparent. No matter what medium carries them, words are the essence of communication, and more and more it appears that the *quality* of what is being transmitted is being overshadowed by *quantity* and by sheer technology. If the media can be said to have two major faults, one would certainly be the prevalence of careless, even trivial writing. The other would be the inability or unwillingness of so many media people to dig below the surface of the news. Taken together, these constitute formidable obstacles to conveying the news of our troubled times and to giving it perspective.

These are major faults and no doubt account in part for the general dissatisfaction with press performance among readers and viewers, although these audiences attribute their discontent to other factors, most of them self-serving fantasies. There is also to be considered the fact that most of the public is completely ignorant of how news is gathered and edited, as is clearly evident from the nature of recent attacks on the media. The communications industry has a large job of education confronting it in this respect.

But if the quality of the media is to be improved, we must look in two directions—toward the media managers, who need to be aware of their problem and determined to do something about it, and toward the chief source of supply of writers and editors, the nation’s schools and departments of journalism.

When the Nieman Fellowships at Harvard were first announced, *The New Yorker* viewed with disdain their proclaimed purpose of elevating the standards of journalism. After all, said the magazine, Hearst had gone to Harvard, and he couldn’t elevate the standards of journalism with a derrick. This stylish piece of acidity turned out to be as shallow as a Hearst editorial. The fellowships *did* raise standards, because they made good newspapermen better informed and more thoughtful about what they were doing. Other fellowship programs in various parts of the country, funded by the Ford Foundation, are performing a similar service today. But the numbers involved in these programs are small, and the hope for any widespread improvement rests on the increasing number of J-school graduates who are staffing the newsrooms and who today dominate the major

newspapers and networks. What, one may reasonably ask, are the schools doing to improve the profession further?

There is one way in which they are not helping, and that is the continued and increasing production of Ph.D.'s in communications. Leaving aside the "chi squares vs. green eyeshades" controversy, it could hardly be argued that any but a few of these graduates are qualified to gather and edit the news, nor should they be expected to do so. They have been trained in a different discipline, and their vocation lies in another direction. A few may have a talent for media writing, but most communicate in the professional language of the sociologist and the psychologist, an intramural tongue hardly understood by others.

Yet, it is commonplace for journalism professors, deans, and heads of departments to find in their small advertisements of faculty openings from other institutions in which the specifications often read: "Must have media experience, and also have, or be near to having, the Ph.D. degree." To the advertisers, there apparently is no contradiction in these demands, but it is common observation that the number of people worth having with any kind of media experience who are also Ph.D.'s, or likely to be, is infinitesimal. Many of the best writers and editors never went beyond the simple B.A., and a few did not reach even that stage.

Professional instruction in journalism takes place largely on the undergraduate level, and its quality is directly related to the media experience of the instructor, as well as his ability to convey what he knows. Inevitably, some schools assemble highly qualified faculties; others simply make do with what they have. Here the dead hand of academicism can be felt in the unprofessional approach of some administrators, and in accrediting procedures that place more value on faculty members' degrees than upon their experience. A school or department with a brilliant assemblage of working practitioners of the craft on its part-time staff can nevertheless be threatened with non-accreditation, if these faculty members do not have the proper academic "union cards." Supposedly, journalism students are being trained for a profession in which the use of words is the vital essence. Writing is what journalism is all about. It seems only simple logic that it should be taught by experienced writers and editors, regardless of their academic backgrounds.

Surprisingly, the idea that journalism training should be on a high vocational level, like that for doctors and lawyers, is gaining new acceptance today, after being sneered at so long by the academicians. "Relevance," the word without which the young would be speech-

less, has put journalism in a new light; as the current arguments over the media testify, there are few things more relevant today than the communications business.

In the restructuring of curricula taking place everywhere, journalism is now mentioned without an accompanying sneer even in the sacred precincts of Harvard, where it is being discussed as a possible new course of study. Except for Columbia, the Ivy League schools have always disdained journalism in following their traditional classical patterns of education, but the student revolt has changed that, among other things.

Existing journalism curricula are also subject to change, sometimes without much notice, in these hectic days. The problems are not easy. Some student needs and demands are logical and not difficult to meet through revisions that should have been made long ago. Others are far too permissive to be useful to people who intend to work in the media. As any experienced writer or editor knows, it is essential to have as broad a background as possible, especially in political and cultural history, yet more and more students try to concentrate their work in a single narrow field of individual interest, and many are so ignorant of the past that they find themselves quite unable to deal with any kind of writing not concerned with contemporary social problems. Many, too, have little respect for the craft of writing itself, as the pedestrian rhetoric of the New Left and the semi-literate prose of the underground press amply testify.

Here again the J-schools are not equipped to deal with some new kinds of students who appear in their classes. The black student, for example, whose ambition is to establish and operate a ghetto newspaper, will probably find little that satisfies him, or even helps him much, in most curricula. The dedicated activist who thinks of the newspaper (or any other medium) only as an instrument of social protest whose purpose is to help bring about social changes will not find anything to interest him in classes that talk about getting the news and presenting it as fairly and accurately as possible. Among a good many students there is an utter disdain for that concept, which has dominated the best newspapers of this century.

Most journalism training elsewhere in the world is based more or less on this idea, even in countries whose press is not particularly dedicated to the proposition, as in France. Journalism education abroad is often in the hands of editorial trade unions, or in a partnership of those unions with government, as in Holland. In Britain it is controlled by a coalition of the government and the newspaper proprietors. In these and other countries, the objective is recruitment of

trained personnel for the business. Only in a few places is such education within the province of faculties of philosophy or law, and in these the curriculum is taken up largely with communications methodology, and such training as exists is left to the media, who do little or nothing about it.

England remains the one country where every effort to date to make journalism education a part of university training has failed. This may be less surprising when one considers that only recently have the Oxbridge authorities agreed to recognize sociology as an academic discipline and have permitted it to be taught. Those who have fought hard to gain a similar recognition for journalism were not even listened to seriously by Oxbridge, and the Redbricks, though at least willing to talk, have not opened their arms. The opposition has come not only from the universities, but from the newspaper proprietors and the trade unions. Even the kind of on-the-job training for young journalists that the National Council for the Training of Journalists has done so well may soon disappear in the new educational bureaucracy controlling British universities.

Nothing of that sort can happen here. Journalism education is too long established and in too healthy a condition to be shot down by old-fashioned editors or a few anachronistic university administrators. But it is suffering from that fashionable contemporary affliction, an identity crisis. Those who want to isolate it from the real world of the media as an academic discipline unrelated to professional performance will have little but sympathy to offer to newspapers and broadcasters who are under attack from critics of every variety, and who hope to fight back by improving their product.

On the other hand, those who want to improve professional training and adapt it to present needs, in an effort to raise the quality of the media by strengthening their personnel, find their intention impeded both on and off the campus, and often by their own students.

Some journalism educators, at least, are coming to understand that it is irrelevant to argue about whether the news judgment of a politician, a political administration, a minority, or a great silent majority should be substituted for that of reporters and editors. Whatever mistakes of judgment the latter may make, it seems obvious that a free press in a democracy cannot operate except through unfettered control by people who are obligated to no one but themselves. Responsibility, yes, and provision for a broad spectrum of opinion in the press as a whole—but these things we already have in about as much measure as is possible in our society. What we do not

have is a press that is adapting itself rapidly enough to changing times, and that often lacks writers and editors sufficiently skilled to use the word, with which knowledge begins, to inform readers and viewers as they must be informed.

It seems equally plain that there is nowhere else the media can turn to for help in improving their product and fulfilling their obligations, implied by the same First Amendment that protects their freedom, than the journalism schools. If the schools are to continue to justify their long existence, it is a problem to which they might well address themselves.

THE STORY EVERYONE IGNORED

Seymour M. Hersh

I was asked to write this article—to tell editors how they missed one of the biggest stories of the year—by an associate editor of one of the biggest newspapers in America, one of the newspapers that was very slow to fully realize the significance of the alleged massacre at Songmy. That irony, in itself, is important to me—for it convinces me that editorship, like democracy, is not dead . . . yet.

The fact that some thirty newspapers in this country, Canada, and abroad did publish my first and subsequent Dispatch News Service stories on Songmy is further proof that the nation's press is not as gutless as all that. I honestly believe that a major problem in newspapers today is not censorship on the part of editors and publishers, but something more odious: self-censorship by the reporters.

There is no doubt that many reporters had heard of the Pinkville incident (at least many have told me so). In talking to some Pentagon officials before I wrote my first story (they talked then), I was told by one general officer: "Pinkville had been a word among GIs for a year. I'll never cease to be amazed that it hasn't been written about before." Another general officer who was attached to headquarters in Saigon in 1968 said he had first heard talk of Pinkville soon after it happened. Of course, an outsider can also be amazed that generals would hear of such incidents and not demand

Seymour M. Hersh won a Pulitzer prize in 1970 for the story he describes in this article. His story on My Lai was broken through the Dispatch News Service. He is a Washington correspondent for the *New York Times*. This personal account is adapted from an article in *The Bulletin of the A.S.N.E.* and is reprinted here with permission of Mr. Hersh and *Columbia Journalism Review*, where it appeared in the Winter 1969-70 issue.

an investigation, but the notion that *those* men thought that the press had somehow fallen on the job is, well, significant.

As everyone knows, the first mention of the incident was provided by the public information officer at Fort Benning, Ga., who released a brief item September 6 announcing that Lt. William L. Calley, Jr., had been charged with murder in the deaths “of an unspecified number of civilians in Vietnam.”

The AP man in the area promptly put in a query; when the Pentagon did not gush forth with all of the details, that was that. No other questions were officially asked of the Pentagon about the Cal-



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Poll reports more American disturbed over My Lai publicity than My Lai massacre itself.

ley story until I offered some carefully hedged queries around October 23. The *Washington Post* queried the Pentagon about Calley on November 6; by that time I had arranged a number of interviews—with Calley, among others—and was well on the way. The *New York Times* also began asking some questions shortly before the first story broke early November 12 for the next morning's papers.

The initial Pentagon dispatch was put on the wire by the AP and appeared Saturday morning in many major newspapers in the country, including the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, and *Los Angeles Times*. It would be wonderful to say I noticed it immediately, saw its significance, and dashed out with pencil and pad in hand. Of course not. I was tipped around October 20 by a source with Pentagon connections. My source simply told me that the military was planning to court-martial an officer at Fort Benning, Ga., for the murder of about seventy-five Vietnamese civilians.

What made me drop everything (I was then finishing *The Ultimate Corporation*, a book on the Pentagon for Random House) and begin pursuing the story? For one thing, my source was good—but certainly no better than others who must have told newsmen about the incident in the twenty months since it took place. Another, more important reason, I think, was my experiences with chemical and biological warfare (CBW). I had written a book on CBW (*Chemical and Biological Warfare: America's Hidden Arsenal*, Bobbs-Merrill) that was published in mid-1968 but somehow failed to make much of a mark at first. The public and the press seemingly did not want to believe that the United States was stockpiling nerve gas at Army commands overseas, nor did they want to believe that American military men would be capable of shipping trainloads of nerve gas through the American countryside without telling anyone. My book prompted very little investigative reporting.

So, I believed the story about Pinkville. And I also knew—or thought I knew—that newspapers would probably be the last to believe it. Thus I began my searches with an eye on *Look* and *Life* magazines. I won't tell who gave me leads, but suffice to say that I managed to find out who Calley was, and where his lawyer was located. I decided that the telephone was a bad interviewing instrument on the Pinkville story, and therefore interviewed every important witness or near-witness in person. I applied for and received a limited travel grant (about \$2,000 en toto) from the Philip Stern Fund for Investigative Journalism in Washington, and began flying around to locate witnesses. (In all, I traveled more than 30,000 miles via air.)

By early November I had a pretty good picture of what had happened, at least solid enough so I could write. I knew Calley had been charged with 109 deaths and I had the precise wording from the charge sheets. I contacted *Life*; they said they weren't interested (little did I know that they had turned down Ronald Ridenhour, the twenty-three-year-old California college student whose letters first prompted the Army to study the incident). Then I went to *Look*. A senior editor there was very interested; I wrote a sketchy, but explosive, memo on what I had. They, too, decided to pass—I think, charitably, because of their four- to six-week lead time.

I really didn't know where to turn, so I simply kept doing research. David Obst, general manager of Dispatch and a Washington neighbor and fellow touch football player, had learned from me about Pinkville and was insistent on handling it. I had written a few Sunday pieces for his news service and been moderately successful; as many as six or eight responsible newspapers (including the *Baltimore Sun*) had published one or more of my earlier works. So in the end, I turned to Dispatch and committed myself to its syndication.

Why? I was convinced that if I walked into a major newspaper and laid out my story, the editors, to verify my information, would have to repeat the painstaking interview-and-more-interview process I had gone through, and then write their own story. I could respect this, but I simply wanted my story for myself. And I wanted it to be credible, which ruled out smaller magazines. This wasn't an article for a journal of opinion, like the *New Republic*, or *National Review*, for that matter—it was hard news that should be written as such.

That left Obst and Dispatch. Amazingly, as is well known, it worked. Of about fifty newspapers contacted, thirty-two or so eventually ran my first story citing the charges against Calley. This was not done on a whim; the papers carefully checked me and as many of the facts as possible. That was to the newspaper world's credit.

What happened after the first story is not. Only the *New York Times*, which had its own story, chose to follow up independently on the story, by sending Henry Kamm from its Saigon bureau to the Pinkville area to interview survivors (ABC-TV and *Newsweek* also went along). The *Times* decided to treat Pinkville as a major story and do its own reporting from the outset. Other papers avoided any hint of investigatory research and it was left to me to seek out Ridenhour (who, after my first story, had told newspapers about his role) and to interview him in California. Although he had first revealed his part in the story Friday, November 14, and I did not see him until the following Monday afternoon, amazingly I was the first

reporter to personally interview him. The *New York Times* and AP had talked briefly to him by telephone, but the *Los Angeles Times*—barely thirty miles away in downtown Los Angeles—did not send a reporter. And none of the papers realized how important Ridenhour was—he had a list of eyewitnesses, many of whom were out of the service and willing to talk.

Ridenhour gave me the names and addresses of some of the eyewitnesses he had spoken to about Pinkville (he did not actually participate in the incident), and off I went. After personal interviews in Utah, Washington, and New Jersey—conducted within twenty-four hours—my subsequent story, for newspapers of November 20, was well received by the nation's press. [Editor's Note: The first publication of My Lai photos came in the November 20 *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, which later reported many readers who phoned within twenty-four hours disapproved of publication of the photos.] After that second story, newspapers generally were still reluctant to comment editorially on Pinkville (with the *New York Times* and *Chicago Sun-Times* being notable exceptions), although they were playing the story big. It all had suddenly become much more credible when the Army announced in late November that Calley had indeed been charged with the murder of 109 Vietnamese civilians.

The last newspapers vestiges of resistance disappeared when Paul Meadlo of Terre Haute, Ind., submitted to a *Dispatch* interview and told how he had calmly executed, under orders, dozens of Vietnamese civilians. *Dispatch* provided information on Meadlo to CBS-TV, which ran a long interview on the Walter Cronkite show. It was a crash deal for *Dispatch*, with Meadlo, who had been fully informed of the possible dangers to him and his rights in the matter, not being paid one cent; but even more important was the fact that television was needed—that somehow just relying on newspapers to sear the conscience of America hadn't been working, or had been working too slowly. It took three newspaper stories and one television interview to make Pinkville a national issue; it shouldn't have.

After Meadlo came a flurry of newspaper stories quoting former members of Calley's platoon and his company. The newspaper industry, in one of those collective changes of mind that can only be found in the business, decided each man's testimony was important enough to play all over the front pages. The indiscriminate use of eyewitness statements was amazing to me; I had carefully attempted to get some kind of "feel" from each of my interviewees before quoting them. GIs are notorious liars (that point is based on a per-

sonal recollection), particularly when talking about their combat days. I think some of those who came forward did not tell all the truth.

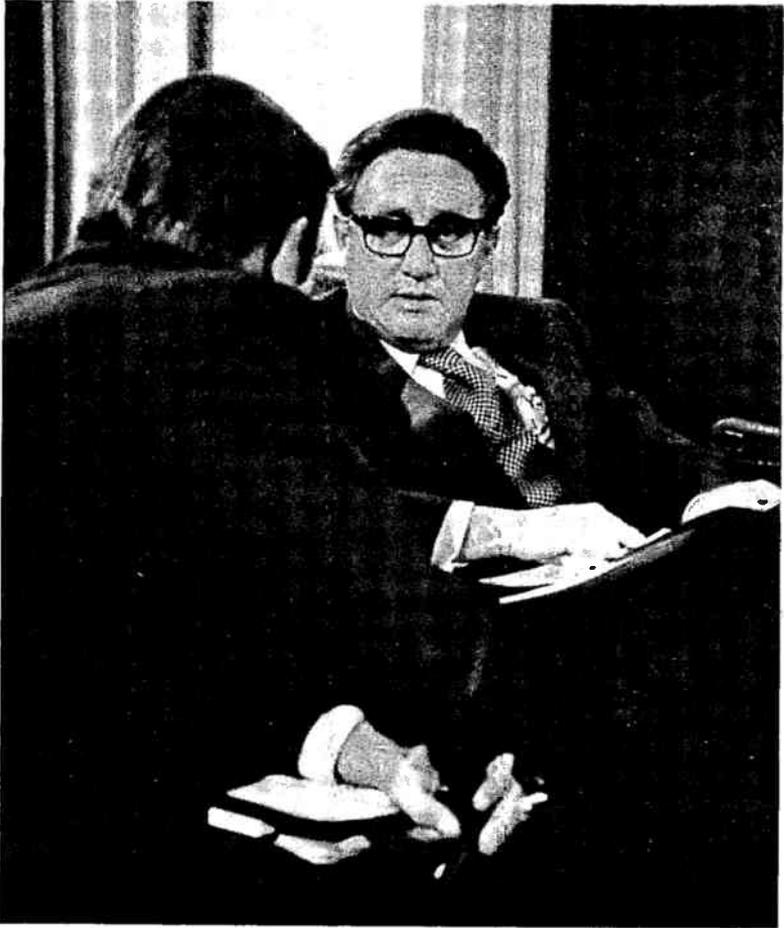
This, of course, leads right into the issue of pre-trial publicity; a major dilemma facing newspapers today. I was impressed by how important this issue was for some newspapers when they were deciding whether or not to run my first few Dispatch stories; and then surprised at how quickly the same newspapers forgot about such rights and began splashing stories across their newspaper once Pinkville became a big issue. Dispatch handled the pre-trial publicity question by retaining a prominent Washington law firm and relying on it for advice. The advice generally was that the public's right to know far outweighed any disadvantages to some involved individuals. Even if a court-martial became an impossibility and some men had to be turned free, this seemed preferable to not having as full and as responsible a debate as possible—and "responsible" to me simply meant when I quoted a source I firmly believed him to be telling the truth; it was not always a question of just quoting someone accurately.

What made some responsible and careful newspapers publish my stories and others, equally as responsible and careful, not publish them? I think part of the answer is instinct, the instinct many reporters and editors feel for a story or a source. There are many blind sources one can trust, even over a telephone, while others need careful checking.

One newspaper with which I became involved was the Washington *Post*. I met with top editors of the paper early on the morning of November 12, when Dispatch broke the story. The meeting was chaired by Ben Bradlee, the *Post*'s executive editor. My story was passed around, read by all, and I answered some direct questions on the legal aspects of the charges against Calley. No one asked what seemed to me to be the obvious question: "Is this true?" After I left, I learned later, Bradlee handled that aspect by telling his staff, "This smells right." His instinct was working, at least that morning.

Nevertheless, I knew things had changed for most of the nation's press after the Meadlo interview; at least six friends in the Washington newspaper corps called me at home over the next few evenings seeking tips on where to go next or leads on involved GIs or officers who might be living in their local areas.

When the nation's newspapers begin wanting their hometown mass murderer, things are well in hand.



Henry Kissinger, U.S. Secretary of State.

abc photo

HENRY KISSINGER AND THE MEDIA: A SEPARATE PEACE

Roger Morris

And I attach great importance to being believed: when one persuades or conquers someone, one mustn't deceive them.

Henry Kissinger, Interview with
Oriana Fallaci, Nov. 4, 1972.

Nowhere is the admiration of Henry Kissinger more apparent than in the blurb-like superlatives of his press clippings. The "Merlin of American diplomacy . . . the name that made foreign policy famous," says *Newsweek*. One of 56 secretaries of state, *Time* thinks he has a chance of being remembered as "the greatest in U.S. history." To Murrey Marder, the experienced diplomatic correspondent of the *Washington Post*, he "may well be the biggest, permanent, floating foreign policy establishment in our history. . . ." The *New York Times* has told us for the record that we are indeed living in the age of "Pax Kissingerus." Such coverage—plus his stunning diplomatic success—has helped to make him "America's most admired man," as measured by the Gallup Poll.

This is the same Kissinger who also has guided American policy through a savage bombing of Indochina, the near collapse of our international financial position, an ominous alienation of Japan, a back-biting split with Western Europe, silence in response to human rights outrages from Brazil to Bangladesh, and an all but uncontested congressional massacre of foreign aid, the desperately needed along with the dubious. Not least, by his own claim, he has all the while been one of the most intimate participants in Richard Nixon's administration ("like two men in a foxhole," he told Oriana Fallaci, the Italian journalist), where the colossal scale of corruption seems to rival the diplomatic achievements.

This side of the Kissinger record is not so readily apparent. Despite confrontations between the press and the Nixon administra-

Roger Morris directs Humanitarian Policy Studies for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (although this article represents his own view). A former assistant to Henry Kissinger, he is the author of *Disaster in the Desert*, a study of failures of international relief in the African drought, and *Passing By: The United States and Genocide in Burundi, 1972*. This is an abridged version of his article which appeared in the May-June, 1974 *Columbia Journalism Review*. It is used with his permission and that of CJR.

tion, the media seem to have made a separate peace with Henry Alfred Kissinger. Like his other achievements, this peace is a product of Kissinger's virtuosity, his hard work, the mutual interests of the parties, and, in some respects, sheer chance. Yet the settlement has its risks, like any other, and the course of the negotiations may turn out to be as important to America as diplomacy abroad. For if the price of this peace is media self-censorship, a surrender of the independent role of journalists in choosing topics to write about, reporting on personalities instead of policies, and the absence of investigative reporting in foreign affairs (and there are signs that it has been all of these), then the peace may be seen as legitimizing an unsatisfactory status quo, as an obstacle to the new journalism that is needed in coverage of foreign affairs.

The chief substance of Kissinger's first staff meeting in January, 1969, was that there would be no White House mess privileges and *nobody was to talk to the press!* "We are not going to repeat the experience of the Johnson administration," Kissinger wishfully told us. "If anyone leaks anything, I will do the leaking." Over succeeding weeks, one saw some discreet infractions of the rule, but for the most part it stood. Members of Kissinger's staff were authorized to explore secret negotiations, even to edit the ceaseless outpour of his diary. But none of us was trusted to deal with that most sensitive and perilous phenomenon of them all—a journalist.

Kissinger's relations with the media were largely limited to background briefings, hidden from public view, during the first Nixon administration. Yet behind the backgrounders was a steady stream of phone calls and personal visits with journalists ranging from Maxine Cheshire, whose social column for the *Washington Post* might have carried Henry's name in an unflattering context, to Max Frankel of the *Times*, who might have been doing a major story on SALT. "Henry must have spent close to half his time either dealing with the press or worrying about how to deal with them," recalls a former assistant. "My editors were amazed by my access," said one reporter, "but what really mesmerized them was to get a call themselves from Henry Kissinger where he's say, 'I want you to know that . . .'"

Partly as a result of Kissinger's energetic accessibility, the media, while covering Kissinger and what he has concentrated upon, have a tendency to ignore what he ignores. Not only do we thus lack an accounting of the weaknesses or oversights of a singularly powerful secretary of state; more important, there is the danger that public and congressional attention will not fasten on issues—even urgent

ones—that are not to Kissinger's taste. Foreign economic policy is probably the most significant case in point.

Kissinger's failures on economic issues began before his successes in Peking and Moscow, and are still running ahead. Early in 1969, there was a heavy-handed effort to condition the long-negotiated return of Okinawa to Japan upon concessions by Tokyo in trade negotiations. This failure to understand the textile trade issue contributed much to the present envenomed relations with Japan. There followed a similar insensitivity to economic issues in U.S.-European relations, with similar consequences. The huge wheat sale to the Soviet Union has come to haunt not only American consumers, but also hungry millions in Africa and Asia. Nor was the Kissinger magic in evidence as the dollar and nearly the entire world monetary system collapsed in 1971.

"Henry Kissinger's record on economics is dismal," concluded Fred Bergsten, Kissinger's assistant for international economic affairs from 1969 to 1971 and now a Brookings fellow. "On most issues, he has totally abstained. . . . Where Mr. Kissinger did reluctantly get involved in economic issues, he usually bungled badly." U.S. foreign economic policy had been a direct casualty, Bergsten judged, of Kissinger's lone ranger diplomatic style, his nineteenth century sense of *realpolitik*, and his chronic pre-Watergate reluctance to offer a liberal target to the "Haldeman-Ehrlichman-Colson wing of the White House," ever on the lookout for "the issue on which to deep-six Henry."

But when Bergsten elaborated on that analysis in a brief essay written late in 1973, it was read and discussed in Washington as a novel insight. Several years after the events, Kissinger's role in these economic policy failures had not been illuminated by the media. Nor was the idea that Kissinger had to protect his flanks from the sniping of White House advisors widely reported or questioned. At that, Bergsten's essay was rejected by *The New Republic*, which had requested it on the occasion of Kissinger's Senate confirmation hearings, and then by the *Washington Post*, before the *New York Times* printed it on the op-ed page Dec. 12. "It might have been misinterpreted as a personal attack," a *New Republic* editor told Bergsten. "It was not something we were interested in," was the *Post's* reaction. If Kissinger had "abstained" on the international economic issues, Bergsten found that some reputable publications were continuing late in 1973 to abstain on the abstention.

The most recent example of neglect of an economic issue by both Kissinger and the media who cover him is the increasingly grave

world food problem. It isn't seen as a "Kissinger" story. Both the government and the media have tended to treat the global food scarcities of 1973-1974 as an aberration, the product of the unusual Soviet purchases or temporary market fluctuations. Yet some experts warn with rising alarm that the problem is becoming chronic, due to unchecked population growth, massive grain imports by the U.S.S.R., limits on yields of vegetable and fish protein, and the rapid dwindling of world grain reserves. "In the face of the current food crisis and the prospects of added vulnerability in the years to come," argues Lester Brown, a respected economist and former Department of Agriculture official, "the American government has assumed a curious posture of complacency." It required a press conference last winter when Brown wrote his warning in *Foreign Policy* for the issue to assume its deserved importance in Washington. Though Kissinger had alluded to the food problem in his United Nations speech on Sept. 24, 1973, his apparent recognition of the crisis, as Brown put it, "remains unlinked with actual governmental policies and actions." It is Kissinger—the man who holds dramatic airport press conferences—who makes U.S. foreign policy on food. Yet he has received only the most perfunctory questioning on this topic. [Ed. Note: The government, Kissinger, and the media began paying more attention to the world food shortages in late 1974.]

Clearly there are different perspectives on food and the other economic issues. Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz has stated that U.S. food production will stave off a world food crisis, for example. Nonetheless, the telling point made by nonjournalistic observers like Bergsten and Brown is that Kissinger, whether he acts or does not act, is a major part of the world economic story—a story that rivals detente or Vietnam in significance for the average American. Yet, the whys and hows and who-said-whats so laboriously reported when the dateline is Peking or the Sinai have been largely omitted here.

The record of the past five years suggests that Kissinger has probably spent even less time on human rights issues than on economic problems.

Some of the worst human rights abuses in this period have involved a direct economic or military association by the United States with the offending regime. Economic pressure on the Allende regime combined with steady military aid to the Chilean armed forces—perhaps a new and subtle form of interventionism to be repeated elsewhere—may well have helped produce the bloody coup and current repression in Chile. A conservative coalition in Congress, acting with quiet administration blessing (Kissinger was con-

spicuously absent from Capitol Hill) enabled U.S. chrome purchases from Rhodesia in 1971-72 to bolster the racist dictatorship there. American arms sent by Kissinger-approved military assistance programs have fortified repressive regimes in Greece, Brazil, Ethiopia and the Portuguese Territories in southern Africa. In other cases, Washington's silence has been more conspicuous: after the minority regime in the central African state of Burundi fell into a frenzy of ethnic murder to eliminate their tribal rivals in 1972, U.S. cables spoke of "selective genocide," officials acknowledged as many as 200,000 killed, and one Foreign Service officer called it "Burundi's final solution." The U.S. gave no arms aid and had no important political interests in the country, but U.S. officials were unwilling to deplore the genocide in public statements.

Perhaps the most familiar humanitarian problem was Pakistan's brutal 1971 repression in its then eastern wing, killing uncounted thousands, driving ten million into squalid exile in India, and leading eventually to the Indo-Pakistani war and the independence of Bangladesh. Washington found it hard to condemn these all too visible horrors (apparently out of reluctance to upset a long-standing friendship with Pakistan, and also, it was said, to allow the U.S. subsequently to mediate the conflict). At the time, the U.S. government clandestinely violated its own embargo on arms to Pakistan. As most of the world now knows, thanks to Jack Anderson, the whole sordid episode ended with Henry Kissinger "getting hell" from his boss for the public appearance of U.S. neutrality, urging his lesser colleagues in a secret White House meeting during the war to accept the President's order to "tilt" toward Pakistan in public statements, and warning in a favorite idiom that the new Bengali nation would be a "basket case."

On the few occasions when he has been questioned about such policies, Kissinger has convincingly argued against moralism in diplomacy, or cast the issue in terms of the limits of U.S. power to affect internal affairs elsewhere, a cogent point for many in the aftermath of Vietnam. But there has been little investigation of whether those were *really* the issues in each case, or of Kissinger's specific role (or lack of interest) in the formulation of these policies. The most prominent exceptions—Anderson's publication of the leaked minutes on Pakistan and Laurence Stern's reporting on the Chilean policy for the *Washington Post*—came from journalists well outside the diplomatic corps, not those whose beat is Kissinger at the White House or the State Department. The point is not that harried correspondents can or should master every issue, or ignore breaking stories. But the

media's comparative inattention to questions shunned by Kissinger is a sign that, with precious few exceptions, such as Anderson, Stern, I.F. Stone or Seymour Hersh of the *New York Times*, American diplomacy seems still to be awaiting (un anxiously, to be sure) its Bernsteins and Woodwards, or its Upton Sinclair. To date, the overriding reality for the media has been, as Stanley Karnow of *The New Republic* put it, "star quality." "It's more like covering Marilyn Monroe," says Karnow, "than a secretary of state."

Seen from inside the government, even from the perspective of Kissinger's own staff, it may be that media interest is the only way to capture his attention for an issue he will otherwise ignore at mounting cost. In my own experience, Kissinger's attention to the massive starvation in the Nigerian civil war was very much a function of press attention to the suffering, reaching a height when President Nixon took office in early 1969, trailing off over the remainder of the year, briefly revived when Biafra collapsed amid eyewitness reports of great anguish in January-February, 1970. Official sources say it was publication in July, 1971, of a confidential World Bank report on the repression in East Pakistan that spurred a short (and unavailing) debate by government officials with Kissinger about U.S. policy. More recently, Foreign Service officers say media attention has drawn Kissinger to question controversial policies toward the African drought or genocide in Burundi that he had left almost wholly to others. "The press has the power, within limits, to determine Henry's agenda," said a high-ranking State Department officer, "but he does mainly what *he* thinks matters, and the press is not unfair about it."

Kissinger's remarkable personality, his intelligence and power, even his candor, can, ironically, act as obstacles to more comprehensive reporting. The Middle East waits on him to be done with Vietnam, and so on through the maze. Watching this performance, it is easy to conclude that there is nothing of importance beyond Kissinger's schedule. But his success has nurtured a tendency to exonerate him from responsibility for failures: how could the brilliant architect of the SALT agreement or the Sinai disengagement commit transparent blunders elsewhere? Shortly after Kissinger's declaration that "peace is at hand" in 1972, the negotiations collapsed and Hanoi was bombed. *Newsweek* quoted an official to make this point:

Henry has negotiated with the Chinese and with the Soviets, observed one colleague who knows him well. He couldn't suddenly have become an idiot.

While a kind of peace did eventually arrive, that tendency to look elsewhere for Kissinger's seeming failures is common. Mistakes are

caused by the vast anonymous beast called "bureaucracy." They are temporary, unimportant, probably not worth a story. Not surprisingly, Kissinger privately encourages this view by complaining about bureaucratic undercutting or being "spread too thin." Most commonly, he privately portrays himself—and is depicted by the press in turn—as holding the line against a martial foreign policy made in the Pentagon. Yet there are surely some interesting stories in Kissinger's placating the military after Mylai, and in the way the Nixon administration dealt with the military morale problems during the investigation of Lt. William Calley. What about Kissinger's advocacy of military assistance and training programs, his accommodations to the Pentagon on Vietnam policy, Kissinger's quest for support from Pentagon friends in Congress on such issues as trade with the Soviet Union or the Middle East negotiations? "I'll buy that Henry's a genius," said one long-time Washington journalist who covers military and political affairs, "but he doesn't always wear the white hat, and the differences aren't comprehended often enough by reporters." One of the least explored stories of the first Nixon administration was the role of Melvin Laird, then secretary of defense, who resisted earlier escalation of Vietnam bombing and the invasion of Cambodia, while consistently pressing for U.S. troop withdrawals—in opposition to a group that might well have included Kissinger along with those "generals and admirals" often presumed to be out to get him. . . .

Not all of Henry's calls to the media have been to offer stories or give his view of events. Tad Szulc, then a *New York Times* correspondent, says he had a solid story on the U.S.-South Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia a day before the May, 1970, attack was announced. When Szulc filed the story, however, the *Times's* editors were uncertain about its validity. An anxious Kissinger had a conversation with Washington bureau chief Max Frankel, according to some *Timesmen* and sources within the government. Kissinger, worried about national security, asked that the *Times* suppress the story. The Szulc story was killed, and Szulc was later told that managing editor A.M. Rosenthal had made the decision.

(Senior *Times* executives today say they do not remember this conversation with Kissinger—or even Szulc's scoop on the invasion. "I'm not saying it didn't happen," was the representative comment of managing editor Rosenthal, "I just have no recollection of it.")

"You can't imagine how it felt not to see it in the paper," said Szulc. The *Times's* decision can be debated as a question of press responsibility in national security, like the paper's withholding under

similar circumstances of Szulc's scoop prior to the 1961 invasion of the Bay of Pigs. Like the government's decision to invade, the paper's decision to suppress may never be fully known or understood. [Ed. Note: The debate continued in the journalism review (*MORE*) in several fall 1974 issues.] But it seems illustrative to some degree of the price paid by the media for the relationship that was already evolving with Kissinger in 1970—the admiration, the dependence on “Henry” for news and information in a sullen administration, or at least the press's belief in Kissinger and reluctance to interfere with his policy.

Of course, Kissinger has by no means won in all of his direct confrontations with the media. For example, also in 1970, he told the *Times's* Washington bureau “it would not be right” for the paper to report that the U.S. had, unannounced, resumed massive bombing of North Vietnam. But, according to Frankel, when pressed during a telephone conversation, Kissinger stopped short of a flat denial of the facts—and the *Times* printed the story.

Now, as secretary of state with regular news conferences and his own press corps, Kissinger and his relations with the media have become more visible. Both NBC and CBS have carried brief film clips showing a casual Kissinger standing in the aisle of his presidential 707, smilingly chatting with smiling journalists. “Probably no secretary of state in history has had a closer relationship with the newsmen who cover him,” wrote the *Times's* Bernard Gwertzman about a recent foray through the Middle East and Europe. “Particularly on these trips, newsmen are continually in communication with Mr. Kissinger,” he went on. “He likes to wander to the back of the aircraft where newsmen sit to crack jokes and exchange impressions.”

Murray Marder of the *Post* observed the same congeniality during Kissinger's first trip with a contingent of journalists to the Middle East in November, 1973, but saw some drawbacks:

Dr. Kissinger would tease the press about “cutting off the caboose,” meaning the press end of the aircraft, if anyone wrote anything unfavorable about him. The aircraft remained intact. There was so much news generated during the journey, and the trip was so physically exhausting, that there was little time or energy for drawing critical balance sheets.

Along with the jokes, Marder found that Kissinger's visits to the press section also gave him “the advantage of supplying newsmen with his own interpretation of the news he made in each capital.” And if the news flowing from the trip was “hard and interpretive,” it

also “supplied the Nixon administration, at a time of urgent need, with a public display of action in world affairs to set against the miasma of Watergate.”

“He briefs them to death,” said one journalist who is not a regular member of the group covering Kissinger on such trips. It is not only that Kissinger makes himself available. He is also careful to protect his credibility with his flying fourth estate. For example, Kissinger *began* a recent trip to the Middle East with the list of Israeli POWs held by Syria already in his hands, rather than, as much of the press believed and reported, flying to Damascus to receive the list. Behind the secret possession of the list was a tangled diplomatic gambit in the Mideast mediation effort, but, after “fibbing” about the list (both journalists and officials use the same word, interestingly enough), Kissinger called the press back to his cabin to admit—off the record—that he had it.

Marder and other diplomatic journalists seem aware of the danger of being exploited by government. Yet Kissinger clearly adds special dimensions to the problem. His wit is disarming, his brilliance can be intimidating. Intimacy with this extraordinary success and power not only affects self-esteem, but may confer a special sense of professional accomplishment and participation in the historic events one is reporting. Gwertzman describes what can happen on a Kissinger press plane:

... wherever the Kissinger plane has gone, the newsmen aboard have been the envy of their colleagues on the ground. An article in the Israeli press called the airborne press “the best informed in the world.” Correspondents in Syria and Egypt, who have virtually no access to officials of Mr. Kissinger’s rank, swarmed over the American correspondents when the plane landed trying to find out what was going on.

“We know more than most U.S. ambassadors in the places we visit,” added another frequent passenger on the plane. (One has visions of the State Department press contingent holding its *own* backgrounder there on the tarmac at Damascus—and choosing its words carefully!)

All of this can affect the way a journalist sees his colleagues as well as his own mission. “Have you got anything coming up that’ll embarrass us?” one investigative reporter recalls being asked by a worried diplomatic reporter who was about to depart on a Kissinger trip. “It was the ‘us’ that really killed me,” the reporter added.

Such role-confusions have precedent. When Hersh wrote a two-part story on the White House investigative unit known as the “plumbers” in the *Times* on Dec. 9 and 10, 1973—albeit with only

fleeting reference to Kissinger's nurturing presidential fears of the dangers to national security posed by Daniel Ellsberg—there was reportedly visible distress at both ends of the Kissinger press plane. But although Kissinger issued a statement (which was reported by the accompanying press) rebutting the story and fended off questions from foreign correspondents, at least one reporter present recalls that the traveling American press contingent “implicitly” agreed “not to ask questions about the subject in front of the international press.” “They took a dive,” said another journalist who heard about the episode later, “for the good of the mission.” “It’s herd journalism,” comments Stanley Karnow.

Traveling with Kissinger compresses and intensifies the pressures on journalists. Many of the same seductions, though, are present in Washington. Kissinger is often witty, ingratiating and intimate in his State Department press conferences, where the transcripts reflect a “clubby” atmosphere of first names, flatteringly personal references to “former students,” and laughter strategically placed to break the tension of a tough question.

One doesn’t have to argue against newsmen accompanying the secretary of state or civility in press conferences to worry that a subtle compromising may take place in these encounters. Journalists called by first names, their graduate work at Harvard casually mentioned in the banter, may find it all the harder to summon the grit—not to say outrage—that it frequently takes to pry the truth from this gregarious and secretive secretary of state. “Henry’s shown the media remarkable candor,” as one senior U.S. official described it, “and he’s outmaneuvered them.”

By no means do all the factors that constrict the media’s coverage of Kissinger stem from his style, the singular setting, or personal vanities of journalists on the scene. His courtship of the media satisfies as well powerful urges among editors. There is the persistent myth, for example, that authoritative information goes strictly with high-level authorities; the higher the leaker, the better the leak. It is a theory belied by much of the prize-winning reporting of the last decade, but it continues to put a premium on a working journalist’s contact with officials like Kissinger. There also seems to be a chronic yen among editors and producers for “good” news along with the bad. “My producers are after me all the time to do something positive for a change,” said one NBC correspondent. “So Henry is a damned good story all around.”

Looming over all this—for reporters, editors, columnists—is the incalculable privilege of *access*. Without the *right* access in this *de*

facto administration where one man and a small circle of staff aides direct American foreign policy, a diplomatic correspondent may easily feel professionally and personally threatened. "If a reporter loses access to Henry because he's tough," said one former journalist, "his editors won't ask whether he's right; the first question they'll ask is, 'How do we cover Kissinger?'"

The most telling instances suggest that internal self-censorship—limits of judgment, bias, what one reporter called "just plain stupidity"—accounts for failures to fully cover Kissinger and his policies at least as much as any conscious effort on his part to orchestrate the news.

On Wednesday, Dec. 13, 1972, the *New York Times* ran a front page story by James Reston from Paris. The story was apparently based on a talk with Kissinger and it said that the Vietnam peace talks were going well. Meanwhile in Washington, William Beecher, then the *Times's* Pentagon correspondent, got the first hints of quite another view—that the talks were foundering and that the administration was considering grave and immediate action to revive the negotiations, including resumption of the bombing of North Vietnam. Beecher filed what *Times* sources remember as "quite a complete story" on the imminent resumption of the bombing on Thursday, Dec. 14. But the story did not run in Friday's paper, and there ensued what participants remember as an editorial "tug of war" over perhaps one of the most important stories of the Nixon administration.

The New York editors of the *Times*, say several Timesmen, were reluctant to publish the Beecher story because it contradicted the earlier Reston story and because their "instincts," as one source put it, "were that things were great and the Pentagon was leaking to Beecher to upset the negotiations." In any case, Beecher was asked to go back for more confirmation, and later to "recast" the story to include the South Vietnamese role in the breakdown of the negotiations. Sources describe Beecher as "utterly convinced" by Friday that the story was solid. But even then, remembered one journalist watching the exchanges, "The desk wanted him to go further. They just didn't want to go off on something opposed to what the government was saying." On Saturday, Dec. 16, news conference statement by Kissinger about difficulties in the negotiations—predicted in the unpublished Beecher story two days earlier—finally convinced the doubting New York editors of the validity of Beecher's story. A "cut down" version was printed on the front page of the *Times* on Monday, Dec. 18. But it was no longer an advance story. Hanoi had

announced the resumption of U.S. bombing, and the *Times* duly printed the news.

“What we lost was exclusivity on a major story that was cautiously written and that met all the elements of what a story should carry,” said a *Times* figure. “It’s a sad commentary on journalism,” said another. The Beecher episode suggests dubious judgment in the media, but it also illustrates again some elements upon which Kissinger has built his relations with the press—the reluctance to contradict “authoritative sources” (Kissinger and Reston) and the presumption of Pentagon plots. “Things like this happen from time to time,” said one experienced journalist, “It’s not every day, but it’s not as rare as a comet either.”

Sometimes the predilections of editors are irrevocable. Sources familiar with the incident tell how, again, Tad Szulc was recently commissioned by *Saturday Review/World* to do a profile of Kissinger. But when the story was read in galley form by Editor-Owner Norman Cousins, it was dropped. (Szulc says it was a “severe critique.”) The magazine staff fought to save the piece. But Cousins would not run it. “We had planned a cover on Kissinger,” he says, “hoping to find out what was behind the Kissinger miracles, his ability to win confidence from people on many sides. Szulc didn’t answer the question: why is this possible? Instead, he raised some sober doubts about Kissinger,” Cousins recalls, adding: “They were entirely valid, and raised by a competent man. But to have run only Szulc’s piece, without first explaining why Kissinger is as effective as he is, would not have been balanced.” Cousins recalls he told his staff: “I’ve no intention of running a nit-picking magazine. This is not a debunking magazine.”

The chilling effect of such self-censorship can be felt more subtly in the general atmosphere of a newspaper or a network. A number of reporters have described a singular pre-Watergate atmosphere at the *Washington Post* after Agnew’s criticism and Mr. Nixon’s ostracism. “It was a constant fight in 1970-1971,” said one, “on any major article critical of Nixon.” That Henry Kissinger was a direct and specific beneficiary of these internal politics at the *Post* shows nowhere in the consistently professional diplomatic reporting by Marder. But it seems equally clear that such a climate in a newspaper with the potential reach of the *Post*—a reach demonstrated by its *Metropolitan* staff in Watergate—was bound to have its effect on the readiness to probe beyond the routine of diplomatic journalism. “Kissinger was one of the few in the administration who’d talk to

us," recalled one *Post* source. "Kissinger was important to us," said another journalist. "You could feel it." . . .

The ultimate mystifier, Kissinger the magician with his entranced observers, provides probably the best argument yet for the de-mystification of foreign policy that began with the post-Vietnam reporting of journalists like David Halberstam, Seymour Hersh and Frances Fitzgerald. The spell that now hangs over press planes or State Department news conference rooms will not long survive a genuine understanding that foreign policy is *really* an extension of politics and politicians, with all that implies about the absence of mystique among diplomats, professors, reporters, and editors.

The mysteries will persist until there is genuine and widespread investigative reporting in foreign policy. Yet neither government nor journalism seems ready for that reform. Loath to admit that they are akin to "the boys on the bus," prey to the same pressures, pettiness, and assaults on professional standards, the diplomatic press corps travels in a world of glamour and power. The price of their passage is an often crippling dependence on government for stories, and an awesome government power over the minds of editors sufficient to discredit or kill a story like the invasion of Cambodia or the resumption of the bombing. . . .

PART I

QUESTIONS FOR READING AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the “interpretation” of the First Amendment that Jerome Barron is asking the courts to make? Do you agree with Clifton Daniel that Barron has not demonstrated any pressing *need for access* which might justify a new interpretation?
2. What “legitimate” reasons should people have for trying to challenge the license renewals of broadcasting station, according to former FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson? Read Richard Jencks’ article and see whether you agree with him that some of the so-called grievances are not legitimate. If you disagree, what limits—if any—would you place on such requests for concessions?
3. What features of the National News Council set it apart from those experimental and operational local press councils discussed by Alfred Balk? What protection against legal action does the council offer the news media? Are the news media *required* to do anything?
4. Define and explain “reporter power” as expressed by Diamond. Was Bagdikian’s position on the *Washington Post* a type of “reporter power”? Or, did his position go beyond that concept into something that might be called “reader power”?
5. Do you feel that newsmen should have unqualified protection through a shield law? Why? What is the trap in the shield law that John S. Knight is referring to? Do you think his concern is valid?
6. What does “new journalism” mean?
7. What is the major pitfall in muckraking according to Carey McWilliams? Would a national shield law help here?
8. In what ways do you think journalism schools and departments can realistically “improve” the press?
9. The Seymour M. Hersh and Roger Morris articles deal with a continuing problem in American journalism—how to report the facts truthfully and fairly without letting personal feelings interfere. George Orwell once criticized journalists and other intellectuals who espouse causes or ignore information because of dogma. He wrote that the political attitudes of the day will not last, but that to “exchange one orthodoxy for another is not necessarily an advance. The enemy is the gramophone mind, whether or not one agrees with the record that is being played at the moment.” Do the Hersh and Morris articles deal with some people who had or have gramophone minds? What, if anything, can the individual reporter or editor do to avoid the gramophone mind?

PROJECTS OR REPORTS

Cable television. What do the access channels on cable television really mean? Who is watching? Can people be brought to the access channel in sufficient numbers and at reasonable times (prime time?) that will make it worthwhile, by some measure, to create programs for it? Undertake a research paper that brings

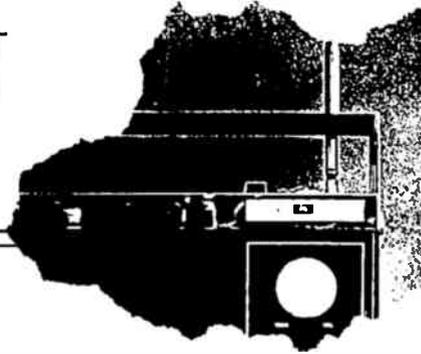
together the results of what we know, so far, about viewers to cable television's access channels. Consult the bibliographies in this *Reader* and the cable news section in *Broadcasting* magazine.

A closely related project for several students would be an analysis of the local access channel (if available) and a report which would categorize and evaluate the content and performance level of the programs on a five-day sample. Interview one of the producers of an access program to see why he used the access channel, what he intended to say, why he thought he was the one to say it, and what specific goals or purposes he had in mind.

Shield laws. If your state has a shield law, read the law and query reporters (newspaper and broadcast) to see if they are (1) aware of the law and (2) have ever reported stories that they felt came under the protection of the law.

Whether or not your state has a shield law, you might show the article by Fred Graham and Jack Landau to reporters and prosecuting attorneys in your area to get their opinions. Interview them after they have read the article. Write and/or give an oral report on the results of your interviews. Be sure to get the *reasons* (with examples, if possible) why the interviewees do or do not support the proposal. If you can, use a portable tape recorder to record the interview and to play back the interview (with the interviewee's permission, of course) to the class.

PART TWO



Revolution in the Mass Media

Whether changes in the mass media are a reflection of social change or of technological change is an oft-debated subject in academic circles. Certainly we can choose a middle position and suggest that some changes are the result of new social mores and/or values, while others appear to be the result of new technology. The decline in movie theater attendance and in the number of films produced during the Sixties, for example, is best explained as a result of the widespread dissemination of television, a relatively new technology. On the other hand, many changes in the content or themes of the movies during the same period are perhaps reflections of our changing social mores which permitted—indeed encouraged—the new content. A case can also be made for the interaction of technological and social change.

Our selections in this part of the book tend to reflect one or the other of these views, usually without trying to establish a cause and effect relationship. Ben Bagdikian discusses the new technology being used to produce mass newspapers and to disseminate the news via the wires services. In doing so, he raises issues about the possible effects of such technology on the production of newspapers, upon reporter-editor relationships, and upon the use to be made of the operating savings that are generated. While Bagdikian focuses on tech-

nology, Lee H. Smith pursues the issue of taste in today's press, which properly is a reflection of changing social mores. Zena Beth Guenin tries to assess the current condition of women's pages in the daily press to determine whether they (finally) reflect the growing, shifting role of women in our society.

The issues we present here vary from violence in films to the present state of the book industry; from minority interests and practices in film and press to a plea on the part of a public relations practitioner to consider professionals in the field as "advocates" for a particular viewpoint, issue, or person. The articles reflect some of the changes occurring in all of the mass media, in some of the specialized media, and in the auxiliary fields such as advertising and public relations.

We believe that the student who reads these articles and enlarges his background by selecting appropriate articles and books from the bibliography that follows will develop a firm grasp of some of the major trends in technology and content which have become issues in American mass communications. The bibliography follows closely the topical arrangement for each chapter.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The new technology of mass communications is affecting the mass media and those who work on them, segments of society, and even entire nations. At least we think it is. The "how" of the affect and the "effect" itself leaves room for much discussion. Bagdikian's survey of technology as applied to wire services and metropolitan newspapers should be supplemented by his book *The Information Machines: Their Impact on Men and the Media*, Harper & Row, 1971, and by A.H. Raskin's "Bert Powers at War with Himself" (*More*) (May 1972), pp. 3-5, which deals with the problem of unions and labor when technology comes to the newspaper. An excellent overview with specific cost examples of facsimile machines, especially as used in newspapers such as the *Wall Street Journal*, can be found in *Fax*, by Daniel M. Costigan, Chilton Book Co., 1971. Present use of facsimile machines in business is compared with its projected use in an article by Tom Alexander, "Lots of Talk, Not Enough Fax," *Fortune* (February 1973), pp. 122-26 ff. Despite Alexander's critical view, many newspapers are using the portable Fax machines which can be used with any telephone. Many reporters use Fax machines from sports stadia or from city and county beats where the story can be typed, copyread, placed on the machine, and

received automatically in the city room. The machine may even do away with the rewrite man. And his role was created by the invention and distribution of a machine—the telephone. For a thoughtful look at the implications of the future, *Information Technology: Some Critical Implications for Decision Makers*, The Conference Board, Inc., 1972, presents some cogent expectations growing out of the merging of communication technology with computer technology. A summary of the book is presented in *The Futurist* (December 1972) and contains an excellent flow chart of what John McHale calls “The New Information Environment.” See also *Talking Back: Citizen Feedback and Cable Technology*, MIT Press, 1973; articles and essays edited by Ithiel De Sola Pool.

A more prosaic approach to the new technology of video cassettes can be seen in Martin Robert, *Video Cassettes: The Systems, The Market, The Future*, Martin Roberts & Assoc., Inc., 1970. This is a pro-cassette book which should balance some the scepticism in our article by Cliff Christians.

The present extensive American distribution system of mass communications was created through the use of microwave and coaxial cable, which slowed the development of domestic satellites. But suddenly, several companies have received permission from the FCC to place their own satellites in the heavens or to lease channels from Anik, the Canadian domestic satellite which is operational. Our article by Sanford Jacobs, which anticipates the use of a domestic satellite, can be supplemented by *Wiring the World: The Explosion in Communications*, U.S. News & World Report, 1971, which covers cable television, video cassettes, picture-telephone, satellites, and pay-television.

No new medium ever caught the imagination of establishment and anti-establishment types quite so quickly as cable television. The literature is already extensive, and the examples that follow should be read in conjunction with the bibliography given in Part I, which accompanies the article by Barry Head. Don R. LeDuc has compiled “A Selective Bibliography on the Evolution of CATV 1950-1970,” *Journal of Broadcasting* (Spring 1971), pp. 195-234, which should be consulted for research on the subject. An excellent survey of cable TV can be found in Ralph Lee Smith’s *The Wired Nation: The Electronic Communications Highway*, Harper Colophone Books, 1972. For a comprehensive, up-to-date view on the regulatory problems of cable TV, consult Stephen R. Barnett, “State, Federal, and Local Regulation of Cable Television,” *Notre Dame Lawyer* (April 1972),

pp. 685-814. This book-length article bears repeated study by those who wish to use cable television and who wish to plan its development for its best use in the public interest.

While our next chapter focuses on elements of "change" in the traditional media, it sometimes is useful for students who have had few mass communications courses to read about the media from a historical or descriptive viewpoint. The following titles are just a few of the large number of substantial works available that will help the student gain the perspective for judging contemporary media and changes that are occurring. For television, consult Sydney W. Head, *Broadcasting in America: A Survey of Television and Radio*, 2nd ed., Houghton-Mifflin, 1972, or Giraud Chester, *et al.*, *Television and Radio*, 4th ed., Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971. For an exciting overview of contemporary television, see Martin Mayer, *About Television*, Harper and Row, 1972. Newspapers and other mass media are covered historically by Edwin Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media*, 3rd ed., Prentice-Hall, 1972. This is the standard work in the field. Theodore Peterson's *Magazines in the Twentieth Century*, 2nd ed., University of Illinois Press, 1969, and James Playsted Wood's *Magazines in the United States*, 3rd ed., Ronald Press, 1971, cover the magazine field to the present. Gerald Mast, *A Short History of the Movies*, Pegasus, 1971, is an admirable work for such small dimensions. Raymond Fielding, *The American Newsreel: 1911-1967*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1972, covers a related but now largely vanished field of cinematography. *Comix: The History of Comic Books in America* by Les Daniels, Outerbridge & Dienstfrey, 1971, can be supplemented by Dick Lupoff and Don Thompson, eds., *All in Color for a Dime*, Ace, 1971.

To complement the television articles in this edition, students can turn to *What People Think of Television and Other Mass Media, 1959-1972*, The Roper Organization, Inc., Television Information Office, May 1973. For a look at the ability of television to teach, read "The Electric Company: Easy Reader and a Lot of Other Hip Teachers," by Martin Mayer, *New York Times Magazine* (Jan. 28, 1973), pp. 14-15 ff. "Walter Cronkite: A Candid Conversation with America's Most Trusted Television Newsmen," *Playboy* (June 1973), pp. 67-68 ff., gives the candid views of "America's Most Trusted Television Newsmen"!

Newspapers face problems other than those outlined by Smith in his article, but the question of taste still hovers over the newspaper community, as Ethel Reed Strainchamps demonstrates in "Why We

Can't Say B---shit" (*More*) (July 1972), pp. 8-11. The title expresses her view. Two useful articles on recent trends in newspapers can be found in Jeffrey A. Tannenbaum's, "Suburban Newspapers Find News and Profits on Cities' Outskirts," *Wall Street Journal* (Nov. 14, 1972), pp. 1, 20, and in Lee Smith's, "Softly Into the Suburbs" (*More*) (November 1972), p. 9 ff., which deals with the *New York Times'* development of regional sections, especially in New Jersey. Jay Levin's, "Extra, Extra! Read All About It" (*More*) (June 1973), p. 1 ff., explains with exhaustive and fascinating detail the stranglehold distributors have over newspapers and magazines. This article is especially thorough on the East Coast situation.

Ms. Guenin's article on women's pages in newspapers can be supplemented by Nancy Henry's, "Women's Mags: The Chic Sell," *The Nation* (June 5, 1972), pp. 710-12; an article that criticizes advertising policy abuses of the magazines, which "are significant because these publications function as the major source of consumer information for 50-million readers." Donald Bremner's up-to-date discussion of the modern comic page in the newspaper should be followed by reading Mark McIntyre's "Muting Megaphone Mark" (*More*) (July 1973), pp. 5-6, which deals with "censorship" of the "Doodlesbury" strip after Garry Trudeau began satirizing Watergate.

Students interested in magazines, music, film, etc., should consult two excellent bibliographic sources in addition to those books already mentioned. *Print, Image and Sound: Essays on Media*, edited by John Gordon Burke, American Library Association, 1972, has chapters on new journalism, educational television, popular rock music in the 1960s, cinema in the 1960s, and little (often literary and university) magazines. In addition to the solid essays, the bibliographies and film listings make the book especially valuable to the student researcher. Consult also John H. Schact, compiler, *A Bibliography for the Study of Magazines*, Institute of Communications Research, University of Illinois, 1972. The changing magazine is detailed in a book of the same title by Roland E. Wolseley, Hastings House, 1973.

Violence and the media, whether on television or in the movies, has received a great deal of study in the past several years. Perhaps the basic study is the U.S. Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior, *Television and Growing Up: The Import of Television Violence*, Government Printing Office, 1972, a summary of the Surgeon General's five-volume study. For related research in television, particularly on its impact on children, consult Charles K. Atkin, *et al.*, *Television and Social Behavior*:

An Annotated Bibliography of Research Focusing on Television's Impact on Children, National Institute of Mental Health, 1971. This should be updated by John P. Murray, *et al.*, eds., "Television and the Child: A Comprehensive Research Bibliography," *Journal of Broadcasting* (Winter 1971-72), pp. 3-20. For a thoroughly jaundiced view of violence in movies by a director who has refined the genre, read Bernard Weinraub's "'If you don't show violence the way it is,' says Roman Polanski, 'I think that's immoral and harmful. If you don't upset people, then that's obscenity,'" *New York Times Magazine* (Dec. 12, 1971), pp. 36-37 ff. The articles on violence in the media should be read in conjunction with articles on the effects of obscenity in the media, particularly magazines, movies, and books. The 1973 decision by the Supreme Court, which Paul Bender outlines in our selection, can be supplemented by earlier works on the "effects" of pornography. A good discussion of the issues involved in obscene communications, particularly pornography, can be found in a special issue of *Public Interest* (Winter 1971), where "Pornography vs. Democracy: The Case for Censorship," by Walter Bernes, is responded to by four writers in "Dissenting and Concurring Opinions." The writers are Alexander Bickel, Stanley Kauffman, Wilson Carey McWilliams, and Marshall Cohen. The third article, "Violence, Pornography, and Social Science," by James Q. Wilson, is a critical look at the findings of the two presidential commissions: the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence and the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography. For an essentially concurring view of Wilson's views, see Leonard Berkowitz's, "Sex and Violence: We Can't Have It Both Ways," *Psychology Today* (December 1971), p. 14 ff. Students who are interested in exploring the response of the film industry to law and public policy, particularly regarding the content of films, should see Douglas Ayer, *et al.*, "Self-Censorship of the Movie Industry: An Historical Perspective on Law and Social Change," *Wisconsin Law Review* (1970), pp. 791-838. This article is particularly valuable in discussing the then "new" movie ratings of films for public consumption. It also offers useful perspective in anticipation of the changes that may occur as a result of the recent Supreme Court decision on obscenity and pornography.

Two excellent articles to sum up current change in music and to supplement Greil Marcus' interesting assessment of rock are a two-part special report in *Broadcasting* (Dec. 27, 1971/Jan. 3, 1972), pp. 32-34 ff., by Michael Shain entitled "Now, We're into Music . . . It's a Family Affair." The issue of "payola" in the music industry was beginning to break as we went to press. For an early, useful article,

consult Ben Fong-Torres', "Clive Davis Ousted; Payola Coverup Charged," *Rolling Stone* (July 5, 1973), which should be updated by consulting recent issues of *Rolling Stone*, *Variety*, and *Broadcasting*.

Two interesting and useful subjects that are tied into the general theme of Part II, but which are not specifically covered, are *Photographic Communication: Principles, Problems and Challenges of Photojournalism*, by R. Smith Schuneman, ed., Hastings House, 1972, and *The New Literacy*, Donald R. Gordon, University of Toronto Press, 1971, in which Gordon argues that literacy extends beyond the reading and writing normally associated with the concept of literacy and should include various means of communication through print, telecommunications, film, pop music, underground press, and the like.

The issue of minorities and the press has been one of the important areas of controversy that have surrounded the American mass media in recent years. Blacks, largely because certain groups have been militant and because they constitute the largest racial minority in the United States, have received the most attention. The new black movies, as suggested by B.J. Mason's article in this section, have been controversial from both a black and white viewpoint. Two useful survey articles to supplement Mason, are "Black Movies: Renaissance or Rip-off?" *Newsweek* (October 23, 1972), pp. 74-78 ff., by Charles Michener, and Mel Gussow, "The baadasssss success of Melvin Van Peebles," *New York Times Magazine* (Aug. 20, 1972), pp. 14-15 ff. Both are illustrated. A good survey of the black press, in addition to L.F. Palmer's article, is Roland E. Wolseley, *The Black Press, U.S.A.*, Iowa State University Press, 1971, which gives both a historical and contemporary description. Two useful studies offered by Mercer House Press include *The Black Press in America: A Guide*, 2nd ed., 1972; and *The Black Press: A Bibliography*, with over 350 entries. For a look at the black American and the press, consult Jack Lyle's book of the same title, issued by Ward Ritchie Press, 1968. A close study of the white press' handling of racial news in one city will be found in Robert McClory's "Racial Balance in Chicago's Big Four," *Race Relations Reporter* (May 1973), pp. 29-33. The Chicano press still has not had coverage beyond the article published by our own Frank del Olmo, which he has revised for this edition. A rather specialized study of Spanish-language use of television will be found in *Role and Functions of Spanish-Language-Only Television in Los Angeles*, Center for Urban and Regional Studies, Claremont Graduate School, 1973. The focus of the study is on the Spanish American population in Los Angeles. The last half of the study is devoted to

present and possible use of television to meet the needs identified in the first half of the study. Two "minorities" for which we include no article are Indians and women. The Indian press still has had no comprehensive book or article published on it, despite the fact the Indian press in the United States is profoundly varied and interesting. There is an American Indian Press Association (AIPA), which services tribal newspapers, intertribal newspapers, urban-Indian publications, and national Indian publications. According to the AIPA, weekly news packages go out to more than 250 publications while membership in the organization now is over 150. The news packages include human interest features, in-depth interpretive articles of important events and causes, and editorial cartoons dealing with Indian affairs. For a mini-case study of the rural Indian's problem with broadcasting, consult Inderjit Badhwar, "Joe Floyd's Long, Hot Summer," *Chicago Journalism Review* (December 1971), pp. 12-14.

Women, despite recent militant movements, have produced few, if any, articles in women's movement magazines and periodicals that deal specifically with media trends. The leading "popular" journal is *Ms.*, which started publication in July 1972 and apparently has developed a healthy following as well as substantial advertising revenue. Two short but useful bibliographies of "movement" magazines, newsletters, and newspapers appeared in the July 1973 issues of *Ms.*, pp. 95-98, and *Ramparts*, p. 46. The feminist movement bibliographies also include magazines by and for lesbians, one of several specialized "interests" within the movement itself. Perhaps the only survey of any quality is that done by Marion Marzolf's students in a University of Michigan seminar on "Women in Journalism." The special issue of the *Michigan Journalist* (March 1972), entitled "Women in Journalism," grew out of the papers prepared by students in that seminar. A revised 1973 bibliography is available on request from the Department of Journalism, University of Michigan.

The issue of how women are treated in advertising or on television can briefly be surveyed in Muriel Akamatsu's two-issue treatment on "Liberating the Media: Advertising" *FoI Report* (September 1972). The article, "NOW Says: TV Commercials Insult Women," *New York Times Magazine* (May 28, 1972), pp. 12-13 ff., gives results of a study of women in commercials. For a militant view of how the license renewal process can be used to "show women in a better light," see "The Feminists v. WABC-TV," (*More*) (June 1972), 10-11. Both articles were written by Judith Adler Hennessee and Joan Nicholson. As we mentioned in the first edition of *Readings in Mass Communication*, we are awaiting the female Boswell who will report and explain the feminist movement's use of mass media.

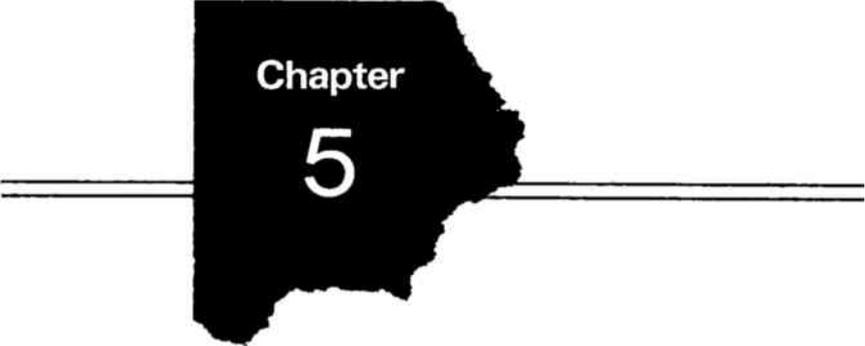
Advertising and public relations often have been criticized and condemned for real and/or imagined sins. But one of the truly great issues in advertising, particularly in broadcast media, occurred recently when the FTC suggested that perhaps the FCC should start to apply the "principle" of counter advertising used by the FCC in cigarette advertising to commercials for other products. In addition to our selection from *Politics of Broadcasting*, read "The Politics of Advertising," a thorough rebuttal to the FTC position by Lee Loevinger, former FCC commissioner, in a speech made before the International Radio and Television Society, January 4, 1973. An extended edition of the speech was reprinted by the Television Information Office, February 1973. A good general survey of the issues in advertising can be found in Stephen A. Greyser's "Advertising: Attacks and Counters," *Harvard Business Review* (March-April 1972), pp. 22-24 ff., and in Carol J. Loomis', "Those Throbbing Headaches on Madison Avenue," *Fortune* (February 1972), pp. 102-107 ff. There are excellent charts in Loomis' article which depict the advertising agency dilemma. For a response by ad agencies to consumer issues see the special report in *Business Week* (June 10, 1972), pp. 46-52. The effect of the current fuel and electrical energy shortage on advertising is outlined in a two-part article appearing in *Advertising Age* (July 9 and 16, 1973). It is written by E.B. Weiss. A recent "insider's" view of television advertising is Paul Stevens, *I Can Sell You Anything: How I Made Your Favorite TV Commercial With Minimum Truth and Maximum Consequences*, Peter Wydeb, 1972. Despite the title, this is a relatively serious attempt to help consumers. For a different view on the making of successful television commercials, read James Conway, "They Tried It," *New York Times Magazine* (May 21, 1972), pp. 48 ff. The article deals with the fantastically successful Alka Seltzer series for Miles Lab, generated by Wells, Rich, Greene agency. The ad series contained the "Try it, you'll like it," and "I can't believe I ate the whole thing" dialogue.

The pressing issue of public relations practice today is elaborated by Joseph McLaughlin in his essay on public relations practitioners as "advocates" for a particular company, issue, or person, including political candidates. It is the practice of using public relations and advertising professionals in the political process that has generated a great deal of concern, along with a substantial literature, in the past few years. Daniel J. Boorstin's, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, Atheneum, 1962, is an excellent basic source on the concept and explication of "created news" by public relations activities. See the special issue of *Public Relations Journal* (June 1973) for several articles on public relations and government.

Other books dealing specifically with the political process are: Gene Wyckoff's, *The Image Candidates: American Politics in the Age of Television*, Macmillan, 1968; Joe McGinnis', *The Selling of the President, 1968*, Trident Press, 1968; Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang's, *Politics and Television*, Quadrangle, 1968; Edward W. Chester's, *Radio, Television and American Politics*, Sheed & Ward, 1969; Harold Mendelsohn and Irving Crispi's, *Polls, TV and the New Politics*, Chandler, 1970, and Sig Mickelson's, *The Electric Mirror: Politics in the Age of Television*, Dodd, Mead, 1972. The books are listed in an ascending order of date of publication. The latest presidential campaign is covered in Theodore White's *The Making of a President, 1972*, Atheneum, 1973.

The change occurring in international communication is not properly a major concern of this text. Yet, American influence and involvement are rather clearly detailed in the two articles reprinted here. The books mentioned in this segment of the bibliography will give a student a broad overview of both international communications and of certain aspects of national communications in selected countries. Two excellent overviews of international and national problems are the late Walter B. Emery's *National and International Systems of Broadcasting: Their History, Operation and Control*, Michigan State University Press, 1969, and *International Communications: Media, Channels, Functions*, edited by Heinz-Dietrich Fischer and John C. Merrill, Hastings House, 1970. A short, useful study of satellite communications, in addition to chapters in the above books, is *The Future of Satellite Communications: Resource Management and the Needs of Nations*, Twentieth Century Fund, 1970. The issue of freedom of broadcasting through satellites, touched on by Hulten, is vigorously defended by Dr. Frank Stanton, "Freedom and Satellites," *Television Quarterly* (Winter 1973), pp. 67-70. The United States "lost" the decision, however, casting the only vote against the resolution. For a highly readable, current view of television around the world, see Timothy Green's, *The Universal Eye: World Television in the Seventies*, Stein and Day, 1972. To expand on Herbert Schiller's view of American "imperialism," consult his *Mass Communications and American Empire*, August M. Kelley, 1969. For a more specialized view, see Alan Wells, *Picture-Tube Imperialism: The Impact of U.S. Television on Latin America*, Orbis Books, 1972. Generally we would not suggest works beyond these, especially those dealing with a specific nation. But a recent Canadian study of its own media is one of the most thorough studies of its kind available to scholars. In addition, it offers insight into the im-

pact of our media upon the mass media of Canada. Students should consult the *Report of the Special Senate Committee on the Mass Media*, 3 vols., Ottawa, Canada, 1970. The three volumes are: vol. 1, *The Uncertain Mirror*, which gives an overview of the mass media of Canada; vol. 2, *Words, Music and Dollars*, which deals with the economics of publishing and broadcasting; vol. 3, *Good, Bad or Simply Inevitable*, which contains an evaluation as well as some of the commissioned studies used by the committee. The readable, indeed flip-pant, writing in the books belies their general thoroughness.



Chapter

5

New Technology

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**Home Video Systems: A
Revolution?—Cliff Christians 197**

**Domestic Satellites: How Will They Affect U.S.
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PUBLISHING'S QUIET REVOLUTION

Ben H. Bagdikian

A funny thing happened two days in a row in New York.

I was talking to Paul Eberhart, thirty-seven-year-old associate editor for United Press International, at his desk on the twelfth floor of the Daily News Building in Manhattan when he said: "In the old days . . ." He stopped, his face went blank, and then he grinned sheepishly. He was talking about "the old days"—last spring [Spring, 1972].

The next day I was talking to Louis Boccardi, executive editor of the Associated Press, eleven blocks away, on the fourth floor of the AP Building at Rockefeller Plaza. In the middle of a flow of intense conversation he said: "In the old days . . ." Then he, too, stopped, put his hand to his head, and broke into a grin. He was talking about April, 1971.

There was a time in the American newspaper business—and about every other place except Japan—when "in the old days" meant 1453, the year before Johann Gutenberg got disputed credit for inventing movable type. Things stayed pretty much the same until development of Mergenthaler's Linotype machine in 1886, and since then we have had about the same kind of machines run by paper tape.

But without most working journalists knowing it, the fine old fifteenth-century factories they work in are finally starting the terrifying leap from typewriter and lead pot to cathode ray tube and computer. To the naked eye, it isn't particularly visible in most newsrooms. But the underlying changes have begun. It seems safe to predict that in five years most newsrooms will look and sound substantially different. In some places there may no longer be a composing room.

The chief reason for the change is the refinement of communication technology and the delayed perception of the news business that, like any other major industry, it must design its own systems rather than wait for suppliers to make radical changes. The required hardware for the revolution not only has been adapted finally to

Ben H. Bagdikian conducted a study of the impact of technology on the American mass media for RAND Corporation; much of it was published in his book *The Information Machines: Their Impact on Men and the Media*. Today he is national correspondent for *Columbia Journalism Review*. Reprinted from *Columbia Journalism Review*, May-June 1973, copyright 1973 by Ben H. Bagdikian, reprinted by permission of The Sterling Lord Agency, Inc.

news operations but its price is plummeting. Cathode ray tubes (CRTs), the TV-like screens with keyboards connected to computers, cost \$80,000 in 1969 but now are in the \$5,000-to-\$18,000 range. Optical scanners—computers that read carefully typed copy—cost \$90,000 three years ago and now come in \$60,000 models. Computer time which cost \$200,000 in 1955 now costs \$1. Ten years ago 1 per cent of American dailies used computers; now at least 60 per cent do, though most are still unconnected to their newsrooms.

Perhaps the most automated newsroom of any major paper is at the *Detroit News*, which has forty-eight CRTs and a dozen more on the way. Most *News* reporters no longer use typewriters. From 30 to 40 percent of all copy there—the AP and UPI main wires, AP state wire, and AP and UPI sports wires, plus most staff-originated stories—is handled electronically without conventional typing or editing with paper and pencil.

Wire service material arrives on regular teletype lines at conventional speeds—about sixty words a minute—but, instead of actuating a teletype printer, the unique set of electrical impulses that represents each key struck in the originating machine goes directly into the *News*' computer. There it activates a letter or numerical character stored in the computer memory.

For locally originated stories, a *News* reporter—or one of the majority who have decided to use the new machines—sits down at the console keyboard of a CRT, the Hendrix 5700, which has a screen that shows eighteen lines of copy in 22-point type. The reporter hits a key called SLUG and his screen shows two blank lines to be filled. The first two characters he types instruct the computer where to send his completed story (LO for local, SP for sports), the next four characters are the first four letters of his last name, and the next six characters whatever he chooses as the slug for his story. He types the edition the story is scheduled for, the date, and then writes his story.

As he types, the letters appear on his screen. If he wishes to delete or add to a line he has typed, he uses a set of command keys to move a cursor—a bright oblong of light—over the place he wishes to alter, types in the change, and the screen shows these and automatically makes room for the additions or closes up for deletions. He can move the story up to make more room, or roll it down to look at an earlier typed portion. If it is an urgent story he can send it to the proper desk in “takes” by pressing a MORE key. If he writes the story as one unit he looks it over to his satisfaction, then pushes a key marked END which sends it into the computer.

At a major desk of the *News*—say, the city desk—the editor can type LO for local copy, then press DIRECTORY, and this instructs the computer to display on the editor's screen a list of all the stories placed in the computer for his desk's use. He can call up any story on the list by pressing the NEXT key, then read the whole story on his screen, edit it, and type GE to send the story to the news editor. The news editor reviews the story, evaluates for length, column width, and body type, and makes notes on where it will go in the paper with size and style of headline (at this point, still written on paper). Then, by typing CE, he sends the story to the copy editor, who gives it a final perusal and a headline. When he is finished, typing GN sends it to a slotman, who gets a hard copy printout on a 200-line-a-minute impact imprinter. His hitting a key marked COMP ROOM tells the machines to send the story to the computer that automatically produces paper tape at about 1,000 words a minute; the paper tape then is fed into a linecaster that sets at the conventional fourteen lines a minute.

This procedure permits complete processing of a story ten minutes before the lockup deadline for a page. It also allows some of the copy for the early home-delivered editions of the *News*, an afternoon paper, to carry a deadline of 11 or 11:30 a.m. instead of the former 8 a.m. And this is just the start of a comprehensive system to be used when a new plant is completed in Sterling Heights, twenty-two miles north of Detroit. The plant will contain all the composing room and press facilities for the main editions of the paper (circ. 700,000), leaving in the downtown headquarters only news, advertising, and executive offices. In addition to hot type, the new plant will use photocomposition cold type handled by computers, with type set at 170 lines a minute. The communications link to the downtown offices will be a one-way "conditioned" (somewhat improved) telephone line costing \$200 a month.

While the Detroit *News* has gone as far as any major paper in converting its newsroom to electronics, the most complete transformation from the traditional Linus blanket of reporters (the typewriter) and of editors (paper and pencil) has already been completed in those unlikely places, the Associated Press and United Press International.

The wires would seem unlikely to change, first, because they are creatures of (for UPI) their clients or (for AP) members. Most newspaper client-members are interested in paying as little as possible for their news, want little disturbance in their standard procedures, are themselves geared to the Gutenberg-Mergenthaler tradition in their

factories, and distrust electronics. And broadcast stations—the majority of client-members—want simple, short items and assurance that the end of the world will not be announced without thirty minutes' notice.

The wire services internally have been the headquarters of the “green eyeshade school” of American journalism, with home-office bureaucracies populated by a disproportionate number of Old-Boy associates—a large number of them senior workers, since the New York headquarters was the top of the hierarchy. It also has been at wire service headquarters where one saw something bordering on genius in the way experienced editors handled paper, for into their newsroom, through ninety or more teletype receivers, came miles of paper every day.

“In the old days” referred to by Eberhart and Boccardi copyboys would tear off each story as it came in and distribute copies to the appropriate desks. These were stories filed by correspondents and bureaus all over the world, stories to be weeded, edited down, combined, rewritten, and then transmitted to clients according to which specialized service he paid for and what interests he was, in the judgment of the editor, likely to have. (UPI New York, for example, handles 3 million words a day, counting both incoming and outgoing—the outgoing being about 80 per cent of what came in.) The editor scanned the story, decided on its priority (or on the appropriateness of the priority indicated by the originating bureau), and put it on the stack of other such stories on his desk, remembering what stories he already had in the pile (updates and corrections came in continually), and rearranging the pile to change priorities as new stories arrived by the minute. When the editor finished editing the story on top of the pile, or a rewrite he had ordered, and marked it for transmission, he handed it to a telegrapher (teletype operator) by his side who then punched out the story on paper tape. This, on completion, was fed into the teletype transmitted to clients of that particular wire.

The wire service newsrooms looked like badly managed paper recycling plants, with endless rolls of teletype paper snaking around machines, and desks piled high. The banks of clattering teletype machines sounded like the shuttle room of a Woonsocket textile mill. There were always stories of oldtimers who, after retirement, couldn't sleep without the customary seven and one-half hours of the noise.

It's gone, practically all gone, at UPI, and it's gone at AP regional news headquarters and is on the way out in Rockefeller Plaza. At

UPI the only sound is a soft squirting noise from about sixty Extel printers typing abstracts of stories being stored in the computers downstairs; the sound is inaudible from three feet away because the sixty-word-a-minute machines imprint by delicate letter- and number-shaped perforation of paper whose interior is purple, producing purple letters. Only occasionally is there the noise of a typewriter or the nostalgic sound of two remaining teletypes.

What has replaced the traditional machines of the trade are TV-like consoles with noiseless keyboards which enable editors or rewrite people to process stories in the same modern way they are handled at the *Detroit News*. What a client gets now is not very different from before—not different enough to impress many newsrooms that something basic has happened back at headquarters. He gets cleaner copy—from 50 to 90 per cent fewer typos and other errors because the editor, not a teletype operator, is the last handler of the story; this saves the newspaper client money, since many stories arrive on teletypesetter tape that is fed directly into composing room machinery. The client also gets more copy in the same time (even the best teletype operators must pause to sneeze or read illegible editing marks, or must feed tape they have just punched into a teletype sender). The computer maintains a queue of stories and sends them electronically and continuously without pauses. UPI figures it sends about 30 per cent more copy per day because of this.

The ultimate significance for newspapers, however, is not fewer typos or more news-per-hour, but the availability of the wire services' prodigious output in digital form in computers—in electronic impulses that can be transmitted at extremely high speeds when clients decide to get machines to receive them that way. These same digital impulses that carry news stories can, if publishers standardize and move toward twentieth century production techniques, practically eliminate the major part of their newspaper factories—the composing room, stereotyping, photocomposition setups for offset, and conventional plate-making. In seven years, says Ronald White of Gannett, one of the more knowledgeable experts in the field, it will be possible for electronic impulses from wire service headquarters, plus others that will represent local copy, to be used to etch printing plates directly without any intervening processes.

The AP and UPI systems, while both using electronic “typewriters” and computers, are organized on different systems. UPI has one headquarters for all its copy. Its three RCA Spectra 70/45 computers on the eleventh floor contain all UPI national news and practically all its international news. Instead of the ninety teletype



A view of a section of the all-electronic newsroom at UPI's New York headquarters where veteran editors sitting at video terminals write, edit, rewrite, proof, and direct the distribution of the news report over computerized circuits. The New York computer is linked by transoceanic cable and satellites with UPI computers in Brussels and Hong Kong.

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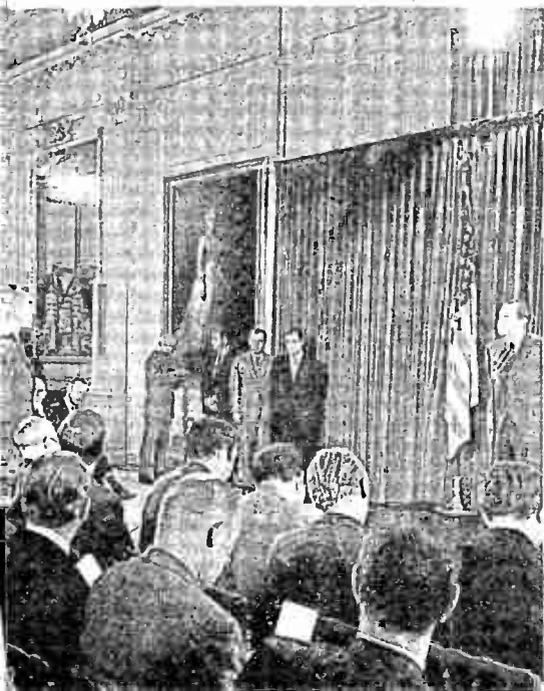
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aa223 turkey-. n. 0299 06:55v

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A UPI editor controlling a wire uses an electronic queue as shown here to keep track of his circuit. He sends a simple command to the computer which responds by displaying the queue for his wire. This shows him what story is moving, the number of words in the story and the time it will clear. Then it shows the editor what stories are stacked up to go out next, their word count, and the time they will sign off. The editor can move around the stories on queue. Or he can remove one more. The queue is his guide as he controls his wire.



The miracles of electronic editing, computerized delivery systems and, other innovations have eliminated much of the extra toil common to publishing. But there always will be reporters at the scene, like these Associated Press correspondents whose words can be moved around the world within minutes, indeed even seconds in the event of a "flash," whether in the private company of a Secretary of State (Saul Pett) or at the White House (Frank Cormier). Women, too, play an increasingly important role in the wire services, as does Helen Thomas of UPI.



receivers and thirty senders that used to fill the New York newsroom, there are now thirty-four VDT's—Video Display Terminals, the phrase used for the TV-like screen with keyboard connected to a computer. UPI uses the Harris-Intertype 1100. Five machines in the UPI Washington bureau and three in Chicago handle the system's national broadcast wire.

UPI bureaus and correspondents still file as they always did, by teletype, but now their stories go into computers. At the same time a conventional copy is made on a teletype receiver, and an abstract of the story—most of the first paragraph—is sent instantly by the computer to an Extel printer next to each editor that the originating bureau thinks will be interested. Some still find it easier to catch up by scanning the regular teletype report. But others use the Extel abstracts and then ask the computer to display on their screen all the slugs of stories stored in the past twenty-four hours.

Each slug on the screened list has a unique code number, the number of words, and its priority (“O” for ordinary, “B” for Bulletin, “U” for urgent, “M” for message, etc.). If an item interests the editor, he types out the code for the story and almost instantly it appears on his screen. If it is longer than the twenty-five lines the screen holds, he pushes a button that moves the story up, showing the rest of it. His chief editing tool is the cursor—on this screen, a white oblong.

(There is a substantial Spanish-language service. For this the editor-translator calls up the English-language story on his screen and types out the Spanish translation paragraph by paragraph, the Spanish appearing on the screen just below the English paragraph. When the translator is satisfied, he pushes a button, the English paragraph disappears, and he goes on to the next paragraph.)

UPI is centralized, even for inter-bureau messages. “In the old days” if Atlanta wanted to send a message to San Francisco, it waited for a chance to break into the wire with the regular news. Now it sends it to the New York computer, which routes it directly to San Francisco without the Atlanta operator having to wait for a chance to get on the wire.

The UPI's three computers are specialized. One handles all the regular news wires, one stock listings, and the third does “batch processing” and serves as a backup. Each can handle the job of any of the other two if there is a breakdown. If there is a disaster—a blackout in New York City, or all three computers die simultaneously for a long period—UPI says it can decentralize and allow regional bureaus to handle the news on their regular teletype line network.

Obviously, it would be a time-consuming switchover. Four times in the first year's operation, there have been computer breakdowns of an hour or two, all during the early months.

(UPI is considering regionalizing its automated operation sometime in the future, making state and regional news available in local computers, which would assist New York in the event headquarters has a blackout. Also planned are backup generators to supply electricity if any area loses public power.)

Associated Press has chosen a different strategy. It has created ten regional headquarters it calls "hubs" (including Boston, Philadelphia, Dallas, Kansas City, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Denver). These hubs do for their surrounding states what the UPI New York office does for the world. Each of the thirty-eight bureaus and seventy-five smaller offices used to be independent originating points for AP news, waiting to break into regional or main wires to put items into the system, and each state (except for the more sparsely populated) controlled its own selection and distribution. Each such former operation had its own teletype operators, except for the individual correspondent offices, where the reporter punched out his own stories.

All the AP hubs now have their own computers, fed both by CRT-keyboards from their regional offices and by datafax, the facsimile machine that transmits a page of copy in four minutes on a special telephone line. With the hub system, the outlying offices no longer need to monitor all the AP wires or wait for a break to insert their stories—or hire teletype operators. At the hub, an editor simply hands a teletype operator any copy that arrives in paper form and the operator types it into the hub's computer with the usual instructions for priorities.

AP headquarters in New York still looks and sounds pretty much like the conventional wire service newsroom—lots of teletypes, lots of typewriters, some Extels, but still the endless ribbons of teletype copy. It is a smaller operation than UPI's (about twenty-five electronic machines and a small computer) because only the main national news wires go out from Manhattan; most news operations are decentralized. AP selected different equipment, the Hendrix CRT and computer. Each CRT is less expensive—\$14,000 each—than UPI's Harris, which in the UPI-altered model costs \$18,000, and both types do essentially the same thing. But the AP machine has a black background with white letters; its cursor is a constantly flashing oblong; and the keyboard is more intimidating—less differentiation between

regular alphabetic and numerical keys and command keys, and some keys with triple functions.

The wire services have been the first to convert to electronics because the technology of cathode ray tubes connected to computers has been the most highly developed in communications, and the wire services are purely in communications—the collecting and transmission of news. They could convert because the biggest human and technological problem in newspaper modernization—the production of printed papers—isn't their responsibility.

There was, of course, the problem of human adjustment and relations with unions. Yet, to the astonishment of everyone involved, there was no massive resistance to the new machines. AP introduced its machines in the Columbia, S.C., bureau, which employs four people, three of them AP veterans. The results were so positive that Wes Gallagher, chief of AP, said he didn't believe the reports his subordinates gave him. "I was coming back from the South and I drove to Columbia to see for myself," he says. "It was true. Everyone liked and accepted the new system, including the older men."

At UPI, a set of machines was put in a room where the staff could "play" with them (and make mistakes) privately. Eberhart says that within four hours most men could run the machines and within two weeks feel comfortable with them. AP, whose machines are less simple looking, report slightly longer adaptation time.

William Laffler, who has been with UPI twenty-eight years and now is a general news editor, says, "I was skeptical at first but I found things easier. The screen is always clear and even. Before, when reporters did rewrite, some had clean copy, some had dirty copy; some had black ribbons, and some had faded ones; and when you read all day it's annoying. Also, I can see what I've got in one glance."

Laffler pushed a button and instantly on his screen twenty-three stories were listed. He pushed the code number beside one slugged FLU and instantly there was a story from Atlanta, by Charles S. Taylor, that looked like typewritten copy except it was on the screen, without the instability of normal TV pictures because the screens are finer and are synchronized so that no "jumping" occurs. Laffler saw a style error—a surplus hyphen—and pushed the delete button. And he thought that FLU should go above a story marked CARS, whose first paragraph he could see on his Extel; within seconds he had made that change.

Wire service executives appeared so euphoric about acceptance of the new machines that it seemed wise to check with representa-

tives of the Wire Service Guild. Norman Welton, administrator of the Guild (1,400 members in AP, 950 in UPI, 80 per cent of them newspeople), confirmed it: "Last spring we were in negotiations and an older member from UPI came to me and said, 'We'll go on strike before we'll let them move in those machines.' Two months after they put in the machines I went through the UPI shop and here was this same guy boasting to a visitor how he could do things with the machine better than he could with paper and pencil."

The Guild does have some problems, rectified in practice but not yet in contracts. Some members are concerned that newsmen will be judged on their technical proficiency with the machines rather than their editorial and reportorial judgment. They do not want editorial people to be given other persons' work to keyboard—to them, tantamount to having to retype another reporter's story. The Guild also is concerned about possible radiation effects from cathode ray tubes, and about eyestrain. However, a UPI-commissioned study by the University of Florida Radiology Department found that editors receive less radiation than is normal from TV sets; another study by the Ophthalmology Department of the Yale Medical School found no eyestrain problem. Welton says he wants contracts to affirm present practices, plus further study of eyestrain and radiation.

For all this, there is a paradox in the rapid electronic systems inside AP, UPI, and a few newsrooms like that of the *Detroit News*: While internal work is handled at electronic speeds, the national news transmission network is still basically a voice-grade telephone or telegraph line with the ancient capacity of teletype machines—officially, sixty words a minute but actually, with pauses and garbles, an average of forty-five. No matter how fast AP or UPI put together their news reports with the new gadgetry, with few exceptions it chugs out of their computers at forty-five words per minute. Some customers—about forty for UPI and 200 for AP—lease (for approximately \$180 a month) Dataspeed machines which will receive 1,050 words a minute and produce hard copy, punched paper type, or computer signals at the same rate. Other available machines receive at 2,100 to 3,000 or more words a minute—but they are not in significant use.

As of now, few of AP's or UPI's customers feel compelled to lease or buy high-speed receiving equipment because their composing rooms can't handle material much faster than their old teletypes receive it. A few organizations have started to convert, however. Booth Newspapers, Inc. has its headquarters in Ann Arbor for the eight Michigan papers in its group (*Ann Arbor News*, *Bay City Times*, *Flint Journal*, *Grand Rapids Press*, *Jackson Citizen Patriot*, *Kala-*

mazoo *Gazette*, Muskegon *Chronicle*, and Saginaw *News*). Booth's Ann Arbor computer receives three AP and three UPI lines. As each item goes into the central computer, a teletype copy is fed to each member paper. An editor at each decides which story he wants to use and, through a keyboard, puts in a call to the Ann Arbor computer, typing out the date, index code for the desired story, and the size and style of type and column-width in which he wants the story set. Almost at once he receives the story at 300 words a minute in the form of punched tape already coded for the proper typesetting. Then the tape is fed manually into a linecasting machine.

Savings for Booth so far total about \$50,000 a year in line charges, plus the wages (\$120,000) of at least eight compositors no longer needed. Within five years Booth hopes to compose whole pages on its CRTs. The page then could be in electronic signal form which could make a printing plate directly, either by computer-instructed laser beam or production of an offset plate. Or there could be plateless printing with some magnetic, electrostatic process that draws dry ink spray onto magnetized moving newsprint.

Booth is switching totally to cold type, which permits electronic photocomposition, the ideal mate to computerized copy. To do this quickly, the chain did what most publishers avoid—rapid writeoff of existing hot metal equipment that is heavy, durable, and operable for years to come. This writeoff, for \$1,250,000, has reduced dividends by 31 cents a share but promises mammoth production savings.

Gannett acquired one of the most accomplished technologists in the field by hiring Ronald White away from a less progressive Scripps-Howard organization, and the chain now is trying alternative systems in two plants before automating its fifty-three papers. Knight Newspapers expects all its plants to be completely converted to photocomposition—and thus totally open to use of electronics—by 1975. All fourteen Lee papers are expected to be converted by the end of this year, using a variety of electronic devices, including some from Japan. The New York *Times* has been negotiating with the International Typographical Union for fundamental changes in production—which accounts for 42 per cent of its expenses. The ITU has accepted in principle the need for modernization, and seems chiefly concerned with guarantees of lifetime pay for displaced workers plus ITU jurisdiction over new integrated systems.

The basic union problem is not simply displacement of individual workers; new devices usually aren't adopted until they save so much money they permit owners to pay displaced workers until death, retirement, or voluntary moves to other jobs. The basic prob-

lem is that truly radical change in newspaper production combines many traditional steps into one operation. This entirely eliminates some unions—stereotypers and engravers aren't needed in offset plants—and in others raises the issue of which union controls a machine that combines the work previously done by two or more different classes of employees.

The CRT connected to computer, for example, allows the reporter or editor to write and edit the story, automatically line it up for transmission (if at a wire service) or (if at a newspaper) cut tape or drive a photocomposition machine. Is this an editing or a composing function? In a unionized paper, do the keyboard and computer command buttons belong to the Newspaper Guild or the International Typographical Union?

At UPI the issue went to arbitration, producing a decision that the CRT-computer is an editing machine. Therefore the Wire Service Guild has jurisdiction, and teletype operators are being phased out. At the Detroit *News* the issue remains unresolved. The paper has no Guild representation but does have the ITU, whose contract gives it control over preparation of all tapes for driving linecasting or photocomposition machines. Management and the ITU held talks for months while the *News* experimented with its new system. [In October 1972], while talks were still inconclusive, the *News* put the new system into operation. The paper offered to go to arbitration and the ITU agreed—meanwhile obtaining an injunction against the new process pending completion of arbitration. The injunction since has been lifted, and at this writing arbitration was continuing.

One of the most important decisions in the field was the so-called Kagel Award in San Francisco (named for Sam Kagel, chairman of the local board of arbitration for the San Francisco Newspaper Printing Co.—joint production venture of the *Chronicle* and *Examiner*—and Bay Area Typographical Union No. 21). Almost everyone has a different interpretation of the decision, some calling it a “victory” for the union and some a “victory” for management. One reason for the ambiguity is that much of the decision concerns optical scanners, for which copy is typed with special clarity on electric typewriters, then read by computer and converted either to tape or more direct composition, eventually including possible whole-page makeup. Some systems, like those at AP, UPI, and some newspapers, do not use scanners.

The Kagel Award permits all “scanner-ready” copy to be processed directly by automatic machines no matter who produces it—presumably including reporters, editors, or members of other departments. “However,” it specifies, “no typing pool will be created or

used to prepare such copy." So unless reporters and editors become precision typists—which the Newspaper Guild wants to avoid in order to retain emphasis on journalistic skills—ITU members will do any retyping for computer-scanning.

The Kagel Award also provides, "If wire service copy is received in a form directly entering the computer, composing room employees will operate the CRT Terminals to make all alterations indicated by the editorial departments on the 'hard' copy." The agreement further specifies that the ITU will do all updating of texts and news, all corrections and alterations, and—perhaps the most significant phrase in the agreement—"original keystroking to be used for typesetting." This seems to mean that editors may not operate the CRT keyboards to edit or rewrite stories which can be sent directly to computers for automatic tape-punching or photocomposition. Either editors will continue to work with traditional paper and pencil, and hand copy to an ITU member to retype, or, less likely, employ an ITU member at the keyboard in the newsroom to receive verbal instructions from editors.

The outcome of these battles—just beginning at most newspapers—will determine who has maximum control over the editing process and how much money owners can realize from innovations. (Even with duplicated typing of copy, the new machines will make possible vastly greater profits—reducing some production costs 50 per cent.) But the stake of journalist and public is not in which unions emerge ascendant nor in the added profits of an industry which already records the third-highest profit of all American manufacturing industries. What matters is the impact on the quality of the product. Will news organizations, already fabulously profitable, shift production savings to the heart of the business—news and editorial?

The dream of all journalists and conscientious owners has been to free the American newspaper from being mostly a factory. That liberation has now begun. The result can be a continuing relatively meager expenditure on the editorial product, with small offices downtown transmitting editorial material to an automated printing plant. Or it can be the realization of the dream that most of a paper's energy will go into covering its community and region, that leaders of news organizations will no longer be executives rewarded for their commercial and mechanical management efficiency but men and women who are essentially recorders and analysts of social and political events—directors of enterprises whose place in society under the First Amendment has more to do with ideas than with producing pieces of lead.

HOME VIDEO SYSTEMS: A REVOLUTION?

Cliff Christians

The material written so far about home video systems may have already used up an entire forest of trees. Yet throughout the avalanche, one assumption persists virtually unanalyzed—that cartridge TV means a communications *revolution*. Though the euphoric prophecies of 1970 have not continued, there is still a consistent theme heralding video cassette's grand and essential newness. A statement by Peter Goldmark, inventor of EVR and CBS' Lab president until the end of 1971, typifies the rhetoric: "It is not just another tool in our audio-visual kit; it is a new medium . . . the greatest revolution since the book." Much of the academic community has been equally expansive. Marshall McLuhan calls it a "cultural revolution" declaring that this fresh medium will "uproot all political, educational, and commercial establishments." Industry insider Stafford L. Hopwood believes: "It will usher in the world's third communications revolution. The first came when man learned to record written words. The second came with the printing press. But the impact of this device will change the world more than the printing press."

Even as CBS was forced by its financial loss to abandon its manufacturing involvements late in 1971, the president of the CBS Comtec Group reaffirmed his belief in this "new dimension" in communications. Indeed the failure of the home video medium to achieve its market potential has not lessened the exuberance about the uniqueness of this achievement. The headlines are still going "to those foreseeing a whole new communications world with cassettes at the center. . . . If some of the zing has gone out of the initial predictions . . . they still persist. . . . The forecasters have merely pushed their to-be-wished target dates back a bit."

This discussion analyzes that persistent doxology. Does cartridge (or cassette or disc) TV signify a revolution? Is this medium radically different in its fundamental nature? The sections which follow suggest that this is no revolution at all. Home video systems are traveling the same path as earlier mass media, with the result that they will end up in much the same economic and social mold as contemporary broadcasting. Industry will undoubtedly benefit from

Cliff Christians is a Ph. D. candidate in communications at the University of Illinois. This article appeared in *Journal of Broadcasting*, vol. 17, no. 2 (Spring 1973), pp. 223-233 and is reprinted with permission. Footnotes have been deleted.

it. As for the home, some superficial advances may result in individualized scheduling; but even when a home video system reaches its potential, it will only be one more element in America's mass media system. Its style and purpose will not be essentially altered from the present communications institution as a whole. Clearly, the lament should not be over home video's present market sluggishness, but over the discouraging fact that this "innovation" finally signifies nothing substantially new for the public.

Expert analyses have erred before. Thomas Edison predicted that recording last wills and testaments would be a major use of phonographs. The heralds of home facsimile are now mute. Bulging populations and technological improvements were supposed to generate increased numbers of newspapers in the twentieth century; they declined steadily after the high point of 2,600 dailies in 1909. And in the same vein, the belief that sooner or later new video systems will spawn a new communications era is misguided as well.

Broadcasting, the popular press, and film have long been characterized by consolidation of capital, bigness, and costliness. Oligopoly seems inevitable when there are standardized products to manufacture and mass markets to saturate.

The new TV systems are being labeled "revolutionary" because everyone seems to have access. In hardware, a number of industrial names can be listed: some are the big corporations (RCA, CBS, Sony, Ampex, Arvin, Grundig, Panasonic, Telefunken, Motorola, Kodak, Polaroid, Magnavox, for example); but many smaller ones are involved as well. Looking beyond present industrial and educational sales, industry consistently talks of a home market big enough by 1980 for any manufacturer who wishes a share. One RCA executive chortled recently about the possibilities: "If you want to calculate the opportunity, just add up the collective market for movies, books, records, audio cassettes, adult courses, encyclopedias, business magazines, and fairy tales. All of this and more. . . ."

It may be sincerely hoped that video systems will not follow the predominant pattern of concentration and monopolization, but [will] provide entry to this medium for everyone. However it appears all too obvious, even at this early stage, that home video systems will become as heavily concentrated in mammoth complexes as other mass media are.

All the costly problems that have plagued video system development indicate very clearly that only large firms will ultimately survive. Even a corporation such as CBS, with assets nearing the one-billion dollar mark, could only compete for three years before it had

to turn over the bulk of its operations to foreign manufacturers. Selectavision Vice President, Tom McDermott, has been quoted as saying that \$50 million is being earmarked by RCA for new program production. How many corporations can spend that and commit an additional \$10 million just to purchase programs and pay copyright and royalty fees? How many can finance five different market research companies to conduct 8,000 home interviews as part of its research and development, as RCA has done; Avco's financial prospectus reports that \$12.1 million will be necessary before its first units are sold, and another \$7.25 million for capital equipment and tooling.

Such enormous financial stakes are eloquent indications that in the matter of control, these video systems are no different than the rest of the communications industry. Entry is no more open and easy. The heavy investments required suggest that new or existing oligopolies will likely predominate. Several other companies may survive to participate in some aspect of the system, but only in a marginal way.

Students of network radio, FM, and TV realize how significant the large and rich corporations ultimately were in determining the shape of these media. Concentrations of wealth portend an important edge once more for giants such as CBS and RCA. RCA's vast cross-media ownership throughout the electronics and programming fields give it great competitive strength. RCA is the twenty-first largest corporation in the United States. The company sells or leases 12,000 products and services in the communications and information fields. The list of subsidiaries and divisions that can be tapped for Selectavision is almost endless. CBS, as well, has nearly unlimited resources to utilize in video cassette development. Just to be able to utilize the production people, artists, and marketing men from its phonograph record operations, television network, and programming divisions are of tremendous advantage.

The present state of incompatibility is another factor that works against home TV systems' ideal of open access. Incompatibility magnifies the stakes considerably and lies at the root of the feverish gambles many corporations are making. It bedevils the entire field, but especially ruins opportunities for smaller firms. The present drive is to seize as much of the market as swiftly as possible. Most companies and individuals are withholding final rights to their materials until they see which system dominates. A number of business and educational firms are reluctant to sign any hardware agreements until they know who can provide the best software. Thus incompati-

bility promotes the vicious trend of concentration of video systems in the hands of the financial elite that has dominated broadcasting and from which video systems are supposed to be free. Industry leaders themselves acknowledge that to become established as the leader means appealing to as large a number as possible, instead of servicing the specific needs of limited groups.

It has long been obvious that consumer buying power is the eventual key to cartridge TV success. As in all industry, in order to realize large enough sales, video cassette, cartridge, or disc manufacturers must get the player/recorder unit price low enough for the majority of American homes. A recent Gallup poll indicated that only 11.9% are interested in the video system idea if prices are as high as \$400 to 800. All the research on these TV systems (including RCA's, Arthur D. Little's, and Spindletop's) concludes that the price range must be low if home markets are to be reached—preferably no more than \$250 for the player and around \$5 to 7 for cassettes, cartridges, or discs (similar to present quality phonographs and records).

Manufacturers are finding it next to impossible to meet this price. Motorola, for example, has been selling EVR players to commercial firms at \$750 so far (which some think [is at] a considerable loss for them), and Sony's price is even higher. By including fewer features in home models and manufacturing them in quantity, the manufacturers claim they can bring hardware to the desired cost level so that an average home owner can afford one.

The evidence in hardware suggests that the home TV system will not be very revolutionary as far as ownership concentration, costliness, bigness, accessibility, and consolidation of capital are concerned. The pronouncements and expectations may be otherwise. However, beneath the surface, the "new" video medium is following the typical pattern of television and radio. As the forces of technology, industrialization, democracy, urbanization, advertising, and others shaped the development of radio, so television was molded by the same forces. And as TV emerged out of the womb of the radio system, so the direction of home TV systems will become crystallized primarily in corporations now controlling television.

Electronic media first appeared when technology, the democratic movement, and urbanization had reached some maturity. Thus, as distinguished from print media, they were "democratized" from the very start. They appealed at the outset to popular, rather than elite audiences.

In this respect, the home video system is also said to differ from electronic communications generally. Rather than aiming at masses,

cartridge, or disc TV is hailed as the system for individualists. The tastes and interests of the majority are not supposed to determine the content. *Business Week* called video cassettes the "Mustang" of the electronics industry, "because it lets people personalize their viewing." On this matter of "allowing personal preference," enthusiasts are especially outspoken: "Why should we settle for anything less than total access to . . . the world's wisdom and pleasure . . . upon . . . request from the customer?"

Appeal to special-interest audiences is certainly a major potential advantage of video systems that make it possible to provide Shakespeare, ballet, philosophy, nature studies, how-to-fix-it ideas, and the rest. In fact, networks are interested in the video systems idea precisely because they feel it will not compete with the democratized content of networks, but will add program variety while catering to select groups. They are assuming that most viewing will be done at times when the TV set would not normally be used.

But, again, there are some disconcerting signs. Democratized content seemed to be in the mind of EVR's president recently: "When you're talking about a Barbra Streisand item for the consumer market, you're thinking in terms of 500,000 to one million." That sounds very much like offering typical mass entertainment fare! This form of technology seems caught in the same profit—mass production-standardization-popularization squeeze that characterizes mass media now. The problem of democratized content becomes acute because of price. It is generally believed that a half-hour program will range in price between \$10 and \$30 (although recent disc systems suggest lower prices), too high a cost for massive home use.

Because new program production is so expensive, CBS has emphasized purchasing the rights to as much present movie and network material as possible. 20th Century Fox, for example, has assigned all of its films (1,500), except the last five years, to EVR; MGM also signed a contract to place its film backlog with EVR. In fact, the movie industry has set up special task forces to investigate ways of exploiting home video systems. No wonder Darryl Zanuck heralds such systems as an advent comparable to the development of "sound, color, and Cinemascope in motion pictures." High system retail prices are also forcing creation of rental firms that are turning to movies and existing TV shows as items of broad appeal. All this does not mean individualized programming, of course, but further use of material designed for the mass, a "revolution" consisting of reruns of reruns. "So far the one kind of programming mentioned most often as being 'unique and different' is the dirty movie."

Obviously the need for big distribution and low programming costs force video systems toward democratized content.

In the early twenties, as radio sought to expand its audience, it developed the star system to lure large audiences to its programs. This was one aspect of the trend toward democratized content. It is now being repeated by promoters of video systems. The earlier quotation about Barbra Streisand is typical. Dan Rowan and Dick Martin set up their own corporation (ARM Productions) to protect their profit rights after being courted by RCA for Selectavision reruns. Even Jack Benny and George Burns materials are being reproduced. RCA executives have already met with Sir Laurence Olivier in London in order to gain exclusive rights to whatever material he has starred in.

The demographic information and distribution facilities are available to feed a segmented home market effectively. There is also the general desire throughout the video system industry to serve the entire population spectrum in all its various needs. But there has always been similar talk of the need for greater variety on television, an ideal defeated by the profit-mass production-popularization cycle mentioned above. The evidence points to the power of these forces at work once more, resulting in generally democratized content for a medium with the potential to have something specialized instead.

The mass media are big business in our country. They are market oriented, an adjunct of the industrial order, "the cultural arm of American industry." Commercial control of the media, of course, necessitates a constantly improving margin of profit for the ownership. Normally this means markets large enough to justify adequate advertising rates.

One alternative to advertising as the lifeblood of communications is for the user to pay. Then the owner becomes obliged to serve the people rather than the advertiser. And precisely around this situation the promoters of video systems have seen their greatest potential. No longer will this communications system be restricted by the industrial order, they say. The people will purchase what they desire and thus control the course of the technology. The *Christian Century* reports the aspirations of many: "Television today is a showcase for products. . . . But freed from the tyranny of ratings, cartridge television could do for ideas what the computer has done for numerical data, and the hours spent in front of the tube could be hours of mind-expansion and horizon-lifting."

Now it could be that in the case of this new medium, the forces of technology and industrialization will not produce the same type

of market-oriented media as before. But once more, the available information needs a second look. In May of 1970 a trial balloon was sent up, forecasting a multimillion-dollar advertising potential for TV cartridges or cassettes. *Television-Radio Age* interviewed various advertising executives and reported:

We're expecting advertising to play a role in cartridge products, CBS, for example, in an attempt to motivate advertising enthusiasm for its system, recently ran an EVR demonstration for the advertising community. Citing some of the uses of EVR, [CBS' Robert] Brockway said that advertisers will be able to [home] in on specialized audiences through the use of sponsored informational cartridges. "Cartridges of this nature may rent for as little as fifty cents," the CBS executive said. This suggests markets of no mean proportion.

One year later, advertising looked even better. In an address to the Long Island Advertising Club, Brockway urged advertising and industry cooperation to revitalize the same "... partnership which cut and tried the television medium in its infancy, and brought it to its peaks of success over the years. By adding the creative imaginations of the agencies to planning and expertise within the EVR division, commercial success of television would be realized again in videocassettes." There is no question that advertisers are taking the challenge seriously. An "Interpublic Task Force" has been studying the potential of video systems for advertising since late in 1970.

Faced with the nagging price factor, advertising appears as an ideal answer for the manufacturers. This is certainly not an unexpected turn of events, since broadcasting network owners are so involved in the video system field. Advertising has so long proved successful as their revenue source that they turn almost instinctively to this type of finance. Since most of the syndrome exists already (mass production, market saturation, standardization, ownership concentration, and popularization) it seems very natural for the cycle's other element (advertising) to be added in order to make the video system complete as an adjunct of the industrial order. Of course, this raises the immediate danger that the shape of the video system will be determined consciously or unconsciously by network policies—in this case that advertising pays and therefore ultimately influences programming.

Most analyses of video systems have erred because they built from very narrow frames of reference. Nearly all assessments have focused on one aspect—hardware or software, some technological feature, the standardization issue, home or commercial markets, domestic or foreign producers. The apocalyptic generalities have re-

sulted from superficial reductionism, rather than the interrelating of all the complex factors that constitute any communications system.

This discussion argues for a more wholistic viewpoint, attempting to place video systems within their broader mass media context. When seen in terms of the cultural, social, economic, and political forces that have shaped our media, video systems take on a rather different interpretation than the "revolutionary" role originally assigned. Contrary to predictions about radical transformation, this new communications idea is inevitably assuming the characteristics of other mass media systems. The media do not arise in a vacuum; but, as with all inventions, they are shaped dramatically by the societal structures in which they are created.

Mass media's social environment indicates that home video systems cannot be anticipated as the savior of American's communications system. While they will increase the availability of information, they will not prove to be as unique and revolutionary as typically assumed. In its important features (ownership concentration, democratized content, market orientation) video systems will be essentially similar to our present communications setup. Only if there were open access, genuine appeal to every taste, and independence from advertising could there be any profound change.

The history of communications systems reveals the large gap which inevitably develops between a new invention's potential and what is eventually done with it. The institutional perspective of this essay demonstrates no surprise at such developments. It reminds us instead of the complexities of our contemporary sociocultural order. Given those intricacies, an institutional viewpoint is wary of announcing any cheap, facile, singular solution. Vast social forces are not altered summarily by a new ruling from the FCC, establishment of a consumer lobby, or legislation to fix marketing policies.

The broad institutional context should help us turn our attention away from writing exciting scenarios of a communications future. It suggests, rather, that the business of those concerned with improving communications is to continue every effort to make the present system work. The focus of attention must be the advancement of broadcasting as we know it now. Should progress and fresh ideas result, they will undoubtedly have beneficial effects as broadcasting gives birth to home video systems. Intellectuals would be derelict if they persisted in hailing video systems as "this radical alternative to network TV" and abandoned the harder problem of improving the here-and-now. There is always the tendency to escape beyond the stickier issues of the present to some new possibility that

will provide all the answers. Because social forces are creating another medium similar in feature and style to the present broadcasting system, this tendency must especially be resisted in relation to developing video systems.

DOMESTIC SATELLITES: HOW WILL THEY AFFECT U.S. COMMUNICATIONS?

Sanford L. Jacobs

[In 1973] the Federal Communications Commission authorized Western Union to build the nation's first domestic satellite communications system. Six other such proposals are pending, and the FCC has indicated that all "qualified" applicants will win its approval.

It is clear that the era of the domestic satellite is at hand—Western Union plans to launch its first one in mid-April 1974. What will this era mean for American communications? The answer seems to be twofold:

—There will be changes in the availability of various communications services but not in the type of services available. These changes will come about because satellites will vastly increase the capacity of the nation's communications network and reduce the cost of many services. This could be likened to the introduction of the paperback book. Books were nothing new, but books distributed in so many outlets at such low prices were new, and the book business hasn't been the same since.

—Some of these changes in availability could be dramatic—some people foresee satellite signals beamed directly to your home—but many of the more dramatic changes won't be economically feasible until two or three more generations of satellites, far more powerful than these planned now, have been orbited. The first of these advanced satellites, say some experts, is at least 20 to 30 years away.

Emphasizing these more dramatic potentialities, there are those who predict a virtual revolution, limited, if limited at all, by policy, not technology. John Hult, a thinker at the Rand Corp. think-tank in California, envisions such things as a traveler in an Alaskan wilderness, hundreds of miles from the nearest conventional telephone,

Sanford L. Jacobs is a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*. This article is reprinted with permission of the *Wall Street Journal*, copyright 1973, Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All rights reserved.

taking a contraption out of his knapsack and beaming a call directly to an Indiana home.

"I can see how the technology will accommodate lots of things," Mr. Hult says. "But it depends on whether our institutions will accommodate it. A lot of vested interests are involved. Any time you want to make changes, you have a battle on your hands."

Richard R. Hough of American Telephone & Telegraph Co., which is a major entrant in the satellite race, stresses the nothing-new aspect of satellite communications. "I don't know of any service being proposed by satellite that isn't being provided now," says Mr. Hough, who is president of AT&T's Long Lines Department. But he calls satellites "an important tool; it's important that we add this string to our bow to increase flexibility and reliability of service."

Earl D. Hilburn, president of Western Union's telegraph subsidiary, agrees that satellites won't necessarily mean any new uses although even the first-generation satellites will mean cheaper connections over distances of more than 1,000 miles.

Satellites can greatly cut costs for two reasons. First, as the capacity of a communications network increases, generally the cost of any individual message sent over the network goes down. While satellites aren't exactly cheap—Western Union plans to spend \$70 million or more on its system—their message-carrying capacity, or number of circuits, is greater than is provided by an equivalent investment in present long-distance cables or microwave stations. Thus, the cost per circuit is less and a lot of communications services that have been very expensive, such as Picture-phone or facsimile, can be more popularly priced.

Second, distance isn't a factor in the expense of operating a satellite. It costs the same to move a message 100 miles or 3,000 miles, because the same amount of equipment is used regardless of the distance: a ground transmitting station to signal the satellite, the satellite itself and, until such a day that satellite-to-home signaling becomes feasible, a ground station to receive the signal.

(Once the signal is received at the ground station, it must enter the regular communications system, but it has already bypassed many miles of cable or microwave-station hookups.)

Those who are enthusiastic about the future of satellites put this distance-doesn't-matter factor this way: It costs no more to send a satellite signal from New York to California than it does to send one from New York to New Jersey. Those who are less enthusiastic stress the other side of the coin: It costs just as much to send a satellite signal from New York to New Jersey as it does to send one from New York to California.

Both sides of the coin are genuine: The lure of satellites, in the short run at any rate, is a long-distance one. Hence the 1,000-mile figure mentioned by Western Union's Mr. Hilburn. In the long run, as more powerful satellites with even greater message-carrying capacity are orbited and per-circuit costs fall further, presumably satellites will become more advantageous at shorter distances.

There is general agreement that domestic satellites will be important in long-distance telephone service, in data transmission and in television distribution.

Satellites "offer a good way to go if you want to send to many points from a single point," says Philip Schneider, executive vice president of RCA Global Communications, one of the satellite applicants. It is this superior point-to-many-point capacity of satellites that could radically alter TV distribution methods. Intriguing developments in education, entertainment and business communications could result.

Many of these potential developments are technologically feasible today, through educational or closed-circuit television for instance. What satellites are expected to do—particularly when they are made so powerful that their signals can be picked up by small individual antennas, eliminating the need for ground stations—is to bring such developments within the capacity of more customers' pocket-books.

One possibility is better education for the children of migrant farm workers. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare has a plan whereby schools serving different migrant-farm-labor areas would use the same televised curriculum. Regardless of where the children moved to, their schoolwork would start where their old schoolwork left off.

Another possibility is the delivery of motion pictures to theaters around the country, which would eliminate the need for making hundreds of copies of a movie and for delivering and picking up heavy film reels at each theater. A satellite could deliver the movie on a "real time" basis—a theater projecting the picture as it is received—or a theater could tape the movie for later repeated showings.

Satellites could also keep the postal system from choking on the annual flood of 100 billion pieces of mail expected by 1990. The U.S. Postal Service is looking at electronic mail delivery as a way to survive. "The idea is to transfer the content of your letter in lieu of physical transfer of the letter itself," a spokesman for the service says. One obvious problem is how to safeguard privacy. The technology for such a system has already been demonstrated, but the post office doesn't expect to have even a pilot project working until

1980. Satellites, the post office figures, offer the ideal way to send the ultrahigh-speed facsimile signals nationwide.

Documents such as deeds, mortgages, contracts and stock and bond certificates could also be transmitted in this manner. But to combat counterfeiting and enhance the acceptability of such facsimiles, an extremely high-quality image must be delivered, says Douglas Johnson, director of commercial operations at Western Telecommunications, another of the satellite applicants.

All electronic communications, whether telephone, radio or television, use electromagnetic waves—that is, radio waves. Just how much “information” or how many messages can be packed onto a single radio beam depends roughly on how many waves per second you are sending out and receiving—the frequency of the radio beam.

In the old days of Morse-code telegraphy, for instance, it required as little as 60 waves, or cycles, per second to carry the meager information of dots and dashes. It requires 3,000 cycles a second to transmit the human voice with all its variations in tone and loudness. And a television picture, which has far more information in it than a voice, requires four million or more cycles a second. A radio beam capable of carrying a television picture is capable of carrying several hundred telephone conversations.

To meet the exploding demand for communications of all types, engineers are pushing into higher and higher frequencies, on the order of billions of cycles a second. These are the ultrahigh frequency (UHF) extremely high frequency (EHF) and super high frequency (SHF) radio waves. UHF, EHF, and SHF waves are more commonly known as microwaves.

Unfortunately, microwaves don't follow the curvature of the earth. They travel in a straight line-of-sight path, which is why the farther you live from a television station, the higher the antenna you need to intercept the television beam. At present, to transmit microwaves over long distances requires either that the waves be guided by a wire such as an underground telephone cable or that the microwave beam be relayed around the curve of the earth by placing a receiver-transmitter tower every 30 miles or so.

Both cables and microwave-relay-tower nets are expensive and are most justifiable economically between points with a high volume of communications, like in the Boston-New York-Washington corridor.

A communications satellite opens up the use of microwaves and their tremendous message-carrying capacity to every nook and cranny of the nation. The satellite is nothing more than [a] single micro-

wave-relay tower hovering 22,300 miles in the sky, an altitude that keeps it over the same spot on earth all the time. There it can be in "view" of a microwave transmitter or receiver anywhere in the U.S., be it on the outskirts of New York or Dalhart, Texas.

The three major television networks provide an example of the potential savings. Together they pay \$75 million a year for network connections; 90% of this amount goes to AT&T, which operates 126,000 miles of ground-based microwave routes, and the rest goes to independent telephone and microwave companies. Television distribution by satellite could cut this expense in half.

A number of satellite applicants have been ardently wooing the three networks because the network business should assure the profitability of whatever satellite system obtains it. AT&T, however, may lessen satellites' attraction for the television broadcasters. The phone company is seeking FCC permission to change its TV transmission tariffs, and a reduction of at least 25% for the networks is expected to be included in the final rates.

AT&T itself plans to have circuits available [about July, 1975] on satellites to be orbited by the Communications Satellite Corp. and leased to AT&T. This, too, is subject to FCC approval.

Besides AT&T-Comsat, RCA Global (in conjunction with RCA Alaska Communications) and Western Tele-Communications, other satellite applicants are Hughes Aircraft, American Satellite Corp. (a joint venture of Fairchild Industries and Western Union International, which has no connection with Western Union Corp.) and CML Satellite Corp. (a joint venture of MCI Communications, Lockheed Aircraft and Comsat).

Satellites do present problems. The proposed systems would use the same radio frequencies already used by ground microwave systems. In the United States many microwave stations have been erected in big cities; satellites won't be able to beam signals to receivers in these cities because the signals would interfere with those of the existing stations. Satellite applicants therefore plan to put the receiving stations in rural areas.

Higher, unused radio frequencies are available. Some have been allocated to satellite use (the government assigns frequencies under international compacts), and at higher frequencies interference with existing communications systems wouldn't very likely be a problem.

But the initial satellite applicants don't plan to use these higher frequencies. A Western Union executive explains that the equipment for operation at the higher frequencies hasn't yet been successfully tested for satellite use whereas hardware for the lower fre-

quencies has shown its reliability in the Intelsat global satellites now in orbit.

“With the kind of investment that satellites demand, you want to be sure it’s going to work when you get it up there,” the executive remarks. Western Union’s plans to spend at least \$70 million for its satellite system call for seven earth stations. Hughes Aircraft will build the satellites.

The higher radio frequencies have another drawback. Experiments have shown that one big problem is rain attenuation, weakening of the signal when a heavy rain falls on a receiving station. AT&T has come up with a solution, but an expensive one: Backup receiving stations can be built about 20 miles away. AT&T studies have found that when rain is falling at one site heavily enough to make attenuation a problem, it is almost certain not to be raining that heavily 20 miles away.

Other problems must be surmounted before satellites can emit signals powerful enough to be received directly at your home. Present satellites use batteries recharged by solar cells. There are proposals to have large solar generators put on gigantic satellites so as to provide a lot more electricity to power a stronger radio signal, but such ideas are still on drawing boards.

Another factor in satellite economics is that the life of a satellite won’t be as long as that of land lines. It may be as low as five years for the first generation, and a new launching will then be required.

The global Intelsat satellite system has been operating since mid-1969. The Intelsat satellites, built by Hughes Aircraft and TRW, are owned by the 83-nation International Telecommunications Satellite Consortium. An Intelsat satellite over the Atlantic provided live television coverage here of [the 1972] Olympic games in Munich, and satellites relayed live coverage of President Nixon’s trip to China [in Feb. 1972]. The Communications Satellite Corp., a U.S. corporation, manages the satellites for the consortium.

A domestic satellite system for the U.S. has been slower in coming mainly because the need isn’t urgent. This country has long had a sophisticated ground-based communications network.

For vast stretches where a sufficient ground-based system is lacking, domestic satellites offer the most economical communications, experts say. The Soviet Union has orbited a domestic satellite system. Canada recently launched a domestic satellite that will improve communications with its Arctic territories. [Ed. Note: Late in 1973 the *Wall Street Journal* successfully experimented with facsimile transmission pages via satellite.]



Chapter

6

Change in the Traditional Media

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TELEVISION

**STRONG SHIFT IN TV'S ROLE:
FROM ESCAPE TOWARD REALITY**
Broadcasting

In the public mind American television has ceased to be primarily an entertainment center and has become a major force in journalism as well.

This change occurred in a decade when, paradoxically, viewers were losing some of their enthusiasm for television but nevertheless were watching it more—and enjoying it more—than when the decade began.

These are among many findings made public [in 1973] from 1970 research that duplicated—and thus permitted direct comparisons with—major elements of the 1960 surveys that formed the basis of the late Dr. Gary Steiner's landmark volume, "The People Look at Television" (*Broadcasting*, Feb. 18, 1963, et seq.).

Other major findings and conclusions from the 1970 study:

- Viewers in 1970 found TV less "satisfying," "relaxing," "exciting," "important" and generally less "wonderful" than had those in 1960 (possibly, the report suggests, because some of the newness had worn off), but the change was not from "praise" to "condemnation"—more nearly it was "from summa to magna cum laude." (Table 2.)

- Better-educated viewers in 1970, as in 1960, held TV in lower esteem than did other viewers, but they watched as much—and essentially the same things—as everybody else.

- In 1970 as in 1960 viewers showed a high degree of acceptance of commercials. At most, viewer attitude has become only slightly more negative. "The average viewer still overwhelmingly accepts the frequent and long interruptions by commercials as 'a fair price to pay.'" (Table 4.)

This *Broadcasting* magazine article is a condensation of Robert T. Bower's book *Television and the Public*. Dr. Bower has been director of the Bureau of Social Science Research in Washington, D.C. since 1950. Copyright 1973, Broadcasting Publications, Inc., publishers of *Broadcasting*, newsweekly of broadcasting and allied arts, *Broadcasting Yearbook*, and *Broadcasting Cable Sourcebook* (annual). Reprinted by permission.

Table 1.

"Now, I would like to get your opinions about how radio, newspapers, television, and magazines compare. Generally speaking, which of these would you say...?"

Which of the media:	In percentages									
	Television		Magazines		Newspapers		Radio		None/NA	
	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970
Is the most entertaining?	68	72	9	5	13	9	9	14	1	0
Gives the most complete news coverage?	19	41	3	4	59	39	18	14	1	2
Presents things most intelligently?	27	38	27	18	33	28	8	9	5	8
Is the most educational?	32	46	31	20	31	26	3	4	3	5
Brings you the latest news most quickly?	36	54	0	0	5	6	57	39	2	1
Does the most for the public?	34	48	3	2	44	28	11	13	8	10
Seems to be getting worse all the time?	24	41	17	18	10	14	14	5	35	22
Presents the fairest, most unbiased news?	29	33	9	9	31	23	22	19	9	16
Is the least important to you?	15	13	49	53	7	9	15	20	7	5
Creates the most interest in new things going on?	56	61	18	16	18	14	4	5	4	5
Does the least for the public?	13	10	47	50	5	7	12	13	23	20
Seems to be getting better all the time?	49	38	11	8	11	11	10	15	19	28
Gives you the clearest understanding of the candidates and issues in national elections?	42	59	10	8	36	21	5	3	7	9

1960 base: 100 percent = 2427
 1970 base: 100 percent = 1900

Table 2.

"Here are some opposites. Please read each pair quickly and put a check some place between them, wherever you think it belongs, to describe television. Just your offhand impression."

Television is generally: Proportion of 1960-1970 samples choosing each of six scale positions.

	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		
	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970	
	Relaxing	43	33	21	23	19	27	9	11	3	4	4	
Interesting	42	31	21	23	19	24	9	13	4	5	4	3	Uninteresting
For me	41	27	16	20	19	24	10	15	6	8	8	6	Not for me
Important	39	30	17	19	21	24	10	15	7	7	6	6	Unimportant
Informative	39	35	25	27	20	23	8	9	5	3	3	3	Not informative
Lots of fun	32	22	20	20	25	31	12	16	5	6	6	5	Not much fun
Exciting	30	19	18	17	29	35	13	17	5	7	4	6	Dull
Wonderful	28	19	16	15	33	36	16	22	4	6	3	3	Terrible
Imaginative	26	19	21	20	28	33	14	15	6	7	5	6	No imagination
In good taste	24	18	21	19	31	33	19	19	6	7	4	4	In bad taste
Generally excellent	22	15	19	18	32	36	18	21	5	6	4	4	Generally bad
Lots of variety	35	28	16	20	19	21	12	14	10	9	8	8	All the same
On everyone's mind	33	21	22	18	24	29	15	20	4	7	3	5	Nobody cares much
Getting better	25	16	19	15	24	23	16	21	8	11	9	15	Getting worse
Keeps changing	23	22	17	18	22	24	18	20	10	9	9	8	Stays the same
Serious	8	7	8	8	31	35	29	33	12	10	12	7	Playful
Too "highbrow"	4	3	3	4	29	28	42	43	11	12	9	11	Too "simple minded"

1960 Base: 100 percent = 2427
 1970 Base: 100 percent = 1900
 (Excluding NA's which vary from item to item)

■ Most adults in both surveys felt children are better off with television than they would be without it, but the percentage has increased from 70% to 76%. College-educated parents now give TV the heaviest vote on this score (81%, up from 68% 10 years earlier), and grade-school-educated parents the lowest (68%, down from 75%).

■ Educational benefits remain the biggest advantage adults see in television for children, but by a much bigger percentage in 1970 than in 1960 (80% versus 65%), and entertainment has replaced the baby-sitting function as the second greatest advantage. (Table 6.)

■ “Seeing things they shouldn’t” is still the top-rated disadvantage of TV for children in adults’ minds, but there have been some changes since 1960 in what those things are. “Violence” is still number one, but sex, seminudity, vulgarity, smoking, drinking and drugs have increased as causes of concern. (Table 7.)

■ Parents are “a bit stricter” than they were about controlling their children’s viewing (43% say they have “definite rules” as against 41% in 1960). But better-educated parents, the biggest group in approving of TV for children, are much more inclined to have rules (46%) than grade-school-educated parents (25%), who are most fearful about TV for children. In general, however, “there are about as many parents who look to the children for help in deciding what they (parents) are going to watch as there are parents who try to decide about their children’s viewing.”

The 1970 study was financed by a grant by CBS, which also underwrote the 1960 study, to the Bureau of Social Science Research, a Washington-based independent nonprofit organization. Based on a national probability sample, some 1,900 adults (aged 18 and over) were interviewed by the Roper Organization, New York, in late winter and early spring of 1970—exactly 10 years after interviewing was done in the 1960 study. In addition there was a separate special study in Minneapolis-St. Paul, where, in cooperation with the American Research Bureau, the researchers were able to measure what viewers said against what they actually watched, corresponding to a similar special study in New York as part of the 1960 work (see page 222).

The report is by Robert T. Bower, director of the Bureau of Social Science Research, who emphasizes in his preface that CBS had no control over any aspect of the study or report. It is being published as a 205-page book titled “Television and the Public” by CBS’s Holt, Rinehart & Winston subsidiary, which will offer it later at \$7.95 a copy, but for the present CBS is distributing it widely to editors, educators and other opinion leaders.

Table 3.

Proportion of each group taking most extreme position on two scales.

	<i>Superians</i> Percent who check extreme positive positions				<i>Vilifiers</i> Percent who check extreme negative positions				Base: 100% =	
	"Wonderful"		"For me"		"Terrible"		"Not for me"			
	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970
Sex:										
Male	27	17	40	24	3	4	7	7	1177	900
Female	28	20	41	31	3	2	9	6	1246	982
Education:										
Grade school	44	33	54	43	3	3	9	7	627	367
High school	26	19	42	28	3	3	7	6	1214	1030
College	12	7	20	15	3	2	11	8	516	490
Age:										
18-19	32	17	44	25	0	2	6	7	84	182
20-29	19	17	33	29	3	1	8	6	473	331
30-39	23	18	39	24	2	3	7	6	544	356
40-49	27	13	38	23	2	3	7	9	463	378
50-59	34	21	44	27	4	2	10	5	400	311
60+	36	24	50	33	4	5	10	6	440	419

The report ranges over many areas covered in the 1960 study, but the rising role of television as a journalistic force in the public's perception of the medium represents one of the most striking changes of the decade.

It is demonstrated in many ways. In 1960, for example, television had been voted best mass medium in only one of four specified news categories: giving the clearest understanding of candidates and issues in national elections. But by 1970, Dr. Bower reports, "we find television surging ahead of newspapers as the news medium that 'gives the most complete news coverage', overtaking radio in bringing 'the latest news most quickly', edging out newspapers in 'presenting the fairest, most unbiased news' and increasing its lead" in the one area where it was ahead in 1960, national political coverage. (Table 5.)

Dr. Bower notes that these findings parallel the results of studies conducted—also by the Roper Organization—for the Television Information Office since 1959. (He also notes at another point that when an Apollo 13 moon-flight emergency occurred during interviewing in Minneapolis-St. Paul, where 52% had rated TV the fastest news medium, 58% got their first word of the emergency from radio, as against 40% from TV. However, he says, TV regained its position as predominant source of information in the remaining four days of the flight.)

As another evidence of the public's growing perception of TV's news role Dr. Bower recalls that viewers and critics in 1960 were talking primarily about entertainment and cultural values, but in 1970 had shifted their focus to news functions, objectivity, concentration of control and effects of news coverage on audience behavior. And even in the area of TV and children, he notes, much of the violence parents object to their children's seeing is violence that is reported in the news.

He cites Vice-President Spiro Agnew's celebrated Nov. 13, 1969, attack on network news specifically. That was just three months before interviewing was done for the 1970 study—and still TV was voted the fairest and most unbiased medium [See Appendix].

The study looked for bias in a number of directions. In one, 53% of the conservatives, an equal percentage of liberals and a few more middle-of-the-roaders (56%) said they thought newscasters in general "give it straight," while 30% of the conservatives, 26% of the liberals and 25% of the middle-roaders thought newscasters tend to color the news. Republicans were more suspicious (32%) than Democrats (22%). In the total sample, viewers divided about equally as to whether the newscasters they individually watch most are liberal (14%) or conservative (13%); more consider them middle-roaders (36%) and even more can't tell (38%). But overwhelmingly they feel their favorite newscasters give the news straight (78%) rather than let their personal opinions color it (6%).

Dr. Bower offers this summary: "It appears that a sizable proportion (about one-fourth) of the public feels that television news is generally biased in its presentation. A much smaller group of hard-core critics think even their own favorite newscaster colors the news. But the vast majority of people either accept the objectivity of television newscasting in general or find a specific newscaster to watch who is felt to be objective in his reporting . . . If the public at large were the judge, the medium would probably be exonerated [of bias charges] or at worst be given a suspended sentence."

The study also undertook to learn which news medium people think puts most emphasis on "good things" and which puts most on "bad things"—and found that TV was voted number one on both counts. Dr. Bower suggests a possible explanation: "that for a large group of viewers television is simply so dominant a medium in bringing all the news, any sort of news, they see it as emphasizing all things—both the good and the bad—without any sense of contradic-

Table 4.

"Here are some statements about commercials. I'd like you to read each statement and mark whether you generally agree or disagree with each statement."

Percent who agree that:	1960 total	1970 total	1970 occupation of head of household	
			White collar	Blue collar
Commercials are a fair price to pay for the entertainment you get	75	70	69	71
Most commercials are too long	63	65	67	65
I find some commercials very helpful in keeping me informed	58	54	50	57
Some commercials are so good that they are more entertaining than the program	43	54	56	52
I would prefer TV without commercials	43	48	49	47
Commercials are generally in poor taste and very annoying	40	43	42	43
I frequently find myself welcoming a commercial break	36	35	31	38
I'd rather pay a small amount yearly to have TV without commercials	24	30	30	29
There are just too many commercials	(Not included in 1960)	70	71	70
Having special commercial breaks during a program is better than having the same number of commercials at the beginning and end	(Not included in 1960)	39	35	42
Base: 100 percent =	(2427)	(1900)	(674)	(873)

Table 5.

"Now, I would like to get your opinions about how radio, newspapers, television and magazines compare. Generally speaking, which of these would you say . . ."

		Percent	
		1960	1970
"Gives the most complete news coverage?"	Television	19	41
	Magazines	3	4
	Newspapers	59	39
	Radio	18	14
	None or don't know	1	2
"Brings you the latest news most quickly?"	Television	36	54
	Magazines	0	0
	Newspapers	5	6
	Radio	57	39
	None or don't know	2	1
"Gives the fairest, most unbiased news?"	Television	29	33
	Magazines	9	9
	Newspapers	31	23
	Radio	22	19
	None or don't know	9	16
"Gives the clearest understanding of candidates and issues in national elections?"	Television	42	59
	Magazines	16	8
	Newspapers	36	21
	Radio	5	3
	None or don't know	1	9

1960 Base: 100 percent = 2427 (minus NA's which vary from item to item)

1970 Base: 100 percent = 1900 (minus NA's which vary from item to item)



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tion. Yes, it emphasizes the good things; yes, it emphasizes the bad things; it emphasizes everything.”

The study found 57% rated TV's performance in presenting 1968 presidential election campaign issues and candidates as good (44%) or excellent (13%); 32% wanted more political programs in the 1972 campaign while 15% wanted fewer, and 43% said TV played a “fairly important” (30%) or “very important” (13%) part in

helping them decide whom they had wanted to win in 1968. He doesn't think that last finding should be construed to mean TV caused large numbers to bolt their parties but, rather, that it reflects "a sense of increased familiarity with the candidates and, most likely, a reinforcement of pre-existing tendencies."

At another point Dr. Bower says: "The indications are that

Table 6.

"What do you think are some of the main advantages of television for children?"

*The advantages of TV for children by respondent's general attitude (pro or con) toward television for children.**

Percent who mention:	1960				1960 Total	1970 Total	1970			
	Parents		Others				Parents		Others	
	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons			Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Education	74	49	72	45	65	80	85	69	85	62
Baby-sitting	34	21	31	13	28	16	17	13	18	9
Entertainment	21	15	23	8	19	22	27	20	21	17
Programs good generally	4	17	6	16	8	2	2	2	2	2
Stimulates socializing	2	—	1	—	1	2	3	—	2	2
Adult supervision necessary	4	2	10	4	6	2	2	1	2	1
Other, general	1	4	1	4	2	4	3	6	2	6
Base: 100% =	(858)	(292)	(781)	(419)	(2350)	(1592)	(589)	(159)	(607)	(237)

*Multiple response item: percentages do not necessarily add up to 100 percent.

Table 7.

"What do you think are some of the main disadvantages of television for children?"

*Disadvantages of television for children by parental status and general attitude (pro and con) toward television for children.**

Percent who mention:	1960				1960 Total	1970 Total	1970			
	Parents		Others				Parents		Others	
	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons			Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
See things they shouldn't:	46	55	48	64	51	52	48	55	50	64
Violence, horror	26	32	28	40	30	30	27	32	30	35
Crime, gangsters	7	8	11	13	10	8	6	10	9	12
Sex, suggestiveness, vulgarity	4	7	4	6	5	11	10	12	11	13
Smoking, drinking, dope	2	2	2	3	2	5	4	5	6	7
Adult themes	2	3	1	3	2	9	6	11	10	12
Harmful or sinful products advertised	1	1	1	—	1	1	1	—	1	1
Wrong values or moral codes	3	5	2	5	3	8	8	11	8	9
Other, general	7	11	8	9	8	2	3	5	2	5
Keeps them from doing things they should	34	51	31	41	36	30	29	40	26	34
Programs bad, general	10	9	8	13	10	2	2	6	2	3
Other, program content	3	9	2	6	4	6	7	10	5	6
Physical harm	3	7	4	8	5	5	3	4	5	7
Advertising too effective	2	3	1	—	1	2	3	3	2	3
Other	2	3	1	3	2	5	6	5	5	3
Base: 100 percent =	(858)	(292)	(781)	(419)	(2350)	(1583)	(586)	(157)	(604)	(236)

*Multiple response item: percentages do not necessarily add up to 100 percent.

television does not tend to favor one faction over another in such a way as to suggest a partisan political influence during a campaign, or even to discriminate among the social groups of which the population is composed. To an amazing degree, the perceived effects of television's political coverage are spread evenly among the public."

In summary, he says: "The high assessment of television in its journalistic role that has been shown in this chapter certainly represents a general public endorsement, all the more resounding since it occurs at a time when TV news is under attack.

"Clearly, this part of television's content has largely been exempted from the trend toward a lower public esteem for the medium as a whole. But the vote is by no means unanimous. TV news presentation is not free of the suspicion of bias that the American public accords to tell all the mass media; and while the improvements in the technology of rapid worldwide coverage of daily events may be roundly applauded, there are those who would prefer less emphasis on the unpleasant and disturbing national conflicts."

These presumably would be older viewers, for in another section the study found age to be the great differentiator of views about social strife such as riots, street protests, race problems and campus unrest. "The young applaud what the old condemn in what would seem to be expressions about the world at large, attributed to television only as the bearer of bad tidings," Dr. Bower observes.

Age also figured in one of the major changes found in viewing patterns in 1970. Ten years earlier, the heaviest viewing had been found among teenagers; in 1970, teenagers watched less than any of the other age groups. They also were the only age group that failed to watch more in 1970 than their counterparts did in 1960. In itself the decline was not considered large—from 26.25 median hours per week in 1960 to 25.33 in 1970—but in a broader context, Dr. Bower suggests, it could be huge.

The 1970 dip might be a transitory one, he says, with the teenagers increasing their viewing as they grow older, as viewers who were 28 or 29 in 1970 watched more than those 18 or 19 in 1960. "But," Dr. Bower cautions, "if it happens to be a way of life that will endure as the generation ages," the uptrend of TV viewing is threatened.

Among other changes found in 1970:

- Where 1960 viewers preferred regular series to specials (49% to 32%), 1970's preferred specials (44%) to series (36%).
- Despite a somewhat declining esteem for TV as a whole, viewers found more specific programs to applaud. On average, the

What They Said and What They Saw

The Bureau of Social Science Research's special study in Minneapolis-St. Paul, made in conjunction with its national study, confirmed again what many already knew: Viewers don't always watch what they say they want to see on television.

With the cooperation of the American Research Bureau, the researchers interviewed some Minnesotans who had previously kept ARB diaries, and then compared what they said with what they had watched. One conclusion: "The people who say they usually watch television to learn something do watch news and information programming more than others, but only a little bit more. Those who feel there is not enough 'food for thought' on television watch as many entertainment shows as the rest of the viewers. Those who want television stations to concentrate on information programs spend only slightly more time watching such programs than those who want the 'best entertainment', despite the fact that a great deal of informative fare is available in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area for those who could just switch the dial to another channel."

The researchers also rated respondents on a "culture scale" and examined their viewing in that context; the "high-culture" people, it turned out, "watched television somewhat less than those who scored lower; when they did watch, their viewing was distributed among program types in almost precisely the same way as the low-culture scorers, hardly a hair's breadth between them except in the news [higher viewing] and sports [lower] categories."

proportion of all programs rated "extremely enjoyable" rose from 44% in 1960 to 50% in 1970. In addition, or perhaps as a factor in that increase, Dr. Bower reports that 70% of the viewers said they thought there were more "different kinds of programs" in 1970, giving them a broader range to choose from.

As for changes in television itself, reaction was overwhelmingly favorable (55% had only favorable things to say, as opposed to 16% who were solely unfavorable, with the rest neutral, balanced or in the no-answer category).

Generally they felt neutral about 10-year changes in sports programs and movies, were critical on such morality questions as sex, nudity and vulgarity (10%) and on violence (4%), which they often linked with news, and were favorable toward changes perceived in general entertainment (19%), technical advances such as color and increased numbers of stations (23%) and, most of all, changes in news and information (33%).

"Live coverage of national events, educational television, more

channels, television by satellite and longer news programs are all viewed as changes for the better by 70% or more of the sample," Dr. Bower writes. "At the other end, talk shows, fewer westerns and live coverage of civil disruptions *are* approved by only about a third."

Noting that coverage of space shots and other national events ranked at the top of changes rated for the better, while coverage of riots and protests ranked at the bottom, Dr. Bower assumes that in these cases "people are responding to the message at least as much as to the medium, probably it is the space effort people like and the riots they dislike."

Dr. Bower also cautions that it should not be assumed that "the American television audience has changed in 10 years from a population of entertainment fans to a population of news hawks." Entertainment, he notes, still dominates TV fare and commands most of the viewer's time.

"But," he continues, "there is apparently a general shift in people's perception of what television is and what it means to them, and the new focus on the news and information content of television has undoubtedly altered people's views about various other aspects of the medium's role—from how it affects the 12-year-old to whether it is a benign or malevolent force in society." More than that, he concludes, "the journalistic emphasis may have introduced important new criteria by which TV will be judged in the future."

THE NEW ETHNIC HUMOR

Robert J. Donovan

When Kenneth S. Lynn, now a history professor at Johns Hopkins University, compiled in 1958 "The Comic Tradition in America: An Anthology in American Humor," he observed in the foreword:

"... in the 20th century every strain of American humor has had its flavor diluted by the mass media. The end product is of course, television wherein the jokes of the Negro, the Jew, the Irishman and the frontiersman have all been suburbanized into what may very well be the most pallid vernacular humor in history."

Robert J. Donovan is former head of the Washington news bureau of the *Los Angeles Times* and now is an associate editor of the *Times*, based in Washington. This article appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 10, 1972. Copyright 1972, *Los Angeles Times*. Reprinted by permission.

Recently, as he explained in an interview the other day, Lynn has changed his mind.

"Archie Bunker represents a tremendous shift in popular humor," he said. "You will notice this effect in all sorts of new programs imitative of Archie Bunker.

"Take the new program 'Bridget Loves Bernie'. What it is is 'Abie's Irish Rose' brought up to date. Irish and Jewish people confront one another, so that we seem to be moving into a new phase. There is a kind of new consciousness of ethnic groups. Michael Novak helped stimulate it in his 'The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics', and there has been all this talk about the ethnics going to vote for Nixon and so on. [Ed. Note: "Bridget Loves Bernie" has been cancelled.]

"It has had an effect on American humor, which is to make us aware of the comic resources of national groups.

"The Archie Bunker program is quite fascinating. We were through, in the 60s, a decade of tremendous political education in this country. The charge of racism was often made, and a lot of white people really were affected by this. They began to take seriously the charge that we were a racist society. Out of concern for prejudices they refused to refer to Negroes as Negroes because they themselves wanted to be called blacks.

"People were very sensitive about this, but at the same time it became very inhibiting. We lost the power to criticize minority groups. But when the Archie Bunker program became one of the most popular on TV, we found that through humor we could begin to get certain things off our chests, express our prejudices.

"I think it is a good thing. Though it was right of us to become more sensitive about social and racial conditions in the '60s, we were in danger of becoming more hypocritical. We concealed how we felt about certain things. Humor enables you to say certain things and only partly mean them.

"I think this new wave of ethnic humor introduces a certain new honesty into the American dialogue.

"I also think it is a very early indication of the political mood of the country, which McGovern has read very badly. This ethnic humor has been an indication of the conservative mood of the country and the preference for the status quo rather than for change."

Instead of listening to advisers who told him that the people want to break with the past and strike out for new shores to find new solutions to unresolved questions, McGovern should have listened to Archie Bunker, Lynn said.

"Archie's humor was an early indication that the country isn't

in an innovative, experimental mood, and if McGovern's people had listened to Archie Bunker, they would have known that. American humor has been a barometer of the national mood and this is no exception."

The 49-year-old Lynn, who holds a Ph.D. from Harvard where he was formerly an English professor, is the author of "Mark Twain and Southwestern Humor" and "The Dream of Success: A Study of Modern American Imagination." He looks so much like President Kennedy it is downright astounding. In fact he was once mistaken for Kennedy in Boston and has encountered scores of people at home and abroad who have asked if he is a member of the Kennedy family. Even his manner is reminiscent of the late President in his most urbane moods.

"TV is becoming a much better vehicle for American humor because it is more open now," Lynn said. "Bill Cosby has had a tremendous effect in making millions of Americans see black people as human beings with problems like other people.

"Amos and Andy became a stereotype. Then when the civil rights movement got started they were out—we couldn't deal with that kind of black humor without seeming anti-NAACP. But now Bill Cosby in his droll way has enabled us to laugh at black people—and with them—in a way that has made black humor legitimate again.

"Amos and Andy's humor was not intentionally demeaning, but they did reinforce certain cliches about Negro stupidity. The fact that Andy and the 'Kingfish' would misuse big words did reinforce the impression about innate inferiority, so, though their humor was not vicious, it underscored certain vicious attributions. Actually, I thought Amos and Andy pretty funny.

"Just why there isn't more written humor today I don't know. It may be that Thurber and E.B. White and such writers are dead or retired, or whatever. I suppose Philip Roth is a humorous writer. But actually, although I thought the early chapters of 'Portnoy's Complaint' hilarious, I find 'Our Gang' and 'The Breast' distasteful.

"Writers now wouldn't compare with the 19th century or early 20th century humorists. I don't see anyone as funny as Benchley, Thurber or Ring Lardner. Maybe that's the reason the *New Yorker* magazine has become so serious. All the good writers are now serious.

"I find an awful lot of political humor so scurrilous it is unpleasant. I am not a particular admirer of Johnson or Nixon, but 'McBird' and all that black humor of the Vietnam war I find savage. One of the casualties of the Vietnam war is Mort Sahl, the best of the nightclub humorists. Now he is totally unfunny.

“I really admire political cartooning. We have a proliferation of new cartoonists. Conrad is probably the best. Oliphant is very good. They are doing all kinds of interesting things—very sophisticated.”

Among the recent Presidents Lynn thought Lyndon B. Johnson possessed typical American humor because so much of it was outrageous.

“Johnson,” he said, “was given to tremendous hyperbole. His humor was larger than life.

“Nixon is unbelievable, the things he says. There was that story about his recent meeting with Henry Kissinger at San Clemente. They met all day and at the end of the day Kissinger was going in to Los Angeles. Seeing him off, Nixon said, ‘Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do’. Utterly corny cliché remarks. Nixon is the first President in a long time not to have either wit or humor.

“In the 1952 campaign Adlai Stevenson’s humor went against him. That was a very discouraging thing about American life in the years of the cold war: We regarded humor in a political leader as somehow a deficiency. One of the nice things about the Kennedy victory in 1960 was that a man with a sense of humor was in the White House.

“The [1972] campaign strikes me as utterly humorless. I find McGovern as humorless as Nixon. I wonder, in fact, if it isn’t the most humorless campaign in American history?”

NEWSPAPERS

IS ANYTHING UNPRINTABLE?

Lee H. Smith

When Michael McClure’s play, *The Beard*, opened in New York in late 1967, the daily reviews were unanimous on two points. They didn’t like the play very much and they didn’t want to talk about it very much. The reason for the latter seems clear. The play, a fanciful

Lee H. Smith studied the standard of editing for “family” consumption while an associate editor at *Newsweek*, specializing in the coverage of the news media. His Spring, 1968 article is used here with permission of *Columbia Journalism Review*.

sex duel between Jean Harlow and Billy the Kid not only contained a good deal of verbal obscenity, it also ended in one of the most startling scenes ever staged. *The New York Times* described that finale as “a highly publicized sexual act” (referring, somewhat cryptically, to the notoriety the play had received in San Francisco). The *Daily News* called it “an unorthodox sex act.” The *New York Post* glided over it as “a sexual act that can’t be described in a family newspaper.” What the reviews couldn’t say—or wouldn’t say—was what the fuss was all about: an act of cunnilingus.

For better or for worse, American society has become increasingly concerned with its sex life and more and more eager to talk about it in public. The taboos against strong language and references to sex are vanishing with such staggering speed that it is often hard to remember what last year’s taboos were. Two years ago, the movie *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* created a stir when Richard Burton said “hump the hostess.” Today, the film *In Cold Blood* uses much earthier language and no one bothers to mention it. Norman Mailer was an iconoclast when he wrote the verb “fug” in *The Naked and The Dead*. In his latest novel, *Why Are We In Vietnam?*, he uses much more explicit obscenities much more often and hardly anyone is surprised.

Candor is not restricted to the arts. Women hem their skirts well above their knees and trot off to cocktail parties where “The Pill” has replaced breastfeeding versus bottlefeeding as the favorite topic of conversation. Homosexuals have emerged from the shadows to parade in front of the White House and the Pentagon to demand equality, including the right to serve in the armed forces. August state legislatures openly debate the pros and cons of relaxing the laws for abortion—a word that used to be anathema almost everywhere. Schools across the country are beginning to feel the pressure to provide sex education, even for grammar school pupils.

The sexual revolution is real enough. For responsible newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations that presents a problem: How can they report the revolution without compromising their standards? Some publications, of course, have a vested interest in cheering the revolution on. Magazines such as *Playboy* and its female counterpart, *Cosmopolitan*, often seem to be leading the way. But many more editors seem to be thoroughly confused. They want to keep up with what’s happening but they aren’t quite certain how to do it. More and more editors are faced with the problem of separating what is pertinent from what is simply prurient and trying to define the line between good reporting and bad taste. Some publications have been extremely bold, others far too reticent. And sur-

prisingly, television—usually thought of as the meekest of the media—may be on its way to establishing a standard that accepts progress and yet maintains good taste; it may help the so-called “family” publications decide what can be said and what cannot.

Government censorship doesn’t offer much guidance. The Supreme Court in recent years has decided it will allow just about anything short of what it considers hard-core pornography or (in the case of Ralph Ginzburg’s conviction) hard-sell titillation—boundaries most editors have no intention of approaching. A few publications are exploring and exploiting that frontier, most recently the growing band of underground newspapers scattered in hippie enclaves from New York’s East Village to San Francisco’s Haight Ashbury district. The *East Village Other*, one of the most successful undergrounders, recently displayed, for example, a somewhat fuzzy photograph of what appeared to be an act of homosexual fellatio. And in the classified pages anyone can put his sexual appetites on the block. One ad in the same issue ran: “Attention!!! Dominant male wishes to meet docile female, gay or straight. We will have a whipping good time.” As a result of such frankness, the Brooklyn District Attorney’s office seized 1000 copies of the paper and the editors of *EVO* are going to have to defend their candor in court.

The older *Village Voice*, which straddles the underground and the Establishment, draws the line at peddling perversion in its classifieds. “If you allow those,” says editor Daniel Wolf, “suddenly you discover you’re running an adjunct to Bellevue.” But by most standards the *Voice* is unabashedly frank. “We have always been more open than most papers,” observes Wolf. The *Voice* has used the common four-letter words freely for years. Lately the *Voice* has started running front-on photographs of nudes, collected by *Voice* photographers making the rounds of Greenwich Village dances and art shows. “We didn’t sit around and discuss it,” says Wolf. “We had the pictures and we just said ‘what the hell’ and shoved them in.”

At other publications such decisions are momentous, even when an editor knows he is reaching a limited, sophisticated, and well-educated audience. Robert Manning, editor of *The Atlantic*, recalls pondering over a reportorial piece on Harlem in which the writer quoted a young boy sticking his head out the window and shouting “Fuck you, white cop.” Says Manning: “I looked at it, stared at it, and finally decided the only way to convey the full gut of it was to use it. The idea that a Negro boy of four, five, or six was already conditioned to that extent seemed to me to be something worth conveying. Dots would have undercut the impact.”

Manning declines to allow four-letter words in fiction, but Willie Morris, editor of *Harper's*, says he will permit four-letter words in fiction or nonfiction when they are used by established authors. "This is something we would never do lightly," says Morris, "but times have changed. American readers are now infinitely more sophisticated than at any other time and they even demand more of the language than at any other time." Morris turned over the entire March issue of the magazine to Norman Mailer—an act that would make most editors shudder—for his journalistic report, "The Steps of the Pentagon." The report is witty, moving, and, in part, scatological. [Editor's Note: Morris was fired from *Harper's* in early 1971 and seven editors quit in support. But contrary to popular opinion, the disagreement did not arise solely from his turning over the entire March issue, 48,000 words, to Mailer for a rebuttal to Women's Liberation spiced with four-letter words. It was, said *Saturday Review*, caused more by a philosophical argument over "how to edit an intellectual magazine in today's market."]

Intellectual monthlies such as *Harper's* and *The Atlantic* can proceed rather boldly without worrying about offending large groups of readers. Candor becomes a real problem for general circulation newspapers and magazines that reach mass audiences. Advertising departments are particularly nervous. They diligently "ink in" clothes on unclad starlets in movie ads and edit out the explicit language underneath. When the Yugoslav film *Love Affair—Or The Case of the Missing Switchboard Operator* opened in New York in February the *Times* and the *Post* were sent an ad displaying a nude woman lying face down on a bed. Both newspapers "draped" a towel over her and the *Post* added a brassiere as well. This cover-up seemed reasonable enough. The ad was nothing but a cheap come-on.

Often, however, advertising departments are over-zealous. When the Yale University School of Drama opened its season last fall, the school routinely sent out an ad that listed the plays, including John Ford's seventeenth-century tragedy *'Tis Pity She's A Whore*. The *New Haven Register* reformed the lady somewhat and changed the title to *'Tis Pity She's Bad*. The *Hartford Courant* turned her into a mystery woman by truncating the title to read *'Tis Pity She's*. Donald Spargo, advertising director for the *Register*, explained that the wording of the ad was read to him over the phone and that if he had realized it was a title, he probably wouldn't have touched it. But Sidney Kaplan, advertising manager for the *Courant*, stood fast. "We just didn't run it period," he snapped. "We try to run a clean newspaper."

The New York Times Book Review recently became alarmed that a deluge of ads for marriage manuals and other non-fiction works dealing with sex was giving the book review a bad image. As a result, the *Times* decided to close the *Review*, probably the country's major display case for publishers, to all non-fiction sex books—the important as well as the trivial and the titillating.

Editors are similarly fearful that the wrong word or picture is going to bring them reprisals from their readership. Over the past twenty years or so they have been slowly and cautiously scratching out such euphemisms as “social disease,” “illegal operation,” and “assault” and penciling in the more specific “syphilis,” “abortion,” and “rape.” In some cases they have moved boldly. *Newsweek* magazine put a partly nude Jane Fonda on its cover to illustrate its special report on “The Permissive Society.” *Life* magazine ran an excerpt from *The Naked Ape* in which British zoologist Desmond Morris examines man as a primate. The first paragraph of the excerpt included the sentence: “He [man] is proud that he has the biggest brain of all the primates but attempts to conceal the fact that he also has the biggest penis, preferring to accord this honor falsely to the mighty gorilla.” (That same observation was to cause a considerable amount of trouble for other publications later.)

Some newspapers have been equally outspoken. Unfortunately, one of the best of them is now dead: the *New York Herald Tribune*. When Dr. William H. Masters and Mrs. Virginia Johnson published *Human Sexual Response*, a physiological study of the sexual act, in 1966, the *Herald Tribune* science editor, Earl Ubell, was unabashed in his summary and consequently helped dispel some disturbing myths about sexual performance. In paraphrasing the book's conclusions Ubell included such paragraphs as: “Neither the size of the male sex organ, the penis, nor that of its corresponding anatomical part in the female, the clitoris, has any relation to the adequacy of the man or woman as a sex partner.”

The New York Times was more reticent, for which the *Times* is now apologetic. “I think we were wrong,” says *Times* managing editor E. Clifton Daniel. “This was a serious work and it would have been perfectly acceptable to quote words such as penis and clitoris.”

The *Times* has become more candid recently and such sensitive topics as homosexuality are reported liberally. And in its recent series on the drug-obsessed society the *Times* quoted a girl who said she took amphetamines to prolong her sexual activities. “I once stayed in bed for three days with a man,” the girl was quoted as saying, “taking pills to keep going and smoking pot to enjoy myself.”

Still, the *Times* proceeds cautiously. When theater critic Clive Barnes reviewed *The Beard* he first wrote the word “cunnilingus.” Metropolitan news editor Arthur Gelb asked him to take the word out: “It wasn’t a big argument but at this time I just don’t think we should use it. That might not be the case a month from now.”

Other newspapers, perhaps a majority, are much more conservative. A former reporter on one of the largest papers in upstate New York says her movie reviews were consistently bowdlerized. In discussing *A Guide for the Married Man* she tried to convey the tone of the film by referring to “bouncing bosoms and fannies.” The phrase was softened to read “flouncing females.” In outlining the plot of *The Family Way* she said of the young bride: “After six weeks of marriage she was still a virgin.” The desk changed it to read: “The marriage was not consummated”—a throwback to 1953 when the word “virgin” made *The Moon Is Blue* a “dirty” movie.

Usually, such editing is carried out quietly. But in January 1968 two of the nation’s most influential publications—*The Chicago Tribune* and *The Washington Post*—were caught editing in public. The two papers decided to recall some 1.7 million copies of *Book World*, the Sunday book review supplement they have published jointly since last September, when they spotted a page-one review they found offensive.

Peter Farb, a *New Yorker* who writes science books for laymen, reviewed Morris’s *The Naked Ape* and paraphrased some of the book’s conclusions, including: “The human male and not the gorilla possesses the largest penis of all primates; the human’s preferred face-to-face mating is due to the frontal position of sexual signaling devices.”

In New York, *Book World*’s editor, Byron Dobell, a former managing editor of *Esquire* magazine, approved the review and dispatched it to be printed for the *Post* in Philadelphia and to Chicago to be printed for the *Tribune*. *Tribune* editor W.D. Maxwell and publisher J. Howard Wood picked up copies from an early press run and apparently carried them off to the *Tribune* board of directors’ meeting in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Five days before the book review was scheduled to appear, Maxwell put in an urgent call to Thomas Furlong, managing editor in charge of features. Maxwell’s order was to kill the review. Some 3,000 copies had already been sent to bookstores, libraries, and publishers, but the *Tribune* managed to collect more than a million copies that had been sent to distributors or were still in the plant. The page-one review was killed and a review that was scheduled to have run the following week was

substituted. (Estimates of the cost of the kill ranged from \$30,000 to \$100,000.) The *Post* did not kill the review but did strike out the lines referring to penis from its 500,000 copies. (The *Post* had been much bolder in 1966 when it ran Ubell's review of *Human Sexual Response*.)

The *Tribune's* kill seemed to be consistent with Maxwell's policy. The story goes that in 1961 he was given a copy of *The Carpetbaggers* by a well-meaning friend who thought it was a Reconstruction Novel. Maxwell was so shocked that he ordered the book eliminated from the *Tribune's* best-seller list and, to exclude similar works, he changed the name of the section to "Among the Best-Sellers." *Tribune* readers were thus "protected" from a significant—if depressing—scrap of sociology: The American public buys a lot of trash.

Because it does so much of its editing in public—"bleeping out" of offensive words—television often seems to be the most cautious of the media. But lately the bleeps have been fading and television has been growing much bolder. Five years ago, David Susskind invited a group of panelists that included *Playboy* editor and publisher Hugh Hefner and psychologist Dr. Albert Ellis to discuss "The Sexual Revolution in America." The show was taped but Bennett Korn, then a vice president of WNEW, refused to let it go on the air. Last year Susskind taped an even more delicate discussion, "Homosexuality: Perversion or Sickness?", with two psychiatrists and Dick Leitsch, president of the homosexual Mattachine Society. The show was broadcast to thirty cities across the country without objection from station managements.

Earl Ubell, who is now science editor for WCBS-TV, believes that he has been just as frank on television as he was on the *Herald Tribune* and that his only restraint is to make certain he delivers his information on sex soberly with no hint of a snicker or a raised eyebrow. And recently, Johnny Carson demonstrated that even a mass audience of network viewers will accept a serious discussion of sex. Carson interviewed Desmond Morris on *The Tonight Show* and needled *The Chicago Tribune*. "You talked about his [man's] penis," Carson said to Morris. "And they took that out of the paper in Chicago, because it would offend people. . . . And I don't understand it, in this day and age, that you could not use that in a family newspaper." No bleep. No outraged phone calls to local television stations. Ernest Lee Jahncke Jr., NBC's vice president for standards

and practices, explains why the network didn't bleep the reference. "This wasn't a lot of quipping and kidding around," he says. "It was a serious discussion, an adult discussion."

Television seems to be developing an "adult" standard for coping with the problem of sexual candor. Newspapers and many magazines persist in feeling inhibited by "family" standards. Even *The Wall Street Journal*—hardly a publication one passes on to the children—falls back on this excuse. When Edmund Fuller reviewed Mailer's *Why Are We in Vietnam?* for the *Journal* last fall he said: "Whether or not this newspaper is a family one depends, we suppose, on the family. But it is enough of one that we are restricted from offering you a slice of this pungent literary haggis for your own revulsion." [Editor's Note: The *Washington Post* once ran a news story, editorial and cartoon about a controversy over a four-letter word but never revealed directly or indirectly what word was at issue. A quote from the editorial:

People who propose to take sides on the titanic scandal at McKinley High School over the classroom use of an essay entitled *The Case for Retiring Our Most Overworked Four-Letter Word* might be well advised to read the essay. Most of them, we surmise, will find it instructive (though perhaps not edifying), provocative, amusing, rather sensible and slightly shocking—but not dirty, obscene or pornographic within any reasonable meaning of those painfully overworked terms.]

The premise that mass publications must be edited for "families" always seems to ignore the fact that families are growing up. Also, it begs the question of why publications should be edited for the most innocent reader. Most readers (if Marshall McLuhan is right, all readers) are adults and want to be written to as adults. Furthermore, the "family" standard is an unprofessional one that isn't applied to other areas of coverage. Any correspondent who filed from Saigon that he is witnessing a war that can't be talked about in a family newspaper would be hastily recalled.

This does not mean that editors should discard good taste and indulge themselves in titillation and gratuitous obscenity. On the contrary, it means that they should use good taste as a standard—their own good taste—and not waste their time trying to anticipate the most hysterical reaction of the most sensitive reader. The story of the candid society is too big to be ignored and from all indications it will run for a long time.

WOMEN'S PAGES IN THE 1970S

Zena Beth Guenin

Ben Bagdikian's observation—"Most papers still look as though they are edited on the social assumptions of the 1940's and 1950's"—fits the women's pages of many newspapers. Commentators on contemporary society portray the American woman as an individual changing her outlook, life style and image of self, but the changing woman may be reading a paper that views her as a bucolically contented simpleton whose "most pressing questions are whether the decorations for the Beaver Lodge party should be white and gold or green and pink. . . ."

Women's pages that operate on a stock formula of society, clubs, decorating, furniture, food, cooking, children and sewing represent an information failure obvious to their readers and often to the women who produce them. Within that limited field of coverage, such sections present shallow reporting—reflecting fashion in terms of the offerings of the newspaper's top advertisers, not discussing the high cost and poor quality of clothing; featuring cute layouts on a kindergarten party, not outlining the lack of day-care centers; and, in a surprisingly large number of dailies, reporting the total trivia of local women's clubs as if it were news.

Criticism of women's sections has been appearing in magazines, journals and reviews, and the current interest in this part of American newspapers is obviously linked to the liberation movement. In 1970, the late Maggie Savoy, then women's editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, explained the liberation movement to the nation's male editors. In her article in the American Society of Newspaper Editors' *Bulletin*, she suggested that because editors have "been reading the sports pages" (i.e., ignoring the women's pages), the change in interests of American women has gone unnoticed by editors.

Whether they're called Style, Family, Today, View or Women, the pages that could cover those facets of living that concern everyone—health, habitat, and, yes, happiness—are known both within the industry and to readers as the women's pages. If, as Nicholas von Hoffman, columnist for the Style section of the *Washington Post*,

Zena Beth Guenin has been women's editor and society editor of the Missoula (Mont.) *Missoulian* and home-living editor of the Albuquerque (N.M.) *Journal*. She teaches reporting at California State University, Northridge, where she also advises the daily newspaper. This article appeared in the *Montana Journalism Review*, 1973, which has granted permission to reprint. Footnotes have been deleted.

says, "people read the women's pages far more than the editorial pages," then why are the women's departments of many newspapers still considered the backwater of the newsroom, scorned not just by management but often by the very women who work in women's news? Why do young women in journalism schools say, as I once said, they'll do anything to break into the newspaper business but "I'll be damned if I'll get stuck in 'soc,'" only to find they may be damned if they don't? The women's department may be the only one where they can get work, regardless of their credentials, training, experience or potential.

First-rate women's sections do exist and some were doing a top reporting job long before the theme of women's liberation was heard. And there have been women who strived for excellence despite indifference from management. "There have been islands of creativity all around—but the problem is that these did not turn out to be major theme sections, due of course to a lack of interest and awareness by people on the publisher-top editor level," Jean Taylor, women's editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, has said.

Critics within and outside women's departments often blame the editors and publishers for the condition of women's departments that use a marshmallow approach to stories closest to the genuine interests of readers. Management's tendency to ignore the women's page is partially responsible for its state of disrepair. "The afterthought of the managing editor" is how von Hoffman describes the women's page. Ms. Taylor says women's sections suffer from "lack of affection in high places. We are unloved. We are the pea under the publisher's pillow. When we come down the street on this side, the American Society of Newspaper Editors crosses to the other. . . ."

In the summary of a 1969 survey of women's and managing editors' opinions about women's pages, it was reported that "on some papers the old-fashioned women's pages are retained by the insistence of higher authority. . . ." Colleen Dishon, editor and president of Features and News, Chicago, and former women's editor of the *Chicago Daily News* and the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, lists "management's need to cling to the impossible ideal woman" and "top editors' needs to be accepted socially in their own communities" as reasons for the reluctance to change women's pages. One wonders just how many women's page editors, if given a chance to be publicly honest, could chronicle tales of stories written on the behest of not just the editor but more particularly a publisher—or, even more powerful in some cases, a publisher's wife.

Pressure from the top joins forces with pressure from another

very viable power within a newspaper, the advertising department. Edwin Diamond, a former editor of *Newsweek*, realistically notes, in speaking about women's pages, that newspapers are a business and "the law of business is the law of commerce, which is maximized profits and minimized expenses—and if you do get good things, it's because there are a few media barons who operate on the principle of 'noblesse oblige.'"

Attitudes of some newspapermen toward women in journalism must be added to the list of pressures to oppose change. Those attitudes are enough to stoke the fires of the liberation movement for decades. "I have yet to encounter a woman as versatile as a man in the reporting business," an editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* is quoted as saying, adding that it might be his own fault "for not experimenting more with women." Are women so oddly incompetent that their assignment to news stories must be an experiment? "Women just don't have the same flexibility in some areas," says James Hoge, editor of the *Chicago Sun-Times*. Such opinions are not relegated only to metro dailies with mass circulations. "As soon as this Vietnam war is over," grumbled the editor of a Montana daily, "I'm going to get all these goddamn women out of here." Logic cringes.

Credulity was stretched to its furthest limits by the "official, considered response" of the Associated Press Managing Editors to an article written by women journalists at the University of Iowa about the APME's *Guidelines*, which the young women considered to be "blatantly sexist." The reply, written by Edward M. Miller, *Guidelines*' editor and a retired editor of the *Portland Oregonian*, was enough to send any woman journalist off to the nearest bar. He said, "Generally speaking, women are either uncomfortable or unsuccessful in the executive role because of the difficulties they encounter in divorcing their personal feelings and ambitions from the job at hand. This leads to unhappy subordinates and inefficient production." Are men, "generally speaking," always cool and detached from their jobs? Innocent of having any personal feelings about their employers, their fellow workers, and their own tasks? And, honestly, should ambition be "divorced" from professional performance? Of course, the answer is no. The detached person goes robot-like through life and if newsmen and newswomen are anything, they certainly are not robots.

Miller says "women become excellent copy editors. They are patient, careful, cheerful and the repetitive nature of the work does not seem to bother them." But other editors do not share that view. Some, such as *Chicago Today*'s copy desk chief, Cliff Bridwell, stage

an absolute lockout against women. He reportedly "won't allow the female species to work on his desk, presumably because he had one once and didn't like the experience."

On the copy desk of an Albuquerque newspaper is a woman who edited a paper in the East and was bureau chief with a staff of three for another paper before moving to the Southwest, bringing her rich journalism experience with her. Last year, after several years on the rim, she was allowed to sit in the slot to prepare page schedules and cull wires for possible page-one stories—but she must get up when the slotman comes in. One day a week, she is "allowed" to "work the line," which means she goes to the backshop to direct the make-up of dummied pages. The irony of her situation is underscored by the fact that she fills her spare time by stringing for the *New York Times* and *Time* magazine, credentials that would qualify any man for an executive position. But the managing editor, after all, is a man—with a background of newspaper experience in Alamosa, Colo.

Despite a lockout on some desks and discrimination on others, some editors report they enthusiastically seek women for the copy desk. In the *ASNE Bulletin* in 1970, one editor said women "keep up with the men in speed, accuracy and interest—including creative approaches to handling news and in making judgments." Another commented, "We've been so pleased that we're considering expanding it [the use of women as copy editors] somewhat." Such enthusiasm is chillingly dampened when one realizes the sexist overtones—the surprise exhibited by men that women can do a good job.

Margot Sherman, senior vice-president and a director of the McCann-Erickson advertising agency, accurately describes the problems of many women in the media: "Even the trained woman comes up against such stereotypes as 'Women are better at monotonous jobs. . . .' Probably what is being said is you can get better-type women than men at the same salary, and what is meant is that they are cheaper."

City editors often have narrow attitudes about women, and those women who reach top reporting positions usually have had to be better than their male peers. Editors have been known to ignore stories about women and their political or social activism or encourage tips from the women's department, give the story to a male reporter and let the "ladies" be content with handouts. There are flocks of editors and reporters who view all women in the news business in that jocular, benevolent way that has helped inspire the contemporary use of the term "male chauvinist."

Discriminatory attitudes may be fertilized by fear that perhaps

the gals aren't just kidding about equality. The result is a "yuck-yuck" attitude about the new movement toward full and equal rights for women. The prestigious *Los Angeles Times* and the even more monolithic Associated Press couldn't resist noting that the vote for the constitutional amendment to guarantee women's rights would be on "leap year day"—noted by AP in the second graph of its story but headlined by the *Times*: "Women's Rights Vote Due On Leap Year Day." One can hear the snickers.

Women's editors who want to change the content or the format of their sections need the support of management and that is a commodity desperately hard for some women's editors to acquire. Ms. Dishon notes that women often do not have "the necessary clout with management" to initiate change. Ms. Savoy challenged male editors in her 1970 article "to take a bold peek at your women's sections. Do you duck the responsibility of helping your women's editor achieve excellence for her 51 per cent of your readership? Or do you just listen to one, two or a dozen irate society women and sigh, 'Don't rock the boat?'"

One reason newspapers isolate their women's staff by putting the department in a corner or down the hall from the photo lab may be the whole thing can be tidily isolated mentally too. It's easier for an editor to ignore the section and trust the competence of the women he has hired to keep quietly working within the prescribed format, catching their own errors, digging up story leads, fighting the layout battles with the printers, writing heads that fit—to do more, actually, than most city-side personnel and sometimes with less salary.

Is the accusation that women journalists receive less salary than their male counterparts a valid charge, or is it simply a tale of woe that managing editors are beginning to hear and skillfully ignore? A woman reporter at the *Washington Post* found that "At least 27 papers where the American Newspaper Guild has contracts pay society or women's news reporters less than other reporters. The difference is as great as \$60 per week." And since many non-Guild newspapers do not meet Guild pay scales, it may well be that many women's editors receive slim paychecks in addition to their other problems.

Responsibility for the content of women's pages or for the status of women on newspapers cannot be placed solely with male editors and management. There are women's editors who have grown up in the stock society mold and couldn't break away from it any more than the traditionalist Edward M. Miller of *Guidelines* fame (or infamy) could be wrenched away from his convictions about "Our

Friend on High," creating such markedly unchangeable differences between women and men that they carry right through to the keys of a typewriter and the end of a copy pencil.

The female traditionalists in the women's department (I like to think of them as the "white glove brigade") are those who are as engrossed in printing a full social calendar as the sports desk is in making sure all the box scores are run. Such women's editors are steadfast in their devotion to the local club-social circle to the detriment of the majority of their readers. They fit their pages to the interests of a special (and usually moneyed) few and provide a steady source of scrapbook filler for the clubs they slavishly chronicle. Or they are so involved typing all the wedding and engagement stories, they haven't time to be relevant even if they desired to be.

It may be true in some instances, as suggested by Ponchitta Pierce to a Penney-Missouri Awards audience, that a few women's editors "actually have little talent—either as editors or writers—but they have somehow landed the job. . . ."

No formula covers all attitudes of women in journalism just as there is no universal attitude among men. There are women like Joan Roesgen of the *Kingsport* (Tennessee) *Times-News* who says "women's editors are wallowing in relevance" because they are "having a hard time sorting out priorities." Roesgen says she's interested in getting her relevance in the general news columns rather than on the women's page. Such an attitude would inhibit rather than promote constructive change.

The basics of survival also might be one reason some women's sections don't change and don't challenge their readers. Unfortunate but true is the fact that though they are in the business of communication, most newspapers don't encourage internal feedback. Women on newspapers demonstrate the social-psychological theory that adherence to group norms is a function of the importance group membership holds for the individual. Although a women's editor may not be free or have the time and staff to produce the kind of journalism she would like to offer her readers, at least she is involved in the profession of newspapering and the importance that involvement holds for her may cause her to keep quiet, if maintenance of the status quo is what is expected by management.

Sadly enough, women often fulfill the "giddy gal" stereotype that some men expect. This bit of silliness came from an edition of *Editor & Publisher* under the headline "Oh deer—the gals edit quite a paper." The story, reprinted from the *Detroit News*, told how the male staffers of a small Michigan weekly left the paper to the women

while the “boys” went hunting. The “all-girl” issue was “well received” with “all deadlines met,” and the publisher said he was “not really surprised” because the women “on our staff are highly competent, very dedicated newspaper people.” The women couldn’t just do that highly competent job and let it speak for itself—they had to play the role of giggling girls by running “an eye-stopper of a picture layout on page one—leg shots of six members of the staff.” If, as Jean Taylor says, the real point of women’s liberation is to “get men to quit treating us as though we’re a bad joke,” then women will have to quit jumping at opportunities to parody themselves.

Although change in a newspaper, as in any social institution, may not come quickly enough for those who chafe under restricting, old-fashioned policies, attitudes toward women and the women’s section are changing. Some fine-looking responsible journalistic efforts appear on women’s pages in big and small newspapers around the nation. And some of the progress toward modern coverage of our rapid, mobile world has come from male publishers and editors. Noting readership surveys and predictably responsive to increased readership because it symbolizes an increase in advertising revenue, some publishers have initiated improvement in content and personnel in their women’s departments. Occasionally there exist those gem-like editors who realize the women back in the corner have the same potential and training for reporting as the fellows in the city room.

Working too are strong-willed and intelligent women’s editors, many with a background of city-wide experience, who approach their pages with a sense of professionalism and the goal of making their sections a relevant contribution to the newspaper.

The women’s department offers a place for the “horizontal” story, for the feature, the probing effort—ignored or handled slipshod city-side because of press of time or staff limitations. The boycott of women city-side on metro papers has, as noted in the *Chicago Journalism Review*, “caused one further development—some women now prefer writing women’s page news to city assignments because it deals with areas of increasing concern. . . .” The liberation movement, beset, as all embryonic revolutions are, with strife and in-fighting among factions, would have gone begging had it not been for the straight coverage given it, even in some highly conservative women’s sections.

Consumerism is one topic that newspapers have been forced to confront. It’s a shameful truth that it took a nonjournalist to prod

newspapers into a field they should have been covering. Nader is to consumerism what Steinem is to liberation. If it takes a national figure to move the press into areas where it long ago should have been involved, then we can only be grateful for those individuals. Editors would be wise to unleash the talents of their women's department on such stories because "the poorest solution to handling the new landslide of consumer-area stories is for the newsdesk to steal them. . . . It means women trained for years in food and shopping and housing and consumer fields are pushed aside."

The basic need—as many of us who have been involved in women's departments have realized for years—is for paper-wide communication and involvement, a fluid interdepartmental motion so ideas are exchanged and staff used on the stories that best suit their experience and interests. When something "new" comes into the field, editors have the hysterical tendency to seek someone "new" to handle the stories instead of reevaluating the talents of current writers. Women who could perform superbly in advocacy-reporting roles about nutrition, health, and merchandise quality control should not be overlooked and left to perform mechanically in the constricting fashion of the past. And the city-side reporter, when he spots and wants to do a feature removed from his routine, should not be thwarted because he thinks there's no place to take his idea or the story.

Critics of a new approach to women's news call it a "force fed" message of activism, but it doesn't have to be. I agree neither with the sneering comment about readers who are "merely performing the duties of a housewife" nor with the critic who says women's editors are "career-oriented" and "tend to forget the unliberated women . . . the masses of housewives . . . who are contemptuous and resentful of working wives. . . ." There is rancor here where none should be. Having seen service, so to speak, in both roles, I can honestly say that each can be both devastating and challenging and that neither is more difficult or more rewarding than the other. A women's editor with professional integrity can achieve an understanding balance in coverage, avoiding that kind of destructive bitterness.

The liberation movement has inspired a break-out of suppressed attitudes on a national level and has given women the courage to express openly the frustrations they have silently endured. Gloria Steinem, so coyly covered by the ASNE *Bulletin* with both a

“kitschy” with-kitten front-page photo and a beaming, full-page photo inside, may be causing the same newspaper editors who smiled as they read the *Bulletin* interview some headaches as their women’s department editors take Steinem’s cue and demand to be heard.

What, then, if women’s liberation succeeds? Will there actually be room in newspapers of the future for the women’s department? Ms. Taylor of the *Los Angeles Times* says if the women’s department were to disappear, “I could be a ‘people’ editor.” Her point is well-taken. With audiences receiving more and more of their hard news coverage from television, there should be more newspaper emphasis on “life-style” stories and involvement with the actualities and frustrations of modern living.

As for content, papers seeking change in their women’s sections will have to make some bold moves. I must agree with Nick Williams, retired editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, who says they are beautiful and beloved by those who know them but they should be banished. Gloria Steinem thinks space for bridal photos should be purchased just like advertising, and some papers have tried this procedure. She also suggests that if wedding photos are run, they should include the bridegroom. Having been exposed to small papers that use couple shots, I can’t agree with this at all. Brides do have an aura of loveliness about them (or enough netting to disguise most of the flaws) but bridegrooms—well, it may be reverse chauvinism—but they generally look uncomfortably stupid. Papers might sell fewer extra issues over the counter if such frivolity were dropped, but it is difficult to imagine any real loss in advertising revenue or in canceled subscriptions. A monthly tabloid of brides is another technique newspapers could employ.

As for the club events—the metro papers handle only those enormously influential groups (such as the ones to which the publisher’s wife belongs) or events of general interest—open-admission fundraising parties, shows and so on, local priorities have to be set, but it seems logical to hold the same standards for women’s club coverage as for men’s service groups. Let’s face it—women’s pages often have an antiquated “women are doing something” approach. It has been firmly established that women can accomplish positive things in their communities—coverage of their activities should not be chained into a club meeting-flower show format.

One of the main reasons Sue Hovik, former women’s editor of the *Minneapolis Star*, initiated a disposal of the women’s pages in

favor of wide-interest feature sections called Taste and Variety was to avoid the sexist treatment of club news. "If a club event or program is newsworthy, it should face the same criteria for publication—regardless of the sex of its members."

This change, from a section clearly labeled for women to one oriented to the problems and interests of living and entitled View or Style or some other "neuter" designation, is one route women's sections are taking. However, the "flag under which good stories appear" may be "incidental."

Critics and those involved in producing good sections stress content. Stylish appearance and a superficial nod to contemporary topics just won't reach the innovative goal. Diamond notes that "some [women's sections] are very impressive in the sense of big pictures, lots of white space, good heads and provocative stories. But it seems to me it's still some of the old Thunderbird wine in some new, French-labeled bottles. Is it really something new, or are we getting the same old segregated women's pages?"

Although the title may change with the direction, the need for a section involving women, both as writers and editors and as readers, is emphasized by most critics. At the A. J. Liebling Conference in New York in 1972, Ms. Steinem said she "has come back full circle in that I now feel the value of women's pages. They should cover all subjects, including men, from a point of view that is not being represented."

In an address to the 1972 Penney-Missouri Awards Conference, Molly Ivins, an editor of the *Texas Observer*, stridently advocated change but not abolition of women's sections. She suggested that the "cultural conditioning" that has produced the liberation-protested differences between men and women make women particularly able to communicate "because women have been forced to deal with people in the tightest pressure-cooker there is—the family." This "special ability to deal with people," she continued, can make women's pages "a forum, a center, a means of communication and discussion, a source of ideas and of perspective with warmth, with friendship, [with] kinship and with understanding."

And such sections, as a few already are, can be such a journalistic challenge to women (and to men) that no one who works on the women's page need feel the isolation of damnation—but rather the exhilaration of liberation.

THE ARTISTS SPEAK: HUMOR IS A MUST, "MESSAGE" IS SECONDARY

Donald Bremner

If there is a trend toward social relevance in the comic strips, some of its most obvious perpetrators are reluctant to admit it.

Strip creators readily confess to trying to get laughs. Some acknowledge a yen for fantasy and adventure, a bent for romance or just "soap opera" dramas stretched out in panels.

But political opinion? Social comment? The artists' almost universal judgment: It had better be funny—the heavy stuff should be left to the newspaper's editorial page.

"First and foremost we want to be funny, and if [we] can do it and still say something, fine," says Johnny Hart, whose prehistoric anteater, snake, dinosaur and assorted caveman types parody modern human failings in the strip *B. C.*, while the egocentric little ruler and his hapless subjects in the *Wizard of Id* frequently caricature world rulers.

"I don't try to lean on people or preach," says Russell Myers, creator of *Broom-Hilda*, a tattered little 1,500-year-old witch who trades witticisms with her introspective sidekicks, a buzzard and a troll.

"I like to think it's both humor and message. Being funny, of course, is the most important part." That from Charles Schulz, whose *Charlie Brown* and friends in *Peanuts* mouth some of the shrewdest psychological insights this side of the Mayo Clinic—and with chuckles free.

Even Garry Trudeau, the Yale graduate student whose *Doonesbury* gently needles the whole social spectrum, disclaims the role of commentator: "I'm not an editorial cartoonist. My first aim is to entertain. Satire is my method, but it's not an end in itself."

Almost alone among the nationally syndicated comic strip artists, Al Capp unabashedly admits goring sacred cows left and right—mostly left these days, to the chagrin of some of his former admirers.

"When *Li'l Abner* laughed at the right, it was very, very funny," Capp booms. "Now that it laughs at the lunacy of the left, there's nothing to laugh at any more. But the public seems to like it."

Donald Bremner was a foreign correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, based in Hong Kong. Today he is a writer on the Opinion Section of the Sunday edition of the *Times*, where this article appeared. Copyright 1973, *Los Angeles Times*. Reprinted by permission.

Humor is the great sweetener. If the artists have a serious message, they prefer to wrap it in laughs and slip it over unobtrusively.

What's Linus, for instance, doing there in the pumpkin patch around Halloween, ludicrously assuring the other Peanuts kids that the Great Pumpkin is coming?

"It started off as a spoof on Santa Claus," Schulz says. "Linus got one holiday ahead of himself. He started writing to somebody and then couldn't back out.

"There's a truth here. Some beliefs are sustained simply because you can't back out."

The theologians can read what they want into Peanuts.

"It's fine if they want to do that," says Schulz, who recently stopped teaching a church class on Sunday because "I simply ran out of things to say, and I was drifting more and more to the belief that the only true theology is no theology at all.

"The only theology that matters is that we love one another. I believe God doesn't want to be worshiped by songs of praise and the building of cathedrals. He wants to be worshiped only by the love we have for one another. I defy anyone to prove otherwise."

Schulz doesn't put things so directly in his strip, but he has Charlie Brown in philosophical moments ponder man's perceptions.

On a recent Sunday, Charlie recalled his father telling him how the neighborhood theater that seemed huge in his childhood became narrower and narrower as the years went by, and Charlie wondered whether in old age the theater widens again.

Leaving Peppermint Patty perplexed, Charlie headed home, worried because "I have a feeling that our back yard is shrinking."

"I'm awfully proud of them," Schulz says of these Sunday strips over the last year or two which are "reflections of my own memories."

"I guess I'm 100% Charlie Brown," Schulz has said.

Linus insecurely clutching his blanket, "probably provides me with as many ideas as any of the characters," Schulz says. "Of the new characters, I like little Marcy, who calls Peppermint Patty 'sir'. I like the way she recognized the hypocrisy and cut through to the truth in the testimonial dinner to Charlie Brown. She hasn't lived long enough to see how muddy things get."

Artists sometimes find their characters maturing as the strip goes along.

Trudeau, for instance, says that Mike in *Doonesbury* has changed.

"In the beginning, he was always being put down. Now he's a

foil for other people's expressions of hate, love, jealousy. He's not so abused by everyone. He's matured, and his maturity has chronicled my own, I suppose."

Trudeau saw "an interesting development" in the way his campus athlete anti-Communist type, B.D., changed when he met Phred, a Viet Cong, in Vietnam. Although steeped in the belief that communism is a malignant force, B.D. "found he shared a basic humanity" with Phred, Trudeau mused.

A new character—a returned pilot POW—[was placed in] the *Doodles* scene in the 250 papers running the strip. "I've really had fun on that," Trudeau says of the culture shock the ex-POW has when he starts college.

Hart uses his friends as models for the characters in *B.C.*, a strip he created in 1958 while "inspired by Charlie Schulz." Hart says that *B.C.* "points out the foibles and follies of mankind."

The Wizard of Id, written by Hart and drawn by Brant Parker, "allows us to make a commentary because they do have a society of sorts—sometimes I think it parallels ours."

The pint-sized king, Hart says, is "a complete tyrant, no feelings," even shaped like a playing card to show he has no emotions; the soldier heading the army is "a cowardly knight," and the wizard who once had designs on the throne now "just plods along doing his magic, which always fails."

Cigar-chomping witch Broom-Hilda, Myers says, is "a dirty old man in a dress. Broom-Hilda is 1,500 years old. She's been married 20 or 30 times, first to Attila the Hun, but most of her husbands left her.

"She represents everything that's bad, but a pleasant kind of badness."

Irwin the troll, Myers says, "is sort of all naive innocence, and a personal friend of Mother Nature. The biggest truths usually come to him because he's free of intellectual encumbrances." Gaylord the buzzard is "bright and sits around indulging in introspection."

With dubious types like these, Myers says he is not trying to change the world: "I try to touch on topical things, but the main thing is to be funny."

For Al Capp and his Li'l Abner, appearing in 700 papers, funniness has another target besides the funny bone.

"Wherever lunacy exists, that's where I'll let it rip. Abner is against lunacy, and lately the left seems to have more lunacy."

Capp caught many of his followers in midchuckle several years ago when—appalled by what he termed the "fascism of SDS," by

student burning of ROTC buildings, and by busing to integrate schools—he turned his satire on the left. An unappealing character named Joanie Phoanie brought protests from Joan Baez. Campus demonstrators in Li'l Abner were labeled SWINE—Students Wildly Indignant About Nearly Everything.

“When I aimed at the right, I was on the cover of *Life*, I was on the TV shows, I was the darling of the media,” Capp said. “When I took on the left, I became a leper—except to the people.

“I must say it's been a hard road. I feel like the last rabbi left in Berlin.”

Switching in the other direction—from right to neutral—Little Orphan Annie has dropped the heavy political slant which had the blank-eyed waif and Daddy Warbucks deploring the New Deal of the 1930s and anything to the left of untrammelled free enterprise.

The change came five years ago, after the death of Harold Gray, who created Annie in 1924. Artist Philip Blaisdell said that when the new Annie writer, Elliot Caplin, took the job, he stipulated that there “be no more John Birch stuff” in the strip, which appears in about 400 papers.

“We stopped pontificating,” Blaisdell said, “and have tried to make it more universally appealing, not just to big business moguls.”

Annie still looks and talks the same—“she never learned to speak properly,” Blaisdell says—but she has more young companions now to appeal to younger readers, she uses with-it words like “cool,” and the heavies now “are musical comedy bad guys, like ‘Guys and Dolls’, all pretty much tongue-in-cheek.”

Dick Tracy, created by Chester Gould in 1931, makes a strong law-and-order pitch in his crime-busting exploits in 800 papers.

“I've never had such an avalanche of supporting mail as I've had in the last three or four years,” Gould said. “I think more people are getting concerned about law and order and are glad to think of having somebody on their side.”

With his black woman fashion photographer Friday Foster, Jim Lawrence tries to “show blacks in roles they haven't had an opportunity to play.

“Until the recent black films, blacks were cheated. They've had no opportunity for fantasy. I've had a black cowboy and a black millionaire.”

In Friday's [recent] adventure in Africa, a “black Tarzan”—a black American football star searching for his cultural roots—appeared to rescue Friday in the jungle.

"She'll have a brief African romance, but I'll keep her single," Lawrence says. "I think the men readers like her that way."

Lawrence and his illustrator, Spanish artist Jorgi Longaron, both whites, have had their complications with the interracial strip.

"I used 'honkey' a couple of times, and it got taken out," Lawrence said. "Any interracial romance is taboo," although one reader from a black district urged him to have Friday marry her white magazine director boss, Shawn North.

Negro dialect also is taboo in the strip, for fear of offending black readers.

Cultural stereotypes, though, are the stuff of life for venerable Snuffy Smith, the shiftless hillbilly, and his loyal wife, Loweezy.

Artist Fred Lasswell said Snuffy is still "scrounging to survive, doing the best he can with what he's got." His offspring, Tater, "a sort of change-of-life baby, some people say, has changed their lives and hopefully won't follow his father's footsteps."

Blondie has gained a worldwide audience in more than 1,600 papers in 60 countries since starting in 1930. Dean Young, son of creator Chic Young, who died recently, says Blondie offers "good clean humor" built around four basic activities—eating, sleeping, making money and raising children. "Everybody in life is involved in those at one time or another, and they're things in life that people can identify with."

Steve Canyon, with his past Air Force connections, taps into intrigues in Israel, Asia and around the world.

"Using Canyon as the catalyst, I can put on almost any kind of show," says artist Milton Caniff, who started the strip in 1947 after turning Terry and the Pirates over to George Wunder.

Canyon's fetching adopted daughter, Poteet, brings in romance, an angle Caniff also plays in other ways.

A [recent] adventure, for instance, has Canyon going to investigate reports of an American POW holding secret papers, and living it up among the beautiful native girls in the hills of Southeast Asia.

The soldier, aptly named Leo Frazier after the celebrated amorous lion that died recently in Southern California, tells his would-be rescuers that he's happy where he is, and, besides, the native girls won't let him go because he can hold a kiss longer than any of their men.

So it goes in the great comics world of fun, fantasy and sometimes philosophy. A smorgasbord of characters and their exploits, the comics feature a proven menu of adventure for appetizers, humor the main course, comment for dessert, and sex the spice—almost like life.

 OTHER MASS MEDIA: MAGAZINES, FILM, BOOKS, MUSIC

LESSONS FROM *LIFE*

Chris Welles

Shana Alexander was “too sad to talk about it, and too mad.” She did, however, manage a few words in *Newsweek* about the death, after thirty-six years, of *Life* magazine, where she had once worked as a staff writer. She was mad, she said, because “somebody had betrayed a trust,” principally the “executive suite [of Time Inc.] where the power was,” which had displayed a “failure of management action and nerve.” *Life* could have been saved, she argued, but for the “boys with the sharp pencils,” the moneymen with their narrow eyes only on the bottom line, who so mercilessly constrained the editors’ resuscitative ideas that the magazine was forced ignominiously into its grave.

The demise of a magazine, or any publication, is an unsettling event for any writer. One feels a distinctly personal loss, as if some very close and dear friend had died prematurely. But unlike the passing of an individual as the result of, say, an illness, which we ascribe to fate, that of a magazine tends to appear, particularly to its staff, more like a murder, a deliberate act. Typically, they finger the sharp-pencil boys as the murderers. In *Decline and Fall*, a history of the *Saturday Evening Post*, Otto Friedrich, the *Post*’s last managing editor, actually blamed the entire “profit system,” which “wastes and corrupts for the sake of its building.” The *Post*, he claimed somewhat less than modestly, was “as good in substance as any magazine in the country” and made a sizable contribution to “civilized life.” It went under, he maintained, not because it failed editorially but simply because it lost too much money. Nevertheless, Friedrich stated emphatically, “It deserved to live.” Richard Schickel, *Life*’s film critic, wrote in a lofty post mortem that *Life*, as the last of the great mass-circulation general-interest magazines, was “part of the national cement—and more valuable than we know” in “trying to bring us together again.” But once *Life*’s financial losses

Chris Welles, who was a *Life* editor from 1965-68, is a free-lance writer specializing in business and finance. This article appeared in *World* magazine, Feb. 13, 1973. Reprinted with permission of the International Famous Agency, copyright 1973 by Chris Welles.

had grown too large, Schickel said ruefully, "The business guys had their day."

There is a certain irony to this ex post facto castigation of the sharp-pencil boys and the values they represent, for perhaps more than any other publications in the country, *Life* and the *Post*, as well as *Look* and *Collier's*, other defunct mass magazines, were deliberately designed not as eleemosynary institutions but as aggressive exploiters of the profit system. The idea was to lure vast numbers of readers through very low subscription rates and a mass editorial approach, which could then be marketed to advertisers at ad rates that ran as high at *Life* as \$64,200 per color page. One recent study estimated that the average *Life* reader paid only twelve cents for a magazine that cost forty-one cents to edit and print. Advertisers paid the rest.

For much of *Life's* existence, the strategy was a striking success. Indeed, the rush to subscribe when *Life* first came out in 1936 was so frantic that the ad rates at which space for the first year's issues had been sold turned out to be far too low. Before rates could be raised, the magazine lost \$6 million and nearly put Time Inc. out of business. *Life's* ad revenues as recently as 1966 were \$170 million, far more than any other magazine in the country. But over the last few years, the strategy became obsolete, and *Life* expired precisely on the terms by which it had been created. In fact, in an age in which economic concentration, oligopolistic market power, and *de facto* price-fixing have tended to subdue free-market forces, *Life's* failure was something of a throwback to an earlier, more Darwinian era. It had become a kind of weekly Edsel, and it was simply rejected by the market place.

The collapse of *Life's* profit-oriented *raison d'être* derived from its increasing inability to fill the needs of its two essential constituencies—advertisers and readers. Advertisers departed when it was discovered that television could deliver the same mass audience at a lower cost and, they believed, with greater effectiveness. *Life* ended up deriving much of its revenues from cigarette and liquor ads, which are banned from TV (and which accounted for nearly half the fifty-seven ad pages in *Life's* next-to-last issue, "Joys of Christmas"). "I don't know what we'll do," said the advertising director for Brown & Williamson when *Life's* death was announced. "We're in nearly every issue, for one brand or another." Advertisers also discovered that when you are selling a product that is purchased mainly by, say, married females, aged twenty-one to thirty, living in suburban areas, it is silly to pay for teen-agers, old people, middle-aged men, and all

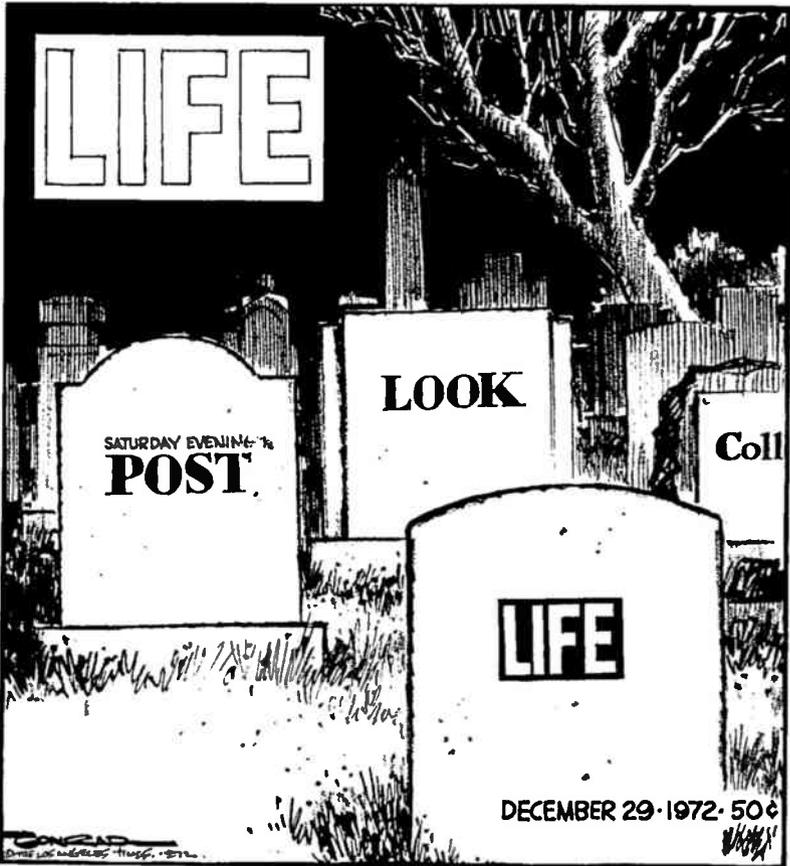
the other groups comprising *Life's* heterogeneous readership. It is more efficient to place your ads in magazines, and other media, that focus directly on and deliver the specific group of readers most likely to buy your product. In 1972 *Life's* annual advertisers' revenues had fallen to \$91 million, little more than half the 1966 level.

Readers, *Life's* other constituency, were long enamored of the magazine's broad editorial thrust: "To see life; to see the world; to eyewitness great events," as Henry Luce had begun his often-quoted prospectus for *Life*. Although *Life's* editors emphasized a photojournalistic approach, they cherished to the end their open-ended "franchise" of running whatever stories happened to strike their fancy. A magazine with a tightly conceptualized formula, Otto Friedrich wrote, "is a magazine in a rut." But as the nation has become better educated and more affluent, readers have become less homogenized and more inclined to pursue their individual interests and tastes, to which a vigorous group of special-interest and special-audience magazines is assiduously catering.

Though 160 magazines failed in the past decade, 753 new ones were born, nearly all with a sharp focus. The only special focus offered by *Life* was photojournalism, which was also usurped by television. Whereas at one time the publication of each issue of *Life* was a unique national event, an instant topic of conversation, the magazine in recent years tended to slip out unnoticed. It was just another publication cluttering up newsstands and mailboxes.

Fading reader interest was an extremely serious blow to *Life's* chances for survival. For most of its existence, the magazine appealed to a small-town readership. Only in the last decade did it consciously try to attract—by editorial redirection and subscription campaigns—a higher-income audience. Aware that any major rise in advertising rates would simply drive cost-conscious advertisers to other media, the publishers of all the mass magazines hoped that readers could be persuaded to pay more money, to the point, eventually, of bearing most of the cost burden. This hope, unfortunately, proved illusory. To cut losses, *Life's* circulation was permitted, beginning in 1970, to drop from 8 1/2 million to 5 1/2 million through attrition. Since existing subscribers were exempt from the rate hike, it was expected that the renewal rate among these remaining, presumably more loyal, readers would be much higher. It turned out, however, to be as low, if not lower. "There was an inordinate demand on us to get new subscriptions because of the soft renewals," says *Life* publisher Garry Valk.

Worse, it seemed apparent that any sizable rise in rates would



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cut renewals even further. In effect, the reader was saying that he cared enough to buy *Life* only so long as it remained prohibitively cheap. Though he was willing to pay fifty cents or a dollar per issue for magazines he really wanted—magazines that addressed themselves to specific areas of his concern—twenty-five cents was far more than he wanted to lay out for an issue of *Life*, which in trying to appeal to everybody ended up appealing, in a sense, to nobody. The widely publicized proposed postal-rate increase, cited both by *Life* and *Look* as a major factor in their demise, actually would have added a nickel per issue on *Life*'s cost over the next five years, a hike that was serious only because of the magazine's already marginal reader acceptance.

Low renewals were not the only barometer of reader apathy. Newsstand sales have long been regarded as an indicator of reader enthusiasm, especially by advertisers, who figure that anyone who must make a conscious decision to purchase each issue must be attracted by a magazine's editorial content and will therefore be responsive to its advertising. Such highly successful magazines as *Cosmopolitan*, *New York*, *Playboy*, and *Family Circle* are star newsstand performers. *Life's* newsstand sales, though, had been falling steadily for many years. For the first six months of 1972, they averaged a mere 184,000, down nearly 20 per cent from 1971, and lower even than *Mechanix Illustrated* and *Weight Watchers*. It is often claimed, as one advertising man did in *The New York Times*, that the reader "was never asked" whether or not he wanted *Life*. The unhappy fact is that he *was* asked, every week, every time his subscription came up for renewal, and in many bargain-rate letters after that; too often his answer was no.

The notion persists that there was a possible editorial fix, some dramatic way of luring back disenchanted readers. In a recent *New York* magazine story, such successful editors as Helen Gurley Brown of *Cosmopolitan*, Harold Hayes of *Esquire*, Jan Wenner of *Rolling Stone*, and Bob Guccione of *Penthouse* were asked for their ideas on "How I'd Change *Life*." Their suggestions were notable mainly for vacuity and banality, e.g., "*Life* has to figure out a way to show Americans what they are like these days"; "*Life* has to look for an angle in its coverage and not meet its subjects so straight on."

While some of *Life's* latter-day articles were as brilliantly conceived and executed as any the magazine ever did, on the whole the magazine seemed bland and predictable. Its old air of unfettered exuberance had given way to cautious restraint, and this was due only in part to editorial cost cutting. Instead of exploring the numerous consumer-oriented issues of concern to *Life* readers—but which might have precipitated reaction by advertisers—the magazine used most of its investigative talent to dig into that easy and overreported target, the Mafia. Rather than pay \$250,000 for Clifford Irving's version of Howard Hughes's autobiography—a ploy characteristic of *Life's* "[checkbook] journalism"—the magazine might instead have given \$25,000 to each of the ten top journalists or photographers in the country to let them pursue at length what they felt to be the day's most fascinating or important unreported stories.

Yet it seems highly unlikely that more imaginative editing could have reversed the broad social and economic forces that have been steadily eroding the magazine's reason for existence. Its editors can

at least be credited with resisting the flurry of breathless new looks and editorial slants that created an atmosphere of desperation at the *Post*, and upset and drove away readers and advertisers. The only true solution to *Life's* editorial predicament would have been the development of some new, more specialized editorial approach and construction of a new readership, a lengthy, highly expensive, and difficult task, which only a very few major publications (notably *Esquire* and *Cosmopolitan*) have ever accomplished. Even if the attempt were successful, the result would be not the rescue of *Life* but merely creation of a new magazine with an old name. (Time Inc. has wisely refused to sell *Life* or its name, thus preventing a pallid and embarrassing reincarnation such as the current *Saturday Evening Post*, a "good news" magazine.)

Otto Friedrich, Richard Schickel, and other advocates of the "it deserved to live" position would contend that the old magazine was good enough. Though both its readers and advertisers refused any longer to support *Life* in the expensive style to which it had become accustomed—large-page-size photojournalism entails massive editorial and production costs—they would argue that *Life* was of such quality and of such national value that its survival should not have to depend on the financial support of advertisers or readers. Implicit in this belief is the theory that the market place rewards only mediocrity and the idea that *Life* had become too good to make a profit.

Mass tastes, if prime-time TV is any evidence, are admittedly not very lofty. And many of the highly successful special-interest magazines are extremely frivolous. ("We should have put out a magazine for one-eyed, geriatric bird watchers," one *Life* writer was heard to remark.) Yet scores of excellent magazines that contribute much to "civilized life" regularly earn at least adequate profits, some mainly from advertisers anxious to reach their elite audience and others, including many scholarly journals, mainly from readers unable to obtain that particular editorial focus or point of view anywhere else. Many other high-quality journals have survived for years through private subsidies, indicating that at least someone, if not advertisers or readers, is willing to ensure their existence. The merit of any publication that dies, therefore, is open to serious question.

It is true, of course, that when *Life* or any other publication disappears we lose a point of view, a voice, a disseminator of information. *Life* people especially like to talk about their unique and indispensable "national cement" role. Numerous other media, however, distribute information nationally to a wide variety of social and economic groups. Although perhaps the nation has become too frag-

mented and needs unifying (just a few years ago we worried about the stultifying effects of "mass culture" and "conformity"), it is difficult to believe that *Life*, which reached barely 10 per cent of the population when it died, was remotely capable of accomplishing such a task.

To say *Life* deserved to live when no private source was willing to pay for it implies also that some subsidy should have been forthcoming from a public source, presumably the government. One can argue that the existing postal-rate subsidy should be continued, although, as has been noted, this would have meant only a marginal improvement in *Life's* fatal economics. But the question, as Otto Friedrich poses it in *Decline and Fall*, is whether the press should be removed from "all the destructive risks and uncertainties of the profit system"? Should the government ensure the maximum number of voices, guarantee the survival of all publications? Or if only some, which ones? And who would decide? Anyone familiar with the efforts of public and private television to maintain editorial independence in the face of federal regulatory and financial controls could not seriously suggest that the press tie its continuing existence to some broad new system of government largess.

Just as ironic as the effort to separate *Life* from the profit system is the depiction of Time Inc. as the creature of ruthless sharp-pencil boys. Admittedly *Life's* death came just after the heavy fall advertising season and in a year when Time Inc.'s \$7 million write-off for the costs of closing down the magazine and a \$9.7 million loss on the sale of a papermill interest could conveniently be balanced against an extraordinary \$13 million gain from the sale of several TV and radio stations. This reduced the overall deleterious impact on Time Inc.'s earnings, and investors responded to the news by bidding Time Inc.'s stock up \$10 a share. However, one can imagine few if any other corporations that would have endured for so long *Life's* seemingly irremediable deficits, amounting to some \$35 million over the past five years. Many influential persons in the Time Inc. hierarchy, among them board chairman Andrew Heiskell, a former publisher of *Life*, had a special emotional attachment to the magazine. Insiders say Heiskell kept *Life* alive for years in the face of demands from less sentimental executives that it be shut down. The hope was that such cost-cutting measures as reduction in paper quality, trim size, and the once luxuriously distended staff would "give us a chance to look for the leak in the boat," as publisher Garry Valk puts it. "However," Valk adds, "we were never able to find it." With another \$30 million in losses projected for 1973 and 1974, further

delay could have subjected management to stockholder suits charging unreasonable wasting of the corporation's assets.

Perhaps an even stronger reason for the company's reluctance to act was the awesome shadow of Henry Luce, under which his successors must labor. Luce built the empire, and like all managerial successors to entrepreneurial founders, those now running the corporation are fearful they will be branded as mere caretakers, lesser men with the ability only to nurture Luce's creations. Results so far have been ominously unimpressive. Time Inc. remains controlled largely by men whose working lives have been spent toiling loyally and submissively under Henry Luce's autocratic rule. Attempts to diversify into newspapers (a chain of suburban weeklies), movies (MGM), and the knowledge industry (General Learning Corp.) have been generally disappointing; and moves into CATV and video and audio cassettes, where competition is high and returns low, have produced at best questionable results. ("Executive Voice," an audio-cassette program edited by *Fortune*, recently was folded because of its inability to generate sufficient interest.) Somewhat more felicitous have been endeavors in the company's traditional area of competence—magazines—as exemplified by *Money*, the new financial publication. Two other new magazines, one on television and the movies and another on photography [were planned for early in 1973]. The field of special-interest magazines, however, is very competitive, and creating new ones able to achieve the premier status and profitability of *Time*, *Fortune*, and *Sports Illustrated* will be an arduous task.

A definitive judgment on whether Luce's successors are hopelessly ossified or capable of sufficient boldness and ingenuity to create their own era cannot be made for some time. But with their lackluster performance to date, the decision to close *Life*—which was still seemingly robust when Luce died five years ago—must have been painful indeed. Inevitably, there are those who argue that if Luce had lived, his genius could have saved it. Unable to build anything themselves, the argument runs, his successors have now sunk to the point of destroying what the founder built.

In the end the sharp-pencil boys necessarily prevailed over sentiment and apprehension. Few of the nation's editorial pages have not printed soaring eulogies and earnest expressions of regret. Yet the real tragedy is for those at *Life* who cared so much and fought so hard to save the magazine when, for most of the rest of us, it no longer made a great deal of difference. It is all a little like the death of a retired elder statesman. We quickly forget the quiet agony of his final illness and remember only the way he was a long time ago, when we really needed him.

VIOLENCE: REAL AND MEDIATE

Paul Carrico

The subject of violence is a well-burned potato on the magazine circuit. Triteness and repetition may be a problem in writing about violence but the repetition of violence in real life is not trite. People of all ages are killed in the theft and protection of even the most minimal property; assassins with anonymous faces arise from a society caught in the emotional and moral shock of change. Artists who mirror their own culture find images that leave them in a quandry.

Statistics are often soporific but the ones about criminal violence are not. 17,630 murders in 1971 (a rise of 90% since 1966) and an arrest rate increase for crimes of violence by youth under 18 of 11.4% for boys and 21.7% for girls since 1970 dulls the boast that crime nationally increased only 7% in 1971. Chances of becoming a victim of crime have increased 74% since 1966. (*Uniform Crime Reports for the United States* FBI, August 29, 1972). In the week of July 14-20 [1972], 58 people were killed in New York City alone—three less than London has in a year. Teachers and students in many cities depend on a cadre of cops to survive a school day.

America has normalized violence both of the body and of the spirit. Media as well as the tenor of the times can sometimes amplify, sometimes attenuate our response to real violence. Benny "Kid" Paret being pounded senseless (he later died) on the TV screen or Lee Harvey Oswald being shot were shocking images. The six o'clock news is often the most chilling horror story in town. And yet while TV can reveal the truth, it can make the real seem unreal. While a sniper on top of the University of Texas tower was gunning down 46 people with a high-powered rifle, a young nun on a lower floor was watching from a window. Her attitude toward the spectacle was passive, almost lackadaisical until she realized "My God, this is not television; those are real people getting shot out there."

Americans who first viewed the footage of the atrocities of Dachau and Buchenwald rejected the images as untrue—or if true not typical and certainly not officially sanctioned. Only Alain Resnais' lyrical treatment of perhaps the most horrible crime of this century in *Night and Fog* helped people to comprehend and face the truth without themselves being brutalized.

The live straight-from-the-scene images of club-swinging policemen charging into crowds of demonstrators at the 1968 Democratic

Paul Carrico's "Violence: Real and Mediate" is reprinted with permission from *Media & Methods*, vol. 9, no. 2 (October 1972), pp. 65-71.

Convention were rejected outright by most of Middle America. A curious media backlash took place among many: "Not only are these images untrue but the opposite is happening!" they seemed to say. Even after the prestigious Walker Report in 1969, many people continued to refuse to believe their eyes. When people see images that don't line up with their beliefs, they reject the images rather than question their beliefs. The frenetic confrontations of 1968 are admirably captured in Charles Braverman's film, *'World of '68.'*

The fuzzing of the lines between the real and the imaginary is at the heart of mediated violence. Does violence either literally replayed or fictionalized in any way *cause* real violence? Though no one presently in prison has ever blamed his incarceration on his having seen a movie, still the question remains: through repeated exposure is there a steady erosion of the sensibilities and the supporting moral structures that control violence? Neither the social scientists nor the humanists have a satisfying answer.

Teachers who need "answers" before they can "teach" often refuse to isolate violence as a problem and discuss it with their students. The necessity for codified dogma should disqualify such teachers from today's classroom. Another cop-out is to handle the problem by not treating it. "Give the kids something good and positive and they won't want violence." Nonsense. Problems that lie just below the level of consciousness are just as real as problems consciously grasped—but more dangerous because they are not perceived. *Child's Play* is a horror story about a well-regulated boys' school complete with all the traditional positive values and a Mr. Chips paternalist. Playwright Robert Marasco showed me my own prep school days turned inside out. Unresolved aggression is the demon always hiding under any placid surface of academic good behavior. Teachers who blithely ignore this negative side of innocence perform a disservice to their students.

A desire to shock students is as irresponsible as not doing anything. Lecturers on the school circuit from "Right to Life" groups who show livid color slides of aborted fetuses, some with I.U.D.'s lodged in their limbs, degrade the discussion of the abortion issue and succeed in little else but giving sensitive students needless hang-ups. Scare tactics have little long range value in making problems intellectually manageable. Even a film like *An Occurrence At Owl Creek Bridge* has been known to traumatize intermediate grade children. There's no need for that. Both sensitivity and perspective are needed to discuss violence in the classroom.

Lawrence Alloway notes: "Traditionally there have been two

sensitive subjects in the mass media, sex and violence, but now there is only violence" (*Violent America: The Movies 1946-1964*). Evidence points to the fact that the subject will be around for a long time. The Surgeon General's Scientific Committee on Television and Social Behavior report in January 1972 was at best ambiguous, but called seriously into question the cathartic effect of viewed violence and suggested a strong causal connection between vicarious and real violence. Other cultures have had their rules about violence. *Oedipus Rex* had an all-star lineup of evil: infanticide, patricide, mutilation. Yet the Greeks permitted none of the violence on stage. Pity and fear were the elements for purgation: violence took place out of the range of the audience.

Another reason violence will continue to be a problem in the fictionalized story is that violence is near the heart of fiction itself. "Vigorous physical action" is the next door neighbor to conflict and conflict is at the center not only of fiction but of life itself. Without conflict, there is no story. Parent groups which have been trying to sterilize everything from baby bottles to nursery rhymes have produced some remarkably ludicrous examples.

Three nice mice. Three nice mice.
 See how they run, see how they run
 They all run after the farmer's wife
 She cuts off some cheese with a carving knife.
 Have you ever seen such a sight in your life
 As three nice mice.

That style of censorship is almost as self-defeating as the expunging of racially derogatory words from Mark Twain.

Robert Penn Warren (*Saturday Evening Post*, October, 1963) maintains that conflict is at the center of fiction because conflict is at the center of life. Despite the fact that we yearn for inner harmony and peace we are constantly turning toward the really problematic or an image of it. The average second-stringer plunks down on a Sunday afternoon with a can of beer and identifies with his favorite linebacker to take himself away from "the drowse of the accustomed," to compensate for the deficiencies of his life. Not content with a decently-functioning biology we seek a heightened sense of life through at least an imaginative identification with a conflict that has a built-in resolution. We seek a model to see if perhaps it can provide a form that can guide our own life, the most important story, the game of ultimate stakes.

Public fiction gives us many models of our old potential selves, people we might have become. We must be in constant dialogue

within us, with the carping mother-in-law, with the *animus* and the *anima*. Fiction in movies, plays, or written form painlessly makes up for the defects in the reality which is our own person. Our official self does not deny the old potential selves which in fiction are paraded before us tamed to manageability. To deny the villain and murderer in us and never to confront him is to live in a nest of self-delusion. The resolution and consequences of the action in a story is a judgment. "In the end some shift of values has taken place. Some new awareness has dawned; some new possibility of attitude has been envisaged."

At least that is what should happen. The only problem with conflict is that in a public medium it overflows quickly into violence. Internal conflict must be presented as it is and for what it is. The quantity, and especially the quality of the violence is determined or controlled by the demands of the material and the culture in which it happens. What are the limits of conflict?

When Fritz Lang made *M* he suggested violence. A child murderer is stalking a little girl carrying a balloon. There are the usual cuts back and forth between the carefree child and the villain played by Peter Lorre. Lang never shows the actual attack but rather the balloon floating upward in the afternoon sun. In a calmer time and in a culture marked by innocence, artists could use restraint with remarkable effectiveness. Even today restraint can be artistically powerful. In *Lonely Are the Brave* the cowboy-hero, played by Kirk Douglas, wants to get himself jailed for public intoxication in order to see and eventually free his friend, Paul. In the local roadside tavern, a deceptively strong and brutal one-armed man picks a fight with him. The ensuing fight is absurdly violent, almost surrealistic. It is simply photographed, but within the limits of audience tolerance. The sheriff's deputies take the cowboy to the station where he is searched and told he can go. At that point the script demands another fight, this time with the arresting deputies. The cowboy must get into jail. Instead of photographing another fight within five screen minutes of the previous one, the director, David Miller, lets us overhear it on the sound track while the camera frames the impassive face of the desk sergeant as he types out the list of the cowboy's personal effects. As he finishes typing, the battered, grinning face of the hero is hoisted into the camera frame by two disgruntled deputies. Perfect. The director has made his point with humor, restraint, and imagination. A little aesthetic distance prevents both the offensiveness and possible boredom of another fight.

Some films demand a restrained treatment. *The Summer We*

Moved to Elm Street is a film about the interior violence done to an eleven-year-old girl by an alcoholic father and a resentful mother. The most heart-rending scenes are photographed in close-up reaction shots of the girl. This is appropriate since children are more often the receivers of action than initiators. At one point we hear a late-night argument in acoustical off-screen space but see only the girl's pained face as she lies awake in bed.

Can an artist afford subtlety today? In the past thirty years America has come through three ugly wars, the last of which has split the country and burdened it with guilt. The image of Fortress America with clearly identifiable external enemies has been superseded by that of Divided America. The demise of the first image was aptly punctuated and celebrated by *Dr. Strangelove*. Our sensibilities have since been battered to numbness. The question the artist confronts: Can the Numb Generation react to anything?

In *Duel at Diablo* the quality of screen violence began to change and reached a peak in *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Wild Bunch*, and currently *Deliverance*. In *Duel* we no longer saw rich actors wearing Stetsons shooting off-screen at miscellaneous stunt men painted like Indians, who dutifully "bit the dust" forever when shot. Lawrence Shaffer understands the new consciousness well:

... *Duel at Diablo* became probably the first (film) in history to bridge the hitherto mystical gap between arrows, bullets, what-have-you and actors claiming to be wounded or dead. In *Duel at Diablo* you could see the arrow enter flesh, you could see the blood spurt. Yet the effect was not ghoulishly literal but rather of respecting things as they actually are, those unheralded things that usually get lost among melodramatic or ideological signposts. *Diablo* replaced the easy iconography of taut bow and toppling stunt men with what it's really like to get hurt. "The Wild Bunch Versus Straw Dogs," *Sight and Sound*, Summer, 1972.

Before anyone can credibly and without guilt commit violence, a depersonalization of the intended victim must take place. The language reflects it. Terms such as "pig," "fuzz," "creep," "gook," "Commie," "Imperialistic dog," and a whole vocabulary of ethnic nouns lead easily to "brutalization by classification." In reporting the Indochinese war, American newspapers call the North Vietnamese "Communists" while Americans or South Vietnamese are called by their national tags and not "Capitalists."

Thus it became easy for audiences to cheer John Wayne as he ripped off a 50 cal. air-cooled machine gun from his downed bomber and mercilessly proceeded to destroy an entire "Jap" battalion. Indians, crooks, and miscellaneous "bad guys" were treated as

tightly-defined categories rather than as human beings and logically destroyed. A beautiful and subtle film, *A Time Out of War* explores what can happen when soldiers suspend a war and get to know one another as men.

Cold War rhetoric sounds archaic to all but the most dedicated non-Communists, but the abortion issue, the women's rights movement, busing, and a host of other moral and political issues produce their own pained epithets. The artist's task becomes one of continually exorcizing the impersonal language which is the basis for clean pre-meditated violence, whether personal or institutional. Arthur Penn does this very well in *Bonnie and Clyde*.

Criminals have rarely been treated in American movies as anything more than societal problems. But in *Bonnie and Clyde* audiences leave the theatre as if they were leaving a funeral home. The cinema deaths they have just witnessed were brutal but they were the deaths of two human beings whom the audience came to know as persons. When real people die it's not a clean bloodless affair. Blood and the stench of vomit and excrement rob the whole thing of any glory. In 1967 that treatment of death was necessary to demythologize it; in 1932 when *M* was made it would have been excessive.

Throughout the film, Penn confronts us with our suppositions for moral judgment and even laughter:

Bonnie and Clyde keeps the audience in a kind of eager, nervous imbalance—holds our attention by throwing our disbelief back in our faces. To be put on is to be put on the spot, put on the stage, made the stooge in a comedy act. People in the audience at *Bonnie and Clyde* are laughing, demonstrating that they're not stooges—that they appreciate the joke—when they catch the first bullet right in the face. . . Instead of the movie spoof, which tells the audience that it doesn't need to feel or care, that "it's all just in fun, that we were only kidding," *Bonnie and Clyde* disrupts up with "And you thought we were only kidding."—Pauline Kael, *Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang*.

Tasteful understated violence would have been as much out of place in *Bonnie and Clyde* as it would have been in *Potemkin*. Violence is not only necessary to both films; violence is their meaning. But the treatment leads not to audience flattery which can desensitize and brutalize but rather to a freshened sensitivity to people who are not necessarily socially pure. The cultural exorcism of violence consists not in its deception as fantasy or ideological necessity, but in showing violence as it is—the violation of the autonomy and dignity of a flesh-and-blood person. (Children may use fantasy to test reality but adults need something tougher.)

Deliverance is John Boorman's brilliant critique of the oldest of dogmas that support violent behavior: *machismo*. In a country whose leaders speak of war in terms of "game plans" and "expansion teams," *Deliverance* could hardly have come at a more apt time. Essentially an isolation story like *Lord of the Flies* or *Straw Dogs*, it focuses on the rites of survival in an all male and nature world. Unlike the diffident intellectual hero of *Straw Dogs* (Dustin Hoffman) whose initiation into manhood had to be both signified and caused by a baptism of blood, Ed (Jon Voight) finds that his reluctant but deliberate choice of violence leads to ambiguity, subsequent compromise of conscience and nightmares. *Machismo*, like innocence, has what Jung would call its dark or shadow side.

The violence in *Deliverance* is four layers deep. The four adventurers are urban types from Atlanta whose attitude toward the culture of the rural mountain men is contemptuous. Only one of them, Drew (Ronnie Cox), responds positively to the "crackers" in one of the most beautiful scenes in all of film. He plays a musical "duel" with a genetically deficient boy: their level of mutual understanding transcends words.

Technology violates nature. Precious and indifferently beautiful backwoods is about to be flooded out by a dam. So is the town of Ainty. ("Best thing that ever happened to this town" says a native. "We had to flood this town to save it" is a parallel sentence that occurs to some of the audience).

Violence to personal beliefs proves devastating to Drew after he assents to a "democratic" moral decision by the other three. Other moral betrayals degenerate into mere self-deception and a cover-up that prevents public justice.

The physical violence arises naturally but appallingly from these other less obvious assaults. The masculine mystique is undercut by ambiguity and serious, terribly valid questions. The easy audience-flattering moralities of subsequent punishment are avoided.

The much-discussed violence of *The Godfather* is certainly valid within the parameters of the film. The more basic question has to do with the apparent "need" for a parallel society run by men with admittedly compartmentalized consciences dispensing "justice" more efficiently than the larger society. Structurally, the intercut scenes of death and baptism in the final moments pull all the hitherto separate elements together into a frightening metaphor. The dichotomies set up so brilliantly in the opening scenes are destroyed as defensible categories.

Exploitation merchants always follow in the wake of true artists. Today there is a glut of violence in the theatres. Gripping dramas have been replaced by dripping dramas. The downward spiral to *Ben*, *Willard*, *Bluebeard* and *Superbeast* has had a long history which it is impossible to detail here.

Nearly every American film, whether a success story or an action story, has contained at least the seeds of violence. Plot resolutions have been generally vigorous but artists had until recently been restrained, not by censorship, but by a generally accepted set of cultural and moral axioms.

In the genres of Westerns and Gangster films violence was expected and tolerated. Even in the old Republic Westerns where the "body count" was always moderate to heavy, the hero always had a



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clearly defined code of morality. Today the old moral certainties have become ambiguous.

[Movies] continue to mix violence with the tense ambivalence of personal morality as it faces the foreboding problems of a confused society. David Elliott, "Panorama"; *Chicago Daily News*, March 4/5, 1972.

The Bond movies exploited the then-current myth of the autonomous man, one with no moral or personal commitments. Spaghetti Westerns at first respected and extended the ritualistic form of the genre, then emptied it of all content except mindless addictive violence.

Even more disturbing than the lack of a controlling moral context in films are a series whose morality is fascist. *Straw Dogs* is what Pauline Kael calls "the first American film that is a fascist work of art." David, the hero-mathematician, comes to enjoy the killing that he must do, and in the recognition of the pleasure becomes a man and a better sex object for his tart-wife. *Dirty Harry*, a Clint Eastwood vehicle, blames the bleeding-heart liberals for handcuffing driven, dedicated policemen.

Pauline Kael summarizes the effects of movies whose violence is stripped of all humanity.

At the movies, we are gradually being conditioned to accept violence. The directors used to say they were showing us its real face and how ugly it was in order to sensitize us to its horrors. You don't have to be very keen to see that they are in fact desensitizing us. They are saying that everyone is brutal, and the heroes must be as brutal as the villains or they turn into fools. . . . We become clockwork oranges if we accept all this pop culture without asking what's in it. *The New Yorker*, January 1, 1972.

A new genre in American films, the black genre (films for blacks by black filmmakers) are shot through with fantasized gore and supported by flimsy, sometimes questionable plots. Many black leaders are decrying films like *Melinda*, *Super Fly*, *Blacula* and the *Shaft* series in terms that hearken back to the early days of the Legion of Decency. Moira Walsh of *America* believes that black audiences whose experience with tentative new freedoms has been highly concentrated in the past few years are having a parallel experience in movies. Each of the new films that puts down The Man has an incandescent relevance as short-lived as a flash bulb. Black audiences will work through the genre to something different, possibly better, in a fraction of the years that white audiences required, Ms. Walsh maintains. Certainly these films are fulfilling a need outside the realm of white consciousness.

Evidence is mounting in a post-Aristotelian world that violence in the mass media may not be cathartic, especially for children and rather juvenile adults. The effects of violence for some people can, like DDT, be cumulative. When all the studies have been collected and codified by behavioral scientists, new arguments are certain to be advanced for censorship.

If "all true insight is foresight" *A Clockwork Orange* prefigures the glooms of Toynbee's *Ecumenopolis*.

I believe this progressive depersonalization of life is the underlying cause of most unrest in the world today, student revolts, violent demonstrations, demands for political autonomy . . . political kidnappings and hijacks, 'wildcat' strikes, etc. Arnold Toynbee, *The American Way*, August, 1972.

The highly stylized, intellectualized violence of *Clockwork Orange* does not elicit the visceral reaction of *Straw Dogs*, but rather illustrates Kubrick's thesis that while a lobotomized and sedated delinquent is more socially acceptable as a victim (even the hero's most placid former victims show an enormous zest for revenge), man is not complete without his aggressive and sexual drives left intact. Even Kubrick's celebration of disturbing totality illustrates Toynbee's thought that man's ultimate enemy may not be death but man himself.

Given the filmic material presently in distribution, the anti-censorship foes will have a difficult time. David Elliott concisely states the problem:

For to have catharsis we must have art, and to have art we must place violence in a human context of moral and social pressures. Without that context violence is neither cathartic nor valid.

And because movies are usually best at their most realistic, we should not expect them to leave the violence out of life. But neither can we allow them to leave life out of violence. "Panorama"; *Chicago Daily News*, March 4/5, 1972.

As Ingmar Bergman has so well noted, the aesthetic experience of a film is not complete until it has been made intellectually manageable through reflection or discussion. Teachers should discuss violent films, comics, TV. Putting one's feelings into the structure of dialogue—or even into a structured non-verbal response can be in itself an exorcism if not a catharsis.

The value system of any mediated experience is a rich field for exploration. Likewise an analysis of its form and style—the instruments of artistic vision—is absolutely necessary. The way an artist envisions his material and either transcends or demeans it is more important than the content itself.

Violence, like love, is here to stay. It will always remain a major force in American life and fiction. No serious educator can afford to ignore the problem.

THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION ON OBSCENITY

Paul Bender

The most intriguing thing about the Supreme Court's new 5-4 obscenity ruling is what *almost* happened to obscenity laws.

The court, in this time of widespread political reaction against excessive "permissiveness," actually came within just one vote of virtually ending broad legal restrictions on blatantly sexual books, magazines and films. All of the four dissenting justices would have held that the Constitution protects such material—however "pornographic," "prurient" or "obscene"—from being banned for adults who want to see them. This position represents a radical change of view for three of the four dissenters.

Thus, for lack of one more vote, existing obscenity law continues to do business at basically the same old stand. True, the Nixon court has made some modifications and adjustments in the constitutional definition of what may be legally treated as "obscene." But it is hard to predict whether these changes—which the court tells us are designed to improve the clarity of the law and its responsiveness to regional, rather than national, ideas of what sexual works should be banned—will have significant long-run effects upon the erotic marketplace, and whether they will lead, as the dissenting justices suggest, to a serious "assault on the protection of the First Amendment." Only time—and the court's future applications of its revised definition—will tell.

A little less than three years ago the congressionally established, presidentially appointed Commission on Obscenity and Pornography recommended the repeal of all laws intended to interfere with what the commission deemed to be "the right of adults who wish to do so to read, obtain or view explicit sexual material."

The commission urged that laws be retained that protect children from obtaining sexual material without parental permission. It

Paul Bender is professor of law at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He served as general counsel for the national Commission on Obscenity and Pornography (1968-70). This article appeared in the Opinion Section of the *Los Angeles Times*. Copyright 1973, *Los Angeles Times*. Reprinted with permission.

also supported laws regulating the open public displays and unsolicited mailings of possibly offensive sexual pictures in order to safeguard individuals from having such materials thrust upon them without their consent.

But the commission argued strongly that adults should be free to make up their own minds about whether—and with what degree of explicitness—to read publications and see films about sex.

The recommendation met with a distinctly cool political reception. President Nixon “categorically” denounced the commission’s views as “morally bankrupt” and the U.S. Senate, in an election year, overwhelmingly rejected those views so quickly that few, if any, of the senators could have had time to read the extensive research or findings on which they were based.

(That research showed, among other things, that there was “no evidence” that exposure to obscenity had a significant role in causing crime, delinquency or emotional disturbance; that the laws on obscenity were expensive to enforce and “extremely unsatisfactory” in their practical application; and that, while a substantial and sometimes highly vocal minority of Americans favor broad obscenity prohibitions, a majority of us actually believe, with the commission, “that adults should be legally able to read or see explicit sexual materials if they wish to do so.”)

Of 50 state legislatures, only Oregon’s has so far seen fit to adopt the commission’s basic approach.

The Supreme Court itself, even in the Warren years, has never looked with theoretical favor upon the “obscene.” With the exception of Justices Black and Douglas, who put obscenity in the same category as other speech for constitutional purposes, all the Supreme Court justices who had ever ruled on the question prior to these latest cases maintained that obscenity was unprotected by the First Amendment and thus subject to censorship or prosecution.

At times the court has narrowed the application of this exception to the First Amendment guarantees by reversing particular convictions on the grounds that a given book or film could not be deemed obscene. But the court can take only so many cases, and it can ordinarily reverse decisions only after book sellers have been arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced—sometimes years after they have been through that ordeal.

The provocative fact is that three justices who dissented in the court’s new decision—Justices Brennan, Stewart and Marshall—have changed their minds that “obscenity” can be banned constitutionally. They, along with Justice Douglas (Justice Black having died al-

most two years ago), now wish to make the obscenity commission's permissive views not only recommendations for legislation, but part of the Constitution itself.

Their grounds are different from those of the commission. The four dissenters rely not on the individual's right to see or read whatever he wants about sex—be it “obscene” or otherwise—but on the impossibility of clearly defining what is obscene and on the enormous burden which is placed upon the Supreme Court by the need to make that determination in case after case.

Yet, regardless of their different premise, the effect would have been the same—the end of obscenity laws for “consenting adults”—if one more justice had swung to their side.

Whether that one vote will come in the next five years—or 20 years or ever—remains to be seen. The majority itself remarked that “this is an area in which there are few eternal verities.”

For the present, opponents of censorship can take heart that a few of the justices—and perhaps the country at large—are rethinking their attitudes toward sexuality, explicit films and publications. After all, sex is not a “wrong” subject, despite what we may have been told as children. Some people like to buy sex books and patronize sex films for much the same reason that others of us might prefer “Mary Poppins” or “The Sound of Music”—they amuse, inform, even feed our fantasies.

Of course, the treatment of sex varies—from gross to subtle, from silly to sensible—and of course tastes are so various that one man's meat is another man's garbage. But why a certain degree of explicitness about this particular subject should be deemed by mature people to be not only outside the First Amendment but also a crime—when, for example, we think nothing of freely disseminating the most gruesome and detailed depictions of violence—remains a puzzle.

The changes which a bare majority of the court have made concern the way in which obscenity is defined and determined. In recent years a plurality of the court has ordinarily used a so-called three-pronged test. Under this test a book or film could not be prosecuted constitutionally as “obscene” unless it (1) appealed to the “prurient” interest in sex of the average person; (2) was “patently offensive” to community standards and (3) was utterly without “redeeming social value.”

To be obscene a work had to pass (or fail, if you like) all three parts of the test—that is, it had to be prurient *and* offensive *and* without redeeming value. Juries had to be told that they could con-

vict only in accordance with this test and appellate court judges—even the Supreme Court itself—would apply the test independently in each case that came before them.

Chief Justice Burger's new opinion for the court keeps the three-pronged structure. Now however, prong No. 2 has been narrowed somewhat in a couple of respects that have received minimal attention: A work can now be deemed sufficiently offensive only if it portrays "sexual conduct"—and only if the law under which the prosecution has been undertaken made clear what kind of sexual conduct might cause trouble. (Interestingly enough, in giving examples of what he means by "sexual conduct," Chief Justice Burger includes not only "ultimate" sex acts and "lewd exhibition of the genitals" but also the "excretory function.")

In that part of the new opinion which received the most publicity, prongs Nos. 1 and 2 have been either narrowed or broadened—depending on geographical circumstances—by the requirement that pruriency and offensiveness be judged by state, rather than national, standards.

This is not, strictly speaking, a change, since the court had never previously decided whose standards were in fact applicable. (The court didn't consider whether it might sometimes be proper to focus on the taste of an entity smaller than the state.)

But the most significant departure may be the alteration of prong No. 3. Instead of requiring that a work be found "utterly without redeeming social value," now the test is whether it lacks "serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value." The implication of this change, however, is unclear, since the court failed to explain what was once meant by "utterly" and "redeeming," and how it will define "serious," "literary," "artistic," etc., in the future.

How will the new decision work in practice? I suspect that verbal changes in the prongs will have little impact on factual cases. Despite what jurors are told about the technical definition of "obscene," they tend to apply their personal intuition about what is too dirty to be tolerated, and there is little evidence that judges act much differently.

However, we are surely going to see some increase in attempted obscenity censorship and harassment by prosecutors seeking to exploit parts of the court's new language. We are also going to see producers of obscenity use their most fertile imagination to gain constitutional immunity by injecting "serious" values into their product—without really deleting the raw sex their patrons crave.

As for the Supreme Court itself, it is probably prepared to let some convictions stand which wouldn't have been upheld before. The justices may well think a line lies somewhere between "Deep Throat" and "Last Tango in Paris"—but how many of them have seen either film, and how will they react when confronted with "serious" packages in which sex will be wrapped?

What seems clearest is that the court has once again invited itself to be the nation's sex censor. This is a role the justices have never played with much success, and it is unlikely that further practice will improve their performance.

BOOK PUBLISHING'S HIDDEN BONANZA

Curtis G. Benjamin

The division of the book world most readily recognized by the general public is between textbook publishing and general (or "trade") book publishing. Indeed, the U.S. book industry has for many years divided itself in this way by maintaining two trade associations: the American Book Publishers Council for producers of general books, and the American Educational Publishers Institute for producers of textbooks and related teaching materials. But this dichotomy loses validity every year as educators continue to move sharply away from the traditional one-subject-one-book teaching practice. In fact, most publishers today, foreseeing a sure meeting of the twain, think their two trade associations should be merged; this move seems imminent.

Another division, and a more natural one, is between what are known within the industry as literary books and nonliterary books. The first category includes fiction, biography, poetry, drama, and general literature. The second encompasses several classifications of practical and professional works in such subject areas as agriculture,

Curtis G. Benjamin, director and consultant for McGraw-Hill, Inc., and former president and chairman of the McGraw-Hill Book Company, gives his expert opinion of trends in book publishing. The article (April 18, 1970) is used with his permission and that of *Saturday Review*, copyright 1970.

business, economics, education, law, medicine, science, and technology; and it includes a multitude of handbooks, manuals, directories, statistical reports, sets of numerical tables and data, and "how-to" guides. Most textbooks, by nature as well as subject matter, fall into this second category. The classifications of the respective categories have been used since the turn of the century by the *Publishers' Weekly* annual statistical reports.

This division represents two worlds of publishing, each quite different and separate, and sufficient unto itself. There is, in fact, a far greater distinction between literary and nonliterary houses than between textbook and nontextbook houses.

During the 1960s, there occurred an astonishing explosion of nonliterary books. This unexpected development was doubly astonishing in that it was within the hardcover realm, and it came at the end of a long and little noticed sea change that began some forty years earlier. Although the explosion was a big one, not many people heard it, or even heard about it. This was because it occurred in the hidden part of the book-industry iceberg, the much larger part that is all but invisible to the general public, and that is not much celebrated within the industry itself.

In the early years of the century, newly published literary works outnumbered nonliterary works by two to one. Then, starting with the 1930s, there came a change in this imbalance; the production of literary works declined, while that of nonliterary works increased in proportion. The decline of the former was caused presumably by restricted spending for nonessentials during the Depression.

In the following decade, the 1940s, literary works declined a little more, while nonliterary works climbed a little higher. Then both categories climbed sharply through the 1950s, and by the end of that decade the two were almost even. Happy days were here again for all kinds of literary books, and for fiction especially. Income from sales of reprint, book-club, and motion-picture rights gave novels a new lease on life, and restored their production to an interesting level of profitability.

Then came the 1960s and the spectacular leap ahead in the production of nonliterary works. In that decade alone, the number of such works produced annually increased by 164 per cent, while literary titles increased by only 29 per cent. The imbalance of the earlier years was completely reversed, and by 1969 new nonliterary works outnumbered new literary works by more than two to one.

The long-range change over this forty-year period was even

more striking: Annual nonliterary book production increased by some 380 per cent, while literary production increased by only 40 per cent. . . .

It is amusing to note the aloofness of certain lofty-minded literary publishers and commentators who like to describe many kinds of nonliterary works as "nonbooks." The publishers of these books laugh all the way to the bank over this disdainful characterization. They know that these "nonbooks" are in great demand, that they have high societal value, and that they are of large importance to the overall resources and economy of the book industry. They know, too, that in many a large, multi-interest publishing firm, the profit earned by nonliterary titles bankrolls the whole house; that more often than not this profit provides large sums for investments in glamorous but uncertain literary ventures of great worth and prestige—ventures of the very kind that always are warmly applauded by the literary buffs.

Another possible division of the book publishing world is the paperback/hardcover bisection. This division actually is not as sharp or as meaningful within the industry as it is in the public's mind. Strangely, one of the most persistent of current myths about book publishing is that the two kinds of books are locked in a battle for survival. Indeed, many people on the fringes of the publishing world now believe firmly that paperbacks are *in* and hardcovers are *out*. This belief has gone so far that many students today suspect the value of any book that has not been reprinted in somebody's paperback series. I, myself, often have to suffer the pity of certain of my young friends when I insist that hardcover books are here to stay. To them, paperbacks have a high public visibility—at bookstores, newsstands, drugstores, supermarkets, railroad stations, bus terminals, and airports everywhere. Besides, they have had the truth of the matter from their teachers and from numerous reporters, columnists, lecturers, TV commentators, and book reviewers.

As an example of how the public can be misinformed about the fortune of paperbacks and the fate of hardcovers, a statement in *The New York Times* of January 31, 1970 written as background to a review of a recently published history of the Houghton Mifflin Company, read:

The economics of publishing today has reached such a stage that the hardcover book is almost a liability to the man who brings it out. Since all the money is in the subsidiary rights, in what can be spun off in the form of movie options, stage adaptations, paperback rights, digests and the like, the publisher wishes the hardcover would go away and leave him alone.

Imagine with what dismay this statement was read by those insiders who know for certain that in recent years hardcover books have provided almost 90 per cent of our industry's sales and about 95 per cent of its profits. Naturally, the question arises why the public fancy has been so far misled. Why has the paperback "explosion" been so overcelebrated? Why has its supposed impact on hardcover publishing been so overstated? The answer, of course, is that large segments of the general public, and some people in book publishing as well, want it that way. Indeed, they want it that way so badly that they refuse to believe hard facts and figures. They simply will not believe that mass-market paperback publishing is, economically speaking, only a small part of the total publishing world. Nor will they believe that the paperback explosion actually has been more helpful than hurtful to hardcover publishing.

The foregoing observation should not be taken in any way as a denial of the status of paperback publishing. Everyone knows that the paperback explosion of the 1950s had large importance of its own. Everyone recognizes that paperbacks, and especially mass-market paperbacks, also have high and special societal values. The insider knows, too, that paperbacks have made a large indirect contribution to the overall prosperity of the U.S. book industry. He sees that they serve to hook thousands of new readers every year who would never have started on the hardcover stuff. Thus, he knows that the importance of the many millions of paperbacks sold each year is far greater than the dollar income and profit derived from their sale.

In this light, it is especially regrettable that paperback publishing had several difficult years in the second half of the 1960s. Although between 300 million and 350 million copies of mass-market paperbacks were sold annually, some of their major producers had rather rough going. The trouble came not from a lack of buyers, but rather from excessive payments for reprint rights and from costly competition for market outlets. Some of this trouble was offset by newfound success with what have been dubbed "instant paperbacks"—meaning quick reprints in large quantities of certain public documents of wide popular appeal, such as the report of the Warren Commission. These quick reprints, in some instances, have put paperback books into fairly direct competition with the news media, and thus have given a "new dimension" to the book industry.

In fairness, the quotation from the *Times* is true of fiction; still, fiction represents less than 10 per cent of the present annual output of new books. In any case, it appears that the *Times* reviewer, like most other outside observers of the publishing scene, was totally

unaware of the great hardcover explosion that had occurred on the nether side of his world.

The striking aspect of the book market as a total aggregate is that, while the annual production of new books of all kinds increased by only 40 per cent in the three decades that ended in 1959, the increase in the subsequent ten years was over 100 per cent. It was inevitable, of course, that there would come with this sharp increase an intensification of the perennial cry that too many books are being produced. Unfortunately, this cry has been repeated through even the years of the book industry's greatest and soundest growth. It comes from certain breast-beating publishers who loftily call for "fewer and better books." What they plainly want, of course, is to cut out the other fellow's trash. Often they want also to eliminate all those dull "nonbooks" that no one ever sees.

Nearly all these advocates of fewer and better books are literary buffs. Observing the publishing scene narrowly, they look no deeper than the rising total numbers of books produced annually, and then declare positively that the market cannot possibly absorb so many new titles. Often they wail, correlatively, that quality is being sacrificed for quantity, that bad books are driving out good books, and that the book industry is going to hell in a crassly overloaded handbasket. Such talk has always been popular with literary audiences and with reporters looking for stories about the charismatic world of publishing. Yet, it has never made sense, and it never made less sense than in the 1960s. For example, how could the great increase in scientific and technical books have anything whatever to do with the quality of the new fiction of the decade? And did the slowdown in published general literature really improve its quality? No, the postulate of fewer and better books patently has no general value as a working principle for the industry.

Far from being choked up in recent years, book markets have actually been expanding rapidly in size and receptivity. In fact, sales of almost all kinds of books climbed sharply through the 1960s. In that decade, total dollar volume of industry sales increased by almost 150 per cent, from \$1.106-billion to \$2.760-billion. Much of this gain came, to be sure, from higher prices and inflated dollars—about a fourth of it, roughly. With an adjustment for this inflation factor, the real ten-year gain was about 110 per cent. In the same period, the country's Gross National Product, after application of the same kind of implicit deflators, grew by only 50 per cent. It is clear, then, that the book industry's growth was far greater than that of the nation's economy as a whole.

In the longer view, looking back through the earlier years of sea change, the book industry as a whole in a way scored a truly remarkable long-term growth record, but in another way it seemed not to keep up with its true potential. Some interesting comparative figures on forty-year growth trends appear. According to these figures, the book industry in sales growth again far exceeded the long-term growth of the national economy. (The dollar figures for both book sales and GNP are adjusted to 1929 values—and who won't be shocked to see that the 2.760-billion of 1969 sales dollars converts to only 1.290-billion of 1929 sales dollars?)

On the other hand, looking at the long-term growth in the nation's population of college graduates, one can ask whether the book industry has not failed to make the most of its growing opportunity. Assuming that college graduates represent the country's hard core of book buyers, it appears that publishers have not kept up with the natural growth of their markets. (In the forty-year period, the college graduate population increased eightfold, while book sales increased only sixfold.) Indeed, it can be fairly said that the industry as a whole has been riding rather than making the long wave of its good fortune.

The publishers of educational and reference books rode high on the wave through the 1960s. The injection of massive federal funds into education and library budgets caused a soaring of sales that reached a truly dizzying height in 1966: In that year, an aberration in government disbursement practice caused most of the funds for two federal fiscal years to be spent in the one calendar year. In the following three years, there was a disappointing slackening in the sale of textbooks and related instructional materials, and of encyclopedias, dictionaries, atlases, etc. Still the publishers of such works, always more prosperous than general book publishers, never had it better. In the decade, their sales increased by 156 per cent. Their net profits failed to soar proportionately, largely because the costs of intensified competition exacted a heavy toll as more and more firms rushed to what was for them a newfound and unfamiliar mother lode.

Many inside observers were bemused by one particular behavioral response of educational publishers in the 1960s. This was the alacrity and enthusiasm with which many reputedly turgid textbook firms answered the call of educators for more and larger multi-unit instructional packages. When teachers began some years ago to move away from the conventional textbook as a monolithic instructional instrument, many textbook publishers pushed to the head of the

parade. Sure, they could supply rather quickly the needed multi-unit packages containing core text materials, supplementary readers, laboratory manuals, workbooks, tests, and whatever else was wanted. Some could, and did, supply even larger and more costly multimedia packages (including films and tapes), which were scooped up by the more affluent school systems and certain government-financed special programs. All this explains in part the juiced-up growth in the educational publishers' sales volume. It also explains how many an old-line textbook firm quickly acquired a refreshing stimulant and a higher sense of professional responsibility. Thus again did progress and prosperity go hand in hand.

The curious phenomenon that helped to produce in the 1960s an inordinate increase of scientific and technical books had a powerful effect on publishing through many years; I have called this, by analogy, the "twigging phenomenon." It can best be described as the continual furcation and fractionation of scientific and technical knowledge, and, hence, of the subject matter of books in these fields. Naturally, this endless fractionation has resulted in the publication each year of hundreds of highly specialized books for groups of readers that are no larger today than they were ten or twenty years ago, despite the fact that our total population of scientists and engineers has almost quadrupled in the past two decades. The specialists need and write books on proliferated and refined subjects; the technical publisher who properly serves his clientele must, of course, publish them in proliferated numbers.

In my analogy, the subjects of such books represent the twigs on the tree of scientific and technical knowledge. Although the tree itself is perhaps five times as big as it was twenty years ago, the twigs are still the same size—and so are the markets for the specialized books. This phenomenon explains in large part why publishers of scientific and technical books have had to scramble to keep up with their markets, and why these particular markets have so readily absorbed the greatly escalated numbers of new titles published in the past decade.

Finally, another, but not so subtle, phenomenon that worked with force on the book industry in the 1960s was the wide impulse for corporate mergers and for related marriages, in some instances, between the electronics industry and book publishing. Many of the mergers were impelled by "cross-media" marriages, and all the latter were inspired by rationalized dreams of synergistically induced extra-dividend happiness. The industrial giants (hardware grooms) happily took to wife many carefully selected bedmates among the avail-

able book firms (software brides). "We have the hardware, they have the software," General Sarnoff is reported to have said when RCA acquired Random House in 1965.

Then what happened? It is, of course, too early to say for sure, but two things now seem quite obvious to insiders.

First, the hardware-software marriages, though widely celebrated in the press and greatly feared by many in the book industry, have been tried and found wanting. The synergistic effect has not come off as expected; to date, the unions have been disappointingly unproductive of profitable hybrids. Clearly, computers and books have not mixed so readily and effectively as many people believed they would. Consequently, some high-powered grooms already have been heard to grumble about their brides, many of which were bought at quite fancy prices. At the same time, many relatively low-powered book publishers have unexpectedly been enjoying life as millionaires. Thus, by the end of the decade, the miscegenetic marriages were rapidly going out of style. Maybe we shall see some annulments or spin-off divorces in the 1970s. Even so, many publishing houses will have been provided, meanwhile, with more adequate working capital and more progressive management.

Second, the many mergers and cross-media marriages have not resulted, as widely supposed, in a baneful concentration of book publishing in the hands of a few large and powerful corporate complexes and conglomerates. To be sure, many independent houses, both large and small, have become operating units in a wide variety of much larger corporate structures. But, at the same time, many new and growing firms have come along to take their places in the ranks of the independents. In fact, contrary to popular belief, these ranks have been more than filled every year. Actually, there were more independent book houses in the United States at the end than at the beginning of the 1960s, just as there were more at the end than at the beginning of the 1950s. Anyone who doubts this statement can be self-convinced by counting the number of independent firms listed in *Literary Market Place* (Bowker's annual guide to book publishing) for certain years. He will find that there were 508 in 1949; 638 in 1959; and 675 in 1969.

No, the book industry is not about to be gobbled up or monopolized by a few large and sinister industrial octopuses—not, at least, for some time to come.

THE BOMP: WAY OF LIFE, NOT A SIDESHOW

Greil Marcus

The Beatles revolutionized rock 'n' roll by bringing it back to its sources and traditions. The new era, in America, began with a song, a joyous song, which had what one friend of mine calls the "takeover sound"—music that breaks from the radio and is impossible to resist. The first notes of *I Want To Hold Your Hand* were there, day after day. Everyone knew something different had happened. For months, every new Beatles song had part of that first record in it—that was just the way you had to hear it; that's what a new beginning, a sense of a new beginning means. All the rules were changing, as they'd changed in the fifties. Like the Beatles, groups had to write their own lyrics and music, and play their own instruments—they had to be as involved as possible. With the coming of the Rolling Stones, a new pattern was set: for the first time in the entertainment world, singers and musicians would appear, in photographs and on stage, in the clothes they wore every day. The music and the mystique were coming closer and closer to life as we lived it. For the new groups and for those of us who listened, rock 'n' roll became more a way of life than a sideshow. There was a hint that those stars up on stage might even be the same kind of people as the ones in the audience. Rock became more comfortable and more exciting at the same time.

Rock 'n' roll seeks to do something that earlier popular music had always denied—to establish and confirm, to heighten and deepen, to create and re-create the present moment. Rock, as a medium, knows that it is only up to a certain point that this can be done. To keep a moment of time alive it's necessary to make a song new every time it's performed, every time it's played, every time it's heard. When a song gets stale it only fills time, marks time, expends itself over two or three or ten minutes, but it doesn't *obliterate* time and allow you to move freely in the space that the music can give you. When a song is alive, the mind and the body respond—they race, merge with the music, find an idea or an emotion, and return. When a song is dead, the mind only waits for it to be over, hoping that something living will follow.

Excerpted from "Who Put the Bomp" from *Rock and Roll Will Stand*, Beacon Press, 1969, copyright Greil Marcus, this is one of many pieces about music and community authored by Mr. Marcus. A student in American political thought at Berkeley, he has been an editor on the *Rolling Stone* staff, coauthored *Woodstock*, edited *Rock and Roll Will Stand* and also has contributed to *Creem*.

Judy Garland has sung *Over the Rainbow* some thousands of times; there's a man who keeps count. The tally is published in the newspapers occasionally, like the Gross National Product, which is really what it is: Judy Garland's GNP. You measure her progress that way. The same kind of mentality that demands this tune from Judy Garland, the same kind of mentality that makes her want to sing it, made a Santa Monica grandmother watch *The Sound of Music* over seven hundred times, once a day, at five o'clock. Listening to a rock song over and over, seeing *A Hard Day's Night* a dozen times, isn't the same—with that you participate when you must, stay away when you desire. The mind is free to remake the experience, but it isn't a prisoner. You don't demand the same songs from Bob Dylan every time he gives a concert—you understand that he's a human being, a changing person, and you try to translate his newness into your own.

This movement of the re-creation of the moment, with the constant changing of the dynamic, is mostly the result of the radio, the way it gives one music. When a song is new, and you like it, when it possesses that intangible grace that makes it part of you, you wait and hope all day that it will come out of the radio and into your ears. You listen, stop what you're doing, and participate. Finally, you'll get tired of it, ignoring the song when it comes on. Months or years later, when it returns as an oldie, the initial experience will be repeated, but with understanding, with a sense of how it all happened. You can't pretend that grace is there when it's not. When *Like A Rolling Stone* was released, I liked it, but I got tired of it pretty quickly. A few months later I put it on the phonograph and it jumped out and claimed me. I think it's the greatest rock 'n' roll record ever made—but I didn't decide that, I accepted it.

An incredible number of songs provide this sort of experience. Because of this, because of the way songs are heard, with an intensity that one provides for himself, they become part of one's mind, one's thought and subconscious, and they shape one's mental patterns. People sense this: there is a conscious effort by the members of the generation I'm talking about to preserve and heighten the experiences of rock 'n' roll, to intensify the connection between the individual and his music, between one's group of friends and the music they share. That effort takes the form of games and contests. These games reinforce the knowledge that this music is ours, that it doesn't and can't belong to anyone else. The kids who'll follow us will have a lot of it, but they can never really know the absolute beginnings of rock 'n' roll—that's our treasure. The generations that came before us

are simply somewhere else. In a strange, protective way, people who are now in middle age aren't *allowed* to possess the music we have. When the Beatles were becoming acceptable, listenable for adults, with *Michelle* and *Yesterday*, the foursome responded with hard rock and experimental music, with sitars and tape machines and driving guitars. *Day Tripper* and *Strawberry Fields Forever* blasted the Beatles back home to students, kids, intellectuals, dropouts. The exclusiveness of rock 'n' roll is well-guarded. If the adults can take it, we'll probably reject it. In a way we want to share it, but in the end, it's better that we can't. If we're to be different, we'd best protect the sources of our differences, whenever they are re-created. That is what the Beatles did when they sang *I'm Down*, the toughest rock 'n' roll since Little Richard—they returned to the beginnings, even as they stayed far ahead of everyone else.

And we preserve our possession with games. As small boys quiz each other on baseball statistics, young people today are constantly renewing each other's memories of rock 'n' roll. If you can't identify an old song by the first few bars, something's wrong. "Who did *Come Go With Me*?" "The Del-Vikings, 1957." That's a conversation between Yale and Harvard football players, caught on the field. Once, in an elevator on the Berkeley campus, a friend and I were singing "Who put the bomp in the bomp de-bomp de-bomp, who put the dang in the rama lamma ding dang, who was . . ." ". . . that man, I'd like to shake his hand . . ." joined in another passenger. "He made my baby fall in love with me!" sang a girl entering the elevator, completing the verse. Another friend of mine once made a list of all the Beatle songs released up to the time, about eighty then, identifying the songs only by the first letter of each word in the title. He quizzed everyone on it. Two years later I asked him about the list—he remembered, and started the game all over again. Then there was the guy who, when about twelve, set up an incredible routine for responding to the current hits. He'd budget enough money to buy five records a week, and he'd buy the ones he dug the most. Then, when he got them home, having also picked up a copy of the most recent Top Forty survey, the ritual would begin: he'd draw elaborate tables, as he correlated his taste with that of the record-buying public, re-drawing the graphs each week as a song moved up or down the charts; and he had elaborate sets of figures establishing and revising the position of his all-time favorites on the same sort of scale. The next week would bring more new songs, adding to his mathematical history of his love for rock 'n' roll. And then there was the disk jockey on an FM rock show who played some records, and then

announced: “You’ve just heard *Since I Don’t Have You* by the Skyliners, and *Ain’t That Just Like Me* by the Searchers, both of which formerly tied for the all-time record in repetitions of a final rock ’n’ roll chorus, and *A Quick One While He’s Away*, by the Who, a song that *destroyed* that record by going over *thirty!*” In live performance, the Who have taken *A Quick One* past one hundred. Anyone who’s seen them do it knows why that’s important.

Rock ’n’ roll has always had an awareness of its music as a special thing, reserved for a certain audience. There are dozens of songs *about* rock ’n’ roll, a game within a game. There’s *Roll Over Beethoven* and *Rock and Roll Music* by Chuck Berry, Little Richard’s *All Around the World (Rock ’n’ Roll Is All They Play)*, the magnificent *Do You Believe in Magic* by the Lovin’ Spoonful, and the classic *It Will Stand* by the Showmen, released at a time when it looked like rock and roll might not:

*They’re always trying to ruin
Forgive them, for they know not what they’re doin’
Cause rock and roll forever will stand. . .*

The vitality and determination of these songs, that consciousness of rock as a special thing, something to be cherished, has reached the listener, who might have come to it on his own anyway, and helped him into the greatest game of all, the use of lyrics and phrases, verbal, “nonsense,” and musical, as metaphors to describe and enclose situations, events, and ideas. “Da do ron ron’ to you too,” wrote a reader in the letters column of a rock newspaper, responding to an offensive article on Phil Spector’s Ronettes, and revealing at the same time the wealth of undefined and undefinable meaning possessed by that phrase David Susskind just couldn’t understand.

This is a great game that never stops; and it’s more than a game, it’s a way of responding to life. Situations are “set”; one puts himself down; reveals an irony; takes comfort in the knowledge that someone has been there before him. There is a feeling that if we could only hear enough, and remember all we hear, that the answers would be there on the thousands of rock’n’roll records that have brought us to the present. It is the intensity of this game of metaphors that allows one to feel this way, to have this kind of innocent confidence. It’s not that people haven’t used metaphors before; “metaphors,” as opposed to “explanations,” have been drawn from all of literature and art for the same kinds of reasons. What is different is that rock ’n’ roll is a medium that is ever-present, thanks to the radio, and repetitive, thanks to Top Forty and oldies and record players, so that

the habit of using metaphors in this way comes so naturally it is a characteristic of how the more articulate part of this generation thinks at any time and responds to any situation. The fact that rock 'n' roll is a body of myths private to this generation only heightens the fact.

People quote lines and phrases from songs to their elders, who can't possibly have any idea of what they're talking about; they quote them to friends, who do know. A line from Dylan can stop whatever action is in progress and return the group to the warmth of a mental community. Since the renaissance of rock 'n' roll, people are finding out that what they thought was their private fetish is the style of a generation. There is a shared body of myths, a common style of feeling and responding, a love of a music that allows one to feel the totality of an experience without missing the nuances and secrets—and as we become aware of our myths we deepen them and practice our own mythmaking. The metaphors drawn from these myths aren't just a matter of fitting the proper words to the proper situation, but of knowing the music is there, somehow, in the same place that the idea is, that somewhere the two have met, and that you have been allowed to see the connection. It is a way of thinking that allows one to give mood and emotion the force of fact, to believe one's instinctual reaction more than someone else's statistical analysis or logical argument.

The music is all around. There's a radio in every car, at least one in every apartment. They are on much of the time—maybe all day. There's a record player, more and more, as people become aware of their music, finding "Oldies But Goodies" and "Greatest Hits" albums on it, as it also plays today's music. A hit song, one you like, is heard at least a hundred times. For the month or so it's popular, it becomes part of the day's experience. If it's on a record you buy, you have control over that part of your experience, instead of receiving it as a surprise from the radio. But playing a favorite song on your own record player lacks the grateful thrill of hearing it cascade from the radio as a gift of smoky airwaves. Rock exists—something makes one want not to control it, but to accept and experience it as it comes. After a record has passed from the charts, it will come back, as an oldie, every once in a while. You only need the rarity of renewal. It's like the surprise of hearing the Beatles' *All You Need Is Love* for the first time, with all those old songs, some virtually legends, jumping and twisting in and out of the chorus: *Greensleeves*, *In the Mood*, and a line from *She Loves You* with just a hint of *Yesterday*.

The incessant, happy repetition of words and music that is provided when a song is a hit on the radio or a favorite on the record player makes the song part of one's mind. The musical patterns and lyrics become second nature, as they merge and separate. The fact and experience of repetition, a song half-heard, half-enjoyed, a quick turning up the sound when a favorite chord comes, then withdrawal—this makes a difference as to how one thinks or subconsciously reacts to a situation. Once a song becomes part of you it is accepted. Then you are more naturally inclined to take that song, or any song, as a metaphor, to “name” the place you're in, and leave it at that. A person who feels this wouldn't employ *For What It's Worth* by the Buffalo Springfield to help explain the Sunset Strip riots, as did two writers in the *New York Review of Books*; he'd just say, “Listen to *For What It's Worth*—it's all there.” The habit and facility of taking metaphors from music, taking music *as* metaphor, and even more important, using these metaphors in a simple and absolute way, is, I think, the result of the musical experiences I've tried to describe. The metaphor isn't even principally the “meaning” of the words to a song; more often it is that the music, or a phrase, or two words heard, jumping out as the rest are lost, seem to fit one's emotional perception of a situation, event, or idea. A pattern of notes or the way in which a few words happen to fit together hit a chord of memory and a perception takes place, a perception which structures and “rationalizes” itself into a metaphor, not on the basis of a “logical” relationship, but because of the power of music and song to reach into the patterns of memory and response. “If you could just listen to it, you'd know what I mean, completely. It's all there.”

“It's all there” is an expression used so often in the making of a song or a musical experience into a metaphor it's as if some members of this generation had a secret language, with this phrase as the signal that an exclusive kind of discourse is about to begin. But no two people ever hear the same song in the same way, or connect the song with the same things. An organ movement in the “live” recording of Dylan's *Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues* is to me the terrifying presence of an evil serpent, swallowing the singer; to someone else, that part of the music slips by unheard, and the notes of the guitar become tears.

What this means is that a strange kind of communication must take place. In one sense, the communication is perfect—one person has complete trust in the other when he is told that a song holds all the truth of a moment or an experience. They both know it; they

both accept the validity of the metaphor. Thus, on a non-verbal, non-visual level, they understand each other and the way in which they both think, and they share the knowledge that only certain people can understand them. They realize the privacy and the publicness of their communication. The repetition, over and over, of a two or three minute musical experience has given them an effortless metaphorical consciousness. One knows what the other is talking about. There is an identification, and a sharing. It is the language of people who comprehend instinctually and immediately. To know "where it's at" isn't rational, it's automatic. "You can't talk about it, you have to groove with it." Of course that can be valid. Two people may try to talk about it, perhaps; but they'll get closer to the truth by placing the experience in front of them, starting with a shared understanding of a common purpose and an unspoken language of intuition and emotion, ending with a respect for the experience as well as for each other. Thus the communication is perfect, among those lucky enough to be a part of it.

But on another level, communication is impossibly difficult and confused. One person will not hear what another has heard in a song. It is hard, and wrong, to force another to put specific meanings on music he can hear for himself. It will bring forth associations for him as well. They both know the truth is there; that is not in doubt. What's there? Who can tell? I know, you know—what else matters? What is vital is that the situation has been captured, robbed, made livable by understanding with a depth that is private and public, perfectly and impossibly communicable. Perfectly communicable in that there is mutual trust that the situation is *ours*, that we have each and together made it our own; it can't destroy us; it can only be relived and reexperienced with each hearing of our metaphor. Impossibly communicable in that we never know exactly what our friend *is* experiencing. But that can be accepted, when one can create or be given metaphors—imperfect knowledge that is perfect understanding, our kind of roots to joy and tragedy. In John Barth's *Giles Goat-Boy*, the various characters of the novel all go to the theatre, where the Barthian paraphrase of *Oedipus Rex* ("Taliped Decanus") is presented. All know that the drama has affected them profoundly, but none knows just how, for himself or for the others. Yet all trust the play to give them the metaphors by which they will shape and interpret their lives, their actions, and the actions of the others. Each knows, by grace of the gift of art, that they will accept, instinctually and non-rationally, the validity of the others' pictures. All trust the play, as we trust our music. The Greeks perhaps lived with this kind

of depth, within this pattern of myth. The same treasure the Greeks of the tragic era possessed is, in some prosaic way, ours again.

Out of the experience of growing up with rock 'n' roll, we have found out that rock has more to give us than we ever knew. With a joyful immediacy, it has taught us to participate with ourselves, and with each other. A repetitive history of songs and secrets has given us a memory patterned by games, within a consciousness of a shared experience exclusive to our generation. Fifteen years of a beat, and thousands of songs that had just enough humor in those words that are so hard to hear, have brought us a style of thought that allows ideas to create themselves out of feeling and emotion, a style of thought that accepts metaphors as myths. Those myths, when we find them, are strong enough to sustain belief and action, strong enough to allow us to fashion a sense of reality out of those things that are important to us. This is not an attempt to "justify" rock 'n' roll by linking it to something "bigger" than itself—we have nothing bigger than rock 'n' roll, and nothing more is needed to "justify" it than a good song.

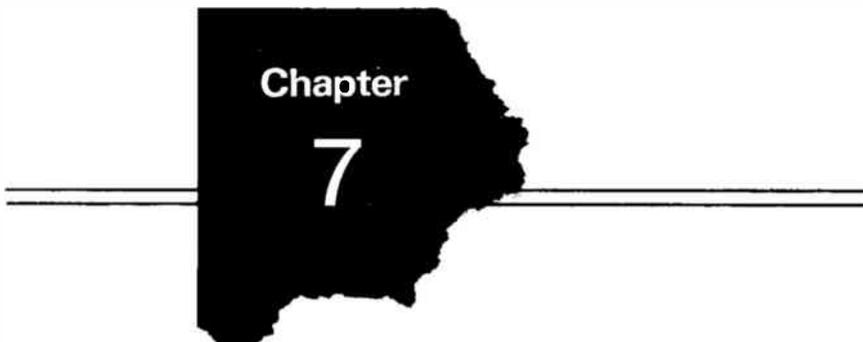
The kind of thinking I've tried to describe, the manner of response, the consciousness and unconsciousness of metaphor, the subtle confidence of mystique that leads to the permanence of myth—such an intellectual mood, I think, will have a deep and lasting effect on the vision and the style of the "students" of this generation. They will, and already do, embrace an instinctual kind of knowledge. This is partly a reaction against a programmed, technological culture—but so is rock 'n' roll, a dynamic kaleidoscope of sound that constantly invents new contexts within which to celebrate its own exhilarating power to create a language of emotional communication, sending messages to the body as well as to the mind, reaching the soul in the end.

What rock 'n' roll has done to us won't leave us. Faced with the bleakness of social and political life in America, we will return again and again to rock 'n' roll, as a place of creativity and renewal, to return from it with a strange, media-enforced consciousness increasingly a part of our thinking and our emotions, two elements of life that we will less and less trouble to separate.

This is a kind of freedom we are learning about. Affecting our own perspectives—artistic, social, and political—it makes the tangible and the factual that much more reprehensible, that much more deadening. The intellectual leap, the habit of free association, the facility of making a single rock 'n' roll metaphor the defining idea for a situation or a time of one's life—that is the kind of thinking that

makes sense. It is the factual made mystical, with a mythic consciousness given the force of fact, that is our translation of society's messages. It's the elusive situation or idea that fascinates, not the weight of proof or conclusion, and that fascination, captured by metaphor, will be, I think, our kind of knowledge, leading to our kind of vision.

The isolation that is already ours will be increased, of course; but that isolation, as politics and as art, is here now. If it isn't comfortable, there is at least a kind of fraternity to be discovered within its limits.



Chapter

7

Media for Minorities

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THE NEW FILMS: CULTURE OR CON GAME?

B.J. Mason

The history of blacks in cinema is, with few exceptions, a chronicle of stereotypes and distortions. Deliberately or otherwise, white film-makers have depicted blacks as lazy darkies, happy slaves, cannibals and brainless phalli—negative images which provided “entertainment” for millions of viewers who left yesteryear’s movies convinced that to be white was to be unquestionably good, but to be black was to be utterly evil. Despite protests from civil rights groups and concerned private citizens, film studios in the early 20th century continued to grind out—in the name of “entertainment”—such sordid fare as *The Nigger*, *The Coward*, *Sambo*, *The Wooing And Wedding Of A Coon*, and *The Birth Of A Nation*. The result: sweet poison down the throat of America, a mint for the makers of myths, and a hard row to hoe for the serious black artists who had to pork-chop their way from grass huts to kitchens to stardom. Witness the emergence of Stepin Fetchit, Topsy, and Amos ‘n’ Andy. Personalities such as Paul Robeson (*Emperor Jones*, 1933) and Rex Ingram (*The Green Pastures*, 1936) were the exceptions, but exceptions were not in demand. The public wanted, and box-office prudence dictated, caricatures—at the expense of black integrity.

Out of this gumbo of moral treason drifts the odor of controversy, for today there are those who believe that the past is not quite dead—that it is alive and grinning at us from the dark balconies of our modern movie houses. They contend that white film-makers haven’t changed; that they are simply glamorizing the old stereotypes. They charge the movie industry with cultural genocide and with making it difficult for black artists to work with any degree of integrity. They claim that, despite the fact that blacks comprise 40 per cent of the film market, blacks still get the short end of the economic stick. And they argue that because of the quick-buck motives of most film-makers, the rip-off trend will get worse unless something is done to stop it.

That trend began a few years ago when the movie industry fell into an economic slump. Sagging budgets and high production costs shook the old film colony to its roots and kept it from competing against new, independent film-makers. Those who survived the wide-

B.J. Mason wrote this article for *Ebony* magazine, a *Life*-like black owned, published, and edited magazine. Reprinted by permission of *Ebony* Magazine, copyright 1972 by Johnson Publishing Company, Inc.

spread unemployment crisis were saved by television, occasional musicals and grade-B westerns, but almost all the beneficiaries were white. Black actors, directors, producers and writers either had to make do or do without; industry racism and skepticism permitted only *one* Sidney Poitier, *one* Harry Belafonte or *one* Sammy Davis Jr. to make it—until 1970, when the experimental *Cotton Comes To Harlem* was released. Directed by Ossie Davis and co-starring Godfrey Cambridge and Raymond St. Jacques as two unlikely black detectives, *Cotton* tapped the previously untested black market, grossed more than \$9 million, and spawned a rash of other films—not the least of which was *Shaft* (1971), which starred former *Ebony* Fashion Fair model Richard Roundtree as a cool, hard-hitting private eye and raked in some \$15 million. Not to be ignored is Melvin Van Peebles' controversial independent smash, *Sweet Sweetback's Baad-asssss Song* (1971), which earned Peebles at least \$12 million and ushered in the "black superstud" vogue.

During the past two years, at least 50 "black" movies have flooded the market. They include *Blacula* (black Dracula), *Buck And The Preacher* (black western), *Georgia, Georgia* (black singer), *Halls Of Anger* (black teacher), *The Legend Of Nigger Charley* (radical slave), *The Liberation Of L.B. Jones* (extra-marital black-white sex), *Melinda* (black deejay), *Skin Game* (master-slave con artists), *Slaughter* (black thriller), *Top Of The Heap* (black cop), *Hammer* (black boxer), *Sounder* (black share-croppers), *Come Back Charleston Blue* (sequel to *Cotton*), *Shaft's Big Score* (sequel to *Shaft*), *Lady Sings The Blues* (Billie Holiday story) and *Super Fly* (black cocaine pusher), which raked in more than \$1 million after only a week at two theaters in New York, and which has earned the reputation of being just about the worst of the bad in black films.

Such cinema cured the movie industry of its blues and created new job opportunities for black artists who had been denied the chance to practice their craft because black wasn't "in." Directors such as Ossie Davis, Gordon Parks Sr., Gordon Parks Jr., Hugh Robertson, Maya Angelou, Mark Warren, Christopher St. John, Ivan Dixon and Wendell Franklin come to mind. For some, however, there is the nagging suspicion that white film-makers only use black craftsmen to lend authenticity to exploitation films and as "showcase" workers in the event that aware blacks complain. Excepted have been super star Sidney Poitier, who was both rich and famous enough to name his own game in *Buck And The Preacher*, and Melvin Van Peebles, who got the upper hand by writing, producing, directing, starring in and distributing his own film. While it is true that

Super Fly was created and financed by blacks, Warner Bros. studios bought distribution rights to it and offered its backers a percentage of the gate receipts. Now, a sequel is being readied by the studio—minus the talents of Phillip Fenty, the black writer, Gordon Parks Jr. the black director, and the original black financiers. Ron O'Neal will, for obvious reasons, repeat his starring role and is slated as director—but Warner Bros. owns the property. Other studios plan sequels to *The Legend Of Nigger Charley*, *Slaughter* and others.

Judging from the cheap, rush-order caliber of the majority of black films, it would seem that producers are more interested in profits than in quality. The low-budget quickie is popular—perhaps because the black market, starved to see itself on movie screens, cares less at this point whether a film costs *one* dollar or one *million* to make—as long as its cool black hero somehow sticks it to “The Man.” Of course, “The Man” cares not one bit about such vicarious attacks—as long as the big profit is made. So far, he has cried all the way to the bank and, no doubt, plans to shed a bucketful of tears over the success of such upcoming titles as: *Blackenstein*, *Black Bart*, *The Werewolf From Watts*, *Blackfather*, *Black Christ*, *Black Gunn*, *Black Girl*, *Trick Baby*, *The Nigger Lover*, and *Sundown In Watts*. In addition, black pockets are now being emptied on such sideline items as *Shaft* suits, watches, belts and sunglasses, leather coats, decals, sweatshirts and night shirts, beach towels, posters, after shave lotion and cologne. At the rate things are going, black audiences will at least be the best-dressed, nicest-smelling film-goers anywhere. Gordon Parks Jr. sums it up this way: “Studios make films to get people to see them on whatever basis they’re on. And if someone is going to put their money in a project, they expect a return.”

Rev. Jesse Jackson, head of Operation PUSH, demands some returns for blacks, too. “The film industry should be putting money in black banks,” he says. “It should be using black advertising agencies and black media.” PUSH has plans to deal with such things. Chicago attorney Thomas Todd, executive vice president of PUSH, says the organization will demand “opportunities for black persons to participate at every level of the movie industry, and we’ll look at the total industry and come up with sound proposals to reflect black people in the amount that they support the industry itself.” Rev. Jackson adds: “Since we’re organized in 30 key cities, the language we will use, if we are not heard, will not be obscenity and vulgarity. It will be at the box offices of the major theaters in those cities. Picket and boycott will be one form of protest. When and if we strike, it will not be a secret. We are prepared to move on major

studios with black films in production, those with films in the planning stages, and, if necessary, those already in distribution.”

One target is *Super Fly*, which has come under fire from PUSH and other groups because of its glamorization of its narcotics-pushing “hero,” portrayed by Ron O’Neal. *Super Fly* is about a cocaine seller named “Priest,” who decides to get out of the racket after one final big deal that will bring him and his partner \$1 million. Aided by his two mistresses (one black, one white), countless snorts of “coke,” at least one “joint,” some alcohol, about 30 kilos of for-sale dope and a couple of hired killers, Priest outsmarts the police-connected drug powers and drives off in his custom-built, chrome-plated “hawg”—to peddle his stuff to Harlem’s blacks. The term “super fly” simply means “the best dope” around.

Charging that the switch from the Stepin Fetchit stereotype to the Super Nigger image is proof that black film portraits have come full circle, Junius Griffin, president of the Beverly Hills-Hollywood NAACP, describes *Super Fly* as “an insidious film which portrays the black community at its worst. It glorifies the use of cocaine and casts blacks in roles which glorify dope-pushers, pimps and grand theft.” Other critics point to the film’s emphasis on Priest’s fancy car, expensive clothing, sexy women, bank roll, and incredible fights as typical elements of box-office bait for impressionable poor blacks—bait which is used as a camouflage for shoddy characterization, so-so acting and weak plots. Gordon Parks Jr., who directed *Super Fly*, attempts to defend his work by defining an exploitation film as “any film that doesn’t go into any depth in the characterization of what those people are, and is obviously made in a way to rip-off people. It uses all those cliché things in life to draw people in to see it.”

Most critics would say that Parks’ definition is exactly right for *Super Fly*; that there is nothing in the film to support the claimed nobility of Priest “getting out of the life”—since he not only snorts cocaine throughout the film but also escapes dope-pushing at the expense of the black community: by pushing more dope. There are those who insist that Priest must be seen as nothing more than a well-dressed, Cadillac-driving murderer of young blacks.

There is another concern: Quite a number of the new black films are criticized for portraying black women as little more than “prime beef” who bed men without establishing any emotional involvement whatever. In *Shaft*, for example, Richard Roundtree makes love to Gwen Mitchell with little or no romantic prelude; he repeats the same procedure with Kathy Imrie in *Shaft’s Big Score*. Calvin Lockhart sexercises Vonetta McGee in *Melinda* and Ron O’Neal calms Sheila Frazier’s nerves in a bathtub in *Super Fly*.

"When you leave the theater," says Griffin, "your girl friend, your wife, or your mother is looked upon as a woman of loose morals because she has just been portrayed that way on screen." In *Slaughter*, Jim Brown goes a bit farther: he simply shoves black Marlene Clark aside and beds down with white Stella Stevens.

Other critics lacerate the current black movies for making a mockery of black oppression. In *Super Fly*, three civil rights organizers are portrayed as money-grubbing extortionists. *The Lost Man* showed black militants whose ability to conduct a revolution was as doubtful as their ability to plan the bank job they bungled. *Watermelon Man* starred Godfrey Cambridge as a horrified "white" insurance agent who wakes up one morning and finds himself black. *Come Back Charleston Blue* pokes fun at everything and has blacks laughing at themselves. "It's not funny," says Griffin. "There's little in the black experience to laugh about."

Questions have been raised about the industry's preoccupation with formula-ridden fantasies on screen and filmmakers have answered that their function is "to entertain" rather than to "deliver messages." Although one hardly expects an artist to function as a postman, the credibility gap between realism and fantasy remains a



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Richard Roundtree (left) and Roy Thinnes in a scene from the movie *Charley-One-Eye*.

source of concern. It appears that every hero has to be a *super* hero—or at least a *super mouth*—so that the fearless, faultless black leads *really* amount to little more than black John Waynes or black James Bonds foisted off on an audience that at one time “couldn’t relate” to such white figures. The question is: will some frustrated black viewer foolishly collar a white policeman as Jim Brown did in *Slaughter*? After all, the cop *did* back down. Will some gung-ho team of black youngsters tackle a mob of whites a la Calvin Lockhart & Co. in *Melinda*? It seemed easy enough in the movie. Or will some “cool dude” act a fool and try to imitate a *Super Fly*?

Both white and black producers respond to criticism of such treatment by saying that they “only give audiences what they want.” But this defense is weakened by the fact that an audience can only want what it gets, since there is no way for the public to visualize the ingredients of a movie before it pays admission. Still other producers claim that “art remains outside the realm of politics,” and that concerned civil rights groups have “no right to set themselves up as moral judges for a whole race of people.”

Roy Innis, national director of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), fumes at this assumption. “We’re talking about the right of the black community to protect its image, to fight against exploitation,” he says. “We’re talking about the right to review scripts before these bad movies are made, to upgrade them or to discourage them in their infancy.” CORE plans to demand contributions to a black college scholarship fund, as well as an industry training program for blacks who have been kept out of studio jobs. Innis shrugs off the threat of a white backlash because the health of the industry depends upon black support. “They can’t do it,” he says, “because we’re 40 per cent of the dollar. This is *money*. Those are *capitalists*. You can always deal with a capitalist with money. They can’t run. They can’t hide. But they *can* go out of business . . .”

Conrad Smith, western regional director of CORE, agrees: “We can’t ignore the problem any longer, even if it means producing our own films—something we plan to do in the near future.” Athlete-turned-actor Jim Brown concurs. “The smart thing for blacks to do is raise money for black film companies to make films which will ultimately have their major runs in black theaters,” he says.

On the other hand, Raymond St. Jacques believes that rich blacks are too conservative to invest in black films. St. Jacques, a veteran actor, recently completed filming *The Book Of Numbers*—which he directed, produced and starred in. He formed his own production company, The St. Jacques Organization, and obtained

financing from Brut Productions, an entertainment subsidiary of Fabergé. St. Jacques owns 50 per cent of the picture. Sam Greenlee wasn't as fortunate. He tried to get a number of black businessmen to finance independent production of his book, *The Spook Who Sat By The Door*, and failed. "Never again," he says. "The cats I ran into don't have any faith in anything a black dude does. They'd rather invest their bread in white-owned productions, I think. The only reason I approached them in the first place was because I wanted to keep artistic control of the movie in black hands. Reluctantly, I had to go to whites—in opposition to my personal philosophy. It's supremely wrong for a film about black revolution to be financed by whites, or to let a white studio distribute such a film. Those studios want 50 per cent of the box-office receipts. The exhibitors want a third of the 'take' just to show your film in their theaters. They steal you blind because they keep the books. Actually, it's not necessary for a black producer to show his film at 200 theaters simultaneously. He can rent two or three theaters in about 10 key cities and avoid the rip-off squads."

What is this thing that has everybody up in arms? What is it about black cinema that causes all the gripes, the demands—the arguments and counter-arguments that threaten to rip the industry apart? Are we witnessing a gigantic con-game??? There are many who believe that we are merely witnessing the birth of black cinema; that the degradation and violence and depravity we see on screen are simply the growing pains of a young child—pains that will disappear when black cinema comes of age. Yet, pessimists insist that the "child" is now 70—too old to play around. And there are those who warn that blacks may very well be the victims of a plot by a white establishment bent on thought-control. Serious questions one might pose are: Who is the real enemy here? Is he white? Or is he black? Or both?

"It would be a damnable lie for us to lay the whole blame on white society for the evils we see on screen," Junius Griffin answers. "The only way whites can get near the black community is through a black broker. Black producers are front men for a white society." Rev. Jackson cautions that black movies have come very close to being an inadvertent advertising medium for drugs. "We cannot document this," he says. "We just hope it's not true. They can't advertise it on the radio. They can't advertise it on television, but through black movies they can popularize dope so much that it can become a form of advertising." Again, one thinks of the sequels being planned.

A number of black artists are equally concerned about the prob-

lem. Beah Richards is one of the few black actresses who has consistently refused to lower her standards to accommodate the demands of exploitative film-makers, for those demands, she says, "must necessarily lead us back into the abyss. Everybody is tired of the skin game. I think we've had it." Cicely Tyson, who [won a 1973] "Oscar" nomination for her brilliant acting in *Souther*, echoes solid agreement: "There is nothing realistic about any of these films. They're fantasy: super-this and super-that. Totally unreal. The psychological effects that I'm concerned about are the ones on the kids. They're being affected by these negative images." Mark Warren, who directed *Come Back Charleston Blue* after a string of *Laugh-In* hits, elaborates: "We have an obligation to project some positive images to the black community and we're not going to do it by applauding the characters they see in the neighborhoods every day." And Moses Gunn, who co-starred in *Shaft* and its sequel, *Shaft's Big Score*, says: "I'm determined not to do another. I did the first two pictures because I thought my character (Bumpy) was whole, *real* enough to portray; but one real cat in a movie full of caricatures isn't worth a damn."

What is "worth a damn," film-makers contend, is to depict reality—to *tell it like it is*. But there are those who believe that the function of films is not merely to depict reality, but to go one step further and illustrate what is *significant*—the virtues considered necessary to *press on*. As Lerone Bennett Jr. states in *The Challenge Of Blackness*, "Blacks have a historical responsibility to draw up an inventory of values separating the black core of experience not only from white encrustations, but from destructive lifestyles that . . . impede our forward movement."

Operation PUSH plans to move on the economic front. CORE has decided to set an example for independent film-makers by producing its own movies. The Beverly Hills-Hollywood NAACP intends to synchronize the efforts of local organizations and rate all future black films. The task confronting black actors and craftsmen is equally difficult. They are being asked to refuse to work under any values except their own, then redefine those values in terms of the black struggle, which means relating their work to the issues of struggle, growth and victory. They are being asked, in other words, to ignore the white censor and make their work yet another lever for the liberation of blacks. They are being asked to consider the question: Do we really have "artistic freedom"—or are our chains simply longer than before?

Ultimately, the black film goer will have to settle the issue. He

will have to decide if, by supporting the current black films, he is, in fact, assisting in his own degradation, for the merit of a given film lies *not* in its popularity but in its moral and esthetic values *alone*. He will have to decide, for himself, whether those values must include the stale rhetoric, meaningless sex and pointless violence seen in today's films, or whether they ought to include black pride, black strength and visions of black liberation. He will have to decide whether the new black screen images are reflections of a glorious people—or trick-mirror, fun-house distortions of black truth. History has proved that “cultural explosions” often leave both mountains and ditches. The verdict belongs to, must be decreed by, the black viewer.

THE BLACK PRESS IN TRANSITION

L.F. Palmer, Jr.

In 1945, when Gunnar Myrdal's classic study *An American Dilemma* was published, this country had 150 Negro newspapers with a total circulation estimated at 1.6 million, and Myrdal could write: “The Negro press . . . is rightly characterized as the greatest single power in the Negro race.” There were three circulation “giants” in the field: the Pittsburgh *Courier* (approximately 257,000); the Chicago *Defender* (202,000); and the Baltimore *Afro-American* (137,000). Twenty-five years later there are about 175 Negro newspapers with a circulation of more than 3 1/2 million; they are referred to as the black press; and there is considerable question about the power they wield in black communities.

The circulation “giants,” using 1971 *Editor and Publisher* figures: *Muhammad Speaks*, Chicago, 700,000; *The Voice*, Jamaica, N.Y., 90,000; *Amsterdam News*, N.Y. 83,000; *Sentinel-Bulletin*, Tampa, 75,000; *Black Panther*, San Francisco, figure unavailable, 1969 estimate 110,000. [Editor's Note: E&P says 108 papers had a 1970 circulation of 10,000 or more, seven with better than 50,000; five have founding dates before 1900. Philadelphia *Tribune* (1885), Houston *Informer* (1892), Baltimore *Afro-American* (1892), Des Moines *Iowa Bystander* (1894) and Indianapolis *Recorder* (1895).]

L.F. Palmer, Jr., former reporter-columnist for the *Chicago Daily News*, had previously worked on the *Chicago Defender* and the *Chicago Courier*. He now publishes a new Chicago Weekly called the *Black X-Press*. His research is used with his permission and that of *Columbia Journalism Review*, where it appeared in the Spring, 1970 issue.

Like the readership it serves, the black press is in transition. Characteristically, the field is changing so fast that it virtually defies measurement. Some editions aren't sold, but are given away; large numbers of publications know only a miraculously marginal existence; and small publications come and go in erratic spurts. But it is apparent that the press of, by, and for black people has entered a new evolutionary stage.

The changes in the "big three" of 1945 alone illustrate this. At the close of World War II, the *Courier*, *Defender*, and *Afro-American* all were national weeklies and could be purchased as easily in Biloxi, Montgomery, or Fort Lauderdale as in Pittsburgh, Chicago, and Baltimore. Today the *Defender* is one of two local black "dailies" in the country (the other is the *Atlanta Daily World* which publishes four times a week.) The *Defender's* 1970 circulation was 33,000 Monday through Thursday, and 37,000 for its weekend edition. But the Pittsburgh *Courier* also has dropped in circulation as has the *Afro-American*.

Among other great names to have withdrawn from the national field is the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, consistently credited with being the nation's best-edited and best-dressed black newspaper. Now more of a regional sheet, it has dipped from 64,368 in 1946 to 30,000. Meanwhile, both the Michigan *Chronicle* and Los Angeles *Sentinel* have made dramatic local gains—the *Chronicle* (published in Detroit) from 25,868 circulation in 1946 to 63,000; and the *Sentinel* from 15,892 in 1946 to 39,227. The *Chronicle*, whose editor and general manager, Longworth Quinn, is considered to be one of the best administrators in the field, achieved sizeable increases by winning and holding many readers during Detroit's daily newspaper strikes of 1964 and 1967-68. In Los Angeles, the *Sentinel's* steady gains along with those of the *Central News* and *Herald-Dispatch*, parallel the city's growth and the migration of blacks westward.

Though copies of the largest black papers can still be found outside their home territories, the end of the national black newspaper is clearly in sight. "Most black papers have to limit their circulation base because it is too costly to maintain far-flung distribution," says John "Rover" Jordan, acting publisher of the *Journal and Guide*. "We can't afford field men any longer, and transportation is too complicated and expensive. It is virtually impossible to provide adequate coverage of the national scene anyway."

Television has made inroads on black newspapers' readership—as it has on that of whites—and, because inner-city blacks are audio-oriented, black-focused radio has hurt, too. As one black editor in

Chicago said: "The four black-oriented radio stations here reach more listeners in an hour than the black newspaper has readers in a month."

The limited expansion of black newspapers' advertising bases also is a problem. Although the *Afro-American* is among the fortunate few with no financial crisis, publisher John Murphy says, "We are really not able to get into the mainstream of the American economy. We just haven't been able to break through the institutionalized discrimination by advertisers." There has been "some success" in obtaining food copy, he says, but little in such fields as department store advertising. In fact, when Macy's started advertising in the New York *Amsterdam News* in 1965 the newspaper turned the milestone into a front-page headline. Similarly, officials of the Chicago *Daily Defender* did not try to hide their elation when Marshall Field & Company signed with them. "We are delighted, of course," says John H. Sengstacke, *Defender* publisher. "This is the first time Marshall Field has advertised in black media, and we've been after them for a long, long time."

Sengstacke, the nephew of the *Defender's* founder, Robert S. Abbott, has become the black newspaper baron of the nation with ten papers. He became president of the *Defender's* parent company after Abbott's death in 1940, turned the *Defender* into a daily in 1956, and in 1967 purchased the *Courier* chain. His main plant at 2400 South Michigan Avenue in Chicago is the best equipped of any black newspaper facility, and his papers circulate in every region but the West. In addition to the *Daily Defender* and *Michigan Chronicle*, they include: the *Chicago National Defender*, *Tri-State Defender* (Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas), *Georgia Courier*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, *Florida Courier*, *Ohio Courier*, *Philadelphia Courier*, *National Courier*.

Then there is the problem of recruitment. "It's hard getting people who are qualified," says C.B. Powell, seventy-four-year-old publisher of the *Amsterdam News*, "and that goes not only for reporters but in advertising and circulation and management as well. I tried three white advertising managers but it just didn't work out." The *Amsterdam News*, the only black paper with a Newspaper Guild contract, pays the highest average salaries, but even these are below the scale of metropolitan dailies. Echoing Powell, John Murphy of the *Afro-American* says the black press has "become the training ground for the white metropolitan newspapers and radio and television stations ever since they recognized that it is advantageous to have a black reporter or two on their staffs."

The dearth of qualified editorial personnel is reflected in the black press' basic staple—news. Black newspapers, recognizing that they are in no position to compete with the metropolitan press in coverage of black communities, are greedy for handouts. In many instances, the black newspaper seems to have thrown in the towel. The metropolitan press, however, concerns itself largely with the most dramatic and sensational aspects of black life—conflict situations, militancy, unusual achievements of “celebrity blacks,” and, of course, crime. Because they have the resources available, white dailies—often with reporters hired from black newspapers—give lengthy coverage to such stories. Thus black readers look increasingly to metropolitan dailies for articles about blacks, even though their treatment may be suspect.

However, when it comes to routine coverage of black communities—social life, church activities, births, marriages, deaths, club and fraternal news, etc.—the black press has an open field and takes full advantage of its monopoly. As one black editor put it: “People like to see their names and their pictures in the paper. Just as sure as day follows night, the average black man or woman will never make the daily newspaper unless he commits a crime, and a serious one at that.”

This is why, for example, the *Chicago Courier*, which is rare in that it prints no crime news, in a recent twenty-page issue carried two full pages of business news, a page of entertainment notes, a generous amount of church and social news, and sixty-seven pictures. A sixteen-page edition of the Cincinnati *Herald* included two church pages, two sports pages, and one entertainment page, as well as a full page of pictures, all of different weddings. The *Afro-American* and *Pittsburgh Courier* routinely carry two or three pages of women's and society news. It is not unusual for black weeklies to devote two pages to school notes, crammed with names. Once the reader gets off the front page of a black newspaper, he is rarely confronted with hard news.

The front page of most black newspapers, however, are fairly predictable. Banner heads are likely to herald a crime or a racial issue. Typical banners in a recent week: in the *Chicago Daily Defender* weekend edition, E. CHICAGO HTS. RANGER TO DIE IN CHAIR; RAP SCHOOL OFFICIAL FOR STUDENT UNREST; in the *Journal and Guide*, FIRE KILLS 8; FATHER SAVES 3 BEFORE DYING; TROOPS PATROL AT VORHEES; in the *Louisiana Weekly*, COURT HITS RACISM IN ASBESTOS TRADES; INTRUDER SLAIN IN APPLIANCE STORE.

The black press dates to 1827, when John B. Russwurm and the Rev. Samuel Cornish went to the editor of the old New York *Sun* and asked him to run a story about a black organization to which they belonged. The editor is reported to have told them: "The *Sun* shines bright for all white men but never for the black man." Rev. Cornish and Russwurm walked out and founded the nation's first black newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*. It did not survive long, but the crusading spirit of its founders did. [Editor's Note: The famous New York *Sun* appeared in 1833, six years after the *Freedom Journal* was started in 1827; the *Sun* of Benjamin Day did have a motto, "It Shines for All" but the rest of the saying is probably just a tale.]

Early black newspapers cried out against the injustices of slavery and, after emancipation, against the plight of the freedmen. Through the lynching years the black press protested loud and long. Robert S. Abbott and his *Chicago Defender* concentrated on the tortured life in the South with such zeal that he contributed greatly to the northward migration of blacks beginning in World War I. During World War II the black press attacked and exposed discrimination against blacks in the armed forces. This relentless crusade led President Harry Truman to issue an executive order ending Jim Crow in the service. The first historic March on Washington in 1941 was dramatized almost exclusively by the black press. The direct result was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's executive order creating the first declaration for federal fair employment practices.

Today, with the black revolution at its zenith, the question is raised throughout the ghettos: where is the black press? The answer is that the established black press is squarely in the middle of a dilemma. It finds itself trying not to be too conservative for the black revolutionaries, and not too revolutionary for white conservatives upon whom it depends for advertising. Murphy of the *Afro-American* speaks candidly about the tightrope the black press walks: "Newspapers are small businesses and publishers are businessmen. Surely you'd have to describe black publishers as conservatives, I suppose. In earlier years, black newspapers were spearheads of protest. Today we're much more informational."

Powell of the *Amsterdam News* concedes that "we have not kept up with the black revolution as we should have. But you've got to realize that we don't see our role as leaders. We are not out to revolutionize. When the *Amsterdam News* sees issues that are too revolutionary, we speak out against them." Louis Martin, vice president and editor of the Sengstacke Newspapers and the former deputy chairman of the National Democratic Committee, says the black

press is “reflecting the rise in black awareness” but admits that “some of the older publishers were a little too slow responding.” Now, he says, “even some of our most conservative black newspapers are bowing to the winds of change.”

Many black readers wonder if “bowing to the winds of change” is enough. An editor in the Midwest says no. “Playing catch-up is not the name of the game,” he declares. “The black revolution has left the black press behind. And one of the reasons is that in the good old days of the black press income came almost exclusively from circulation because there just wasn’t any real advertising available. Today, the papers are picking up some pretty good accounts and, aside from wrestling with the increasingly complex economics of keeping a newspaper alive, black publishers have to make sure they don’t become too revolutionary in tone for fear of losing those new white accounts.”

William Robertson, assistant to publisher Leon Washington of the Los Angeles *Sentinel*, suggests another reason why the black press has relinquished its title of crusader: “I think we have lost much of our penchant for protest because we just don’t have the staff to dig out the stories like we used to.”

Some reporters on black newspapers, moreover, do not appear to have the dedication to the black cause which characterized black newsmen a couple of decades ago. A former reporter for the *Amsterdam News* was quoted in a *New York Times Magazine* article recently: “You don’t feel that you have to stay working there like you do on some jobs because you’re doing good works or really helping to change the community around you. It’s just a job. . . . You know the publisher’s in it to make money, not to reform the black world and that kind of spirit pervades the place. When I was there, my attitude was what the hell, if he’s in it for the money, I am, too.”

This attitude parallels that of a reporter for a Chicago black newspaper who told this writer: “Look, man, you get tired of brothers and sisters bugging you on the street because your paper just isn’t with The Movement. You know, one day our paper looks like it might be getting with it and the next day it sounds like the *Trib* [Chicago *Tribune*].”

Probably the classic example of the black press’ ambivalence on militancy is the way it has reacted to the Black Panther Party. At first black papers tried to ignore the Panthers. As the Panthers’ brand of activism stepped up to where it could not be overlooked, black newspapers, for the most part, reported their conflicts with police but consciously sought to hew a line that would not identify with

the Panther ideology. About a year ago, after the Illinois Black Panther Party served notice that the Chicago *Daily Defender* "will have to become relevant or we will have to deal with it," the *Defender* began carrying more news about the Panthers—their breakfast-for-children program and other activities not tied to police confrontation. When Panther leader Fred Hampton was killed in December, 1969 in a police raid in his Chicago apartment, black newspapers—like many white newspapers—took a new look at the Panthers and began questioning the role of the Establishment in dealing with this ultra-militant group.

How are less explosive issues handled in the black press today? An excellent insight is offered by Harold Barger, who has studied nine black newspapers in the Chicago area for a Northwestern University Ph.D. dissertation. Though there may be isolated differences in black newspapers' handling of news across the nation, Barger's findings apply generally to the established black press. He found two news areas in which there was what he called "an almost total negative image": the Nixon Administration and police activity in black communities.

"Virtually all of the references to Nixon are negative," Barger says. "This is not entirely surprising. Yet it is significant that references to the federal government tend to be favorable. It is when the references are made in more specific terms—the Nixon Administration, the Justice Department, etc.—that the bitterness shows through. Blacks tend to respect the basic traditions of this government—the rhetoric of American democracy, so to speak—and yet they clearly see their own identification as that of second-class citizenship."

Barger sees this apparent ambivalence toward the federal government as a paradox, yet it is easily explained since blacks have always looked to the federal government as their "hope." When the arms of the federal government are viewed individually, they show blatant failures to implement the American promise. Put another way, what Barger affirms is that black newspapers reflect blacks' general support of the American system, but record their readers' beliefs that the system is not working. (References to the Supreme Court were usually positive, but stories on housing, real estate men, jobs, labor unions, and the education, health, and welfare systems had negative images.) The most consistent positive theme Barger found was black unity, allied with the call for community control, particularly of schools. At the same time, he found black newspapers encouraging integration as a means of shaping a kind of society in which both blacks and whites can live in harmony.

These are, indeed, the general images which reflect from the established black press—that segment of the black newspaper institution which publishes as much for commercial motives as others. But there is a bold new dimension in the black press in the form of the organizational newspaper that in some instances is a profit-making venture but in all instances is a propaganda instrument. These papers are appearing all over the nation, especially in major urban areas, and they are having an impact on their readers and on the established black press. One thing sets them apart—militancy.

Two such papers, national in scope with circulations that outstrip virtually all other black newspapers, are *Muhammad Speaks*, published in Chicago by the Black Muslims, and the *Black Panther*, printed in San Francisco by the Black Panther Party. *Muhammad Speaks*—by far the largest of any black newspaper—is published in the Black Muslims' modern \$1.5-million-dollar offset plant. The Panthers' tabloid, according to Black Panther Chief of Staff David Hilliard, sells 110,000 weekly. Significantly, neither paper depends on advertising for revenue and both are sold enthusiastically by members on street corners. Both are remarkably alike in approach, though not in ideology: each issue of the *Black Panther* carries the party platform and its 10-point program; each edition of *Muhammad Speaks* runs the Muslims' program, also a 10-point platform.

Muhammad Speaks, which sells for 15 cents in Illinois and 20 cents elsewhere, runs stories under such headlines as THE SLAVE TRADE, WHITE EXPLOITERS BUILD NUCLEAR ARSENAL IN AFRICA, LINK STRUGGLE OF U.S. BLACKS, VIETNAMESE, as well as numerous messages from Elijah Muhammad, "Messenger of Allah." There also are reports from various Black Muslim Mosques. Only about half of the editorial staff is Muslim, and most top editors are trained in journalism. The acting editor in Chicago—the base for thirty-two staff members—is a Harvard graduate; the New York editor is an alumnus of the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism. Although the newspaper subscribes to United Press International, it does not use much UPI material, depending more on news contacts in key cities and lifting and rewriting of material from other black newspapers. The paper has an office in Cairo and is opening another one soon in London.

The staff of the *Black Panther*—which sells for 25 cents a copy—is mostly volunteer, depending heavily on reports from Ministers of Information in Panther chapters. The paper's pages are saturated with Panther-police confrontations, progress reports on trials involving Panthers, and activities such as free breakfast and health

programs. Typical *Black Panther* headlines scream: BLACK YOUTH MURDERED IN COLD BLOOD BY RACIST S.F. PIG; "RAP" BROWN LAW PUT TO USE BY POWER STRUCTURE; MOZAMBIQUE GUERRILLAS DETERMINED TO CARRY ARMED STRUGGLE THROUGH TO THE END; THE ANATOMY OF EXTERMINATION, A POLITICAL ASSASSINATION.

The fact that these two papers consistently circulate in figures far larger than their memberships affirms that there is a market for the more militant, anti-establishment black newspaper. Indeed, sizeable but unknown numbers of small organizational newspapers are now in existence, with an undetermined but obviously significant aggregate circulation: in Chicago, for example, the bi-weekly *Black Truth* circulates 30,000; the bi-weekly *Torch* 15,000; the weekly *Observer* 25,000; the monthly *Black Liberator* 10,000; and the monthly *Black Women's Committee News* 5,000.

The established black publishers look warily on these militant organs. Sengstacke Newspapers' Martin comments: "It's the same story in every city I've been in. The big weeklies apparently are not able to give these organizations and their points of view the kind of attention they demand." Because they are subsidized by organizations they are less dependent on advertising; and the editors—generally untrained in journalism but committed to the militant black cause—exercise wide freedom in their "news" presentation, which has great appeal to blacks who want action along with words.

Whether the established black press will move more in this direction remains to be seen. But its survival does not appear to be threatened. Publishers, though expressing mixed feelings about their individual futures, agree on that. "As long as there is white racism, we'll have black newspapers," Martin says. "But there is no question about it, we have to change our points of view and presentation of the news as the demands of black people are recognized. We'll have to if we are to be relevant."

CHICANO JOURNALISM: NEW MEDIUM FOR NEW CONSCIOUSNESS

Frank del Olmo

*Bueno, pues que hubo, como les va?
Que lindo día para cantar
Noticias que han llegado
De Nuevo Mexico. . .
from "Que hubo Raza,"
a modern Mexican-American corrido*

This modern day Mexican-American, or Chicano, corrido (folk song) sings about "news that has arrived from New Mexico"—more specifically, it tells of the *Alianza* movement led in that state by the Chicano leader Reies Lopes Tijerina.

The Chicano movement, like all movements that have ever involved Mexicans, has been immortalized in songs—the earthy *corridos* and *rancheras*, as well as the more romantic *boleros*. Unfortunately, in these days of instant mass-communication, there is a need for more efficient and consistent (albeit less romantic) means of carrying news.

Perhaps as many as fifty Chicano newspapers have sprung up since the early 1960's to publicize and help push the "Mexican-American civil rights movement" (to use for once the mass-media label for the complex social ferment now going on in our community).

Since 1965, Chicano newspapers have been published at various times in almost every major city of the Southwest, and even as far away as Kansas City (*Adelante* or *Forward*), Chicago (*Lado*), Florida (*Nuestra Lucha* or *Our Struggle*) and Wisconsin (*La Voz Mexicana* in Wautoma and *La Guardia* in Milwaukee). Most of these publications are members of the semi-formal Chicano Press Association (CPA).

The CPA was formed as a semi-official "confederation" among the earliest Chicano community newspapers. They agreed to share articles and features with each other. They also opened membership

Frank del Olmo, *Los Angeles Times* reporter and member of the Mexican-American Studies Department at California State University—Northridge, contributes one of the first published looks at the Chicano press and the Chicano Press Association. He traveled throughout the Southwest for the *Times* analyzing conditions in Mexican-American communities.

to "all other publications committed to improve the news media in the Spanish speaking community," as their statement of goals and philosophy says.

"Chicano" newspapers and newsletters are distinct from the many Spanish-language news media found in the Southwest, where the radio and television stations, and newspapers, are not as politically and socially activist as are the CPA members. In most cases, these more established media present the usual diet of daily world, national and local news—only in Spanish. (The word "Chicano" is a Spanish slang term used by many Mexican-Americans to refer to themselves. It has no literal translation into English, and its origin is obscure.)

As other Chicano papers were established, they also became members of the CPA. From the first few, they have multiplied to over 25 CPA members, with possibly another 25 non-affiliated Chicano papers, according to one CPA editor. The first of these papers emerged with the event that many social observers say was the start of the current Chicano (or Mexican-American) movement—the California grapeworkers strike.

In 1964, grapeworkers under the leadership of Cesar Chavez walked out of the Delano, Calif., fields to begin their strike and form the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, their new union. They also founded a union newspaper, *El Malcriado* (which means a precocious, ill-bred child in Spanish).

Today, *El Malcriado* is still regarded as a leader of the Chicano press in Southern California. It is published weekly out of the UFW's headquarters, a mountain retreat called La Paz, The Peace.

Located in the pine-studded Tehachapi Mountains between Los Angeles and Bakersfield, La Paz is an isolated location of clean country air and quiet solitude—quite in contrast to the headquarters of Southern California's other leading Chicano paper.

The offices of *La Raza* are located just off the noisy traffic lanes of the busy San Bernardino Freeway which speeds commuters through the sprawling urban barrio (ghetto) of East Los Angeles, where nearly one-half million Mexican-Americans are concentrated. Small, aging homes recline on the steep hills that loom above the old concrete building that is used as both office and layout shop for what is generally acknowledged as the leader of Los Angeles' Chicano press.

Since it was founded in 1967, *La Raza* has spawned many imitators in the Los Angeles area. Among them are *Regeneracion* (Regeneration), *Inside Eastside*, *Chicano Student Movement* (which

merged with *La Raza* in a not-so-new newspaper deal in 1969), *Machete*, *La Causa* (The Cause), *La Gente* (the People) and *El Popo* (named after the Mexican volcano Popocatepetl). In turn, these papers have seen similar publication in California cities from San Diego to the San Francisco Bay area, in New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, Colorado and other scattered areas.

Whether they publish in rural areas like La Paz, or a metropolitan center like Los Angeles, these Chicano newspapers share common traits. Only a few of them are organs for specific organizations. *El Malcriado* represents Cesar Chavez' UFN. *La Voz* (The Voice) in Los Angeles is published by the Community Service Organization, and San Jose's *Forumeer* is the newsletter for the local G.I. Forum, a Mexican-American civic organization. The rest attempt to publicize all organizations in their community.

Like most underground papers, they are photo-offset and quite free in their use of artwork. They tend to be quite inventive in layout of both type and photos. CPA papers make no pretense toward being objective. They are deeply involved in the communities around them and, while they often do give information, they also serve as an organ for the political and social causes of the Chicano *movimiento*. As one CPA editor said, "sometimes every story we run is an editorial."

Generally regarded as the more well-known of these political papers are the aforementioned *La Raza*, and *El Grito del Norte* in New Mexico, which is a supporter of the fiery and controversial Reies Lopez Tijerina. Others are *La Verdad* (The Truth) in San Diego and *El Gallo* (The Rooster) in Denver, which is the publication of the Crusade for Justice, a major Chicano organization in that city.

In 1970 a group called Los Siete de La Raza began publishing a paper in San Jose and Oakland called *Basta Ya!* (Enough).

All of the CPA papers are bilingual. *El Malcriado* publishes one edition in Spanish and another in English. The other papers carry articles in both languages in each issue. Finally, few CPA papers carry any advertising. They tend to be fiercely independent and are usually determined to stay that way.

"This paper is not a business venture," Joe Razo, a former member of *La Raza*'s editorial board, explained. "It is an organizational tool. Our aim is not to make money, but to organize our people. We want to make them aware and sensitive to what goes on both within the community and in the establishment outside."

Another thing CPA papers have in common, according to Razo, is that "they always lose money." Razo, and other Chicano newspapermen, see this as a virtue, although gathering funds to back their papers is often a struggle.

Another editorial board member of *La Raza* is the former editor of *Chicano Student Movement*, (the papers merged in September of 1969 and in Spring of 1970, *La Raza* appeared with a magazine format). Raul Ruiz said he does not worry about ads. "We worry about relevant things that have to be said, and hustle up the money."

Most of these papers do have to "hustle." Although they are sometimes supported by an organization, as UFW supports *El Malcriado*, and Crusade for Justice helps *El Gallo*. More often, like *La Raza*, they get donations from sympathetic supporters of the organizations it publicizes. (Donations from a liberal, social-action oriented Los Angeles church group were helpful in getting *La Raza* started in 1967, and an editor of *La Verdad* said his paper received some aid from a small foundation grant.)

The major exceptions to the no-advertising rule are *El Malcriado*, San Bernardino's *El Chicano*, and the *Chicano Times* in San Antonio.

CPA writers and editors tend to dismiss traditional journalistic objectivity as irrelevant to their situation, and sincerely feel they are aiding their community by emphasizing political controversy over straight news reporting.

As Ruiz bluntly put it, as he leaned back from one of the battered old desks in the *La Raza* offices, "the purpose of *La Raza* is not just to report all the news that is fit. We participate in what we print, we cannot separate ourselves from the community. If we did we would be committing the same sins the establishment media does, we would become noninvolved and irrelevant."

La Raza's reputation spread after serious Mexican-American rioting in East Los Angeles during the summer of 1970. A victim of that rioting was Chicano newsman Ruben Salazar, news director for Spanish-language television station KMEX and a columnist for the *Los Angeles Times*. He was killed by a tear gas shell fired by a law enforcement officer during the rioting. Ruiz and Razo scooped all other news media outlets in Los Angeles when they photographed the incident.

Their photos were republished in a full-page *Times* display and proved to be a focal point in a coroner's inquest into Salazar's controversial death. Both Razo and Ruiz testified at the inquest, which was televised live by most Los Angeles TV stations.

Why have so many Chicano newspapers sprouted up recently? The reasons are varied. A staff member of *El Malcriado* offered a pragmatic explanation. "The huelga (strike) here in Delano turned on the younger generation," he said. "And offset-printing enables a small group to put out a paper with little capital or equipment."

Another CPA member answered more philosophically. Tomas Trimble, former writer-photographer for *La Raza*, said the CPA was “trying to fill a vacuum.” “Our people have had few chances to read about themselves,” he said, “because the regular press carries little about them.” “There has always been some mistrust of the Anglo press in our communities,” he added. “In the past the media have not represented us properly. This includes works of history and social interpretation as well as newspapers.”

“I think a whole new kind of Chicano expression is coming out for the first time. There is a renaissance going on in the *barrios* that these papers are the start of. Later we will get novels and plays written by Chicano authors. The CPA is just filling a gap right now.”

At least one observer of the Chicano community in the Southwest echoed these sentiments. Dr. Rudy Acuna, former chairman of the Chicano Studies department at California State University, Northridge, also described the CPA papers as training grounds for the future literary spokesmen for the Chicano. “You cannot have a movement without ideas,” he said. “Before any real Chicano leaders can emerge, we will need ideas, and this is a function the Chicano papers are serving now.”

Dr. Acuna said that the Chicano papers were “probably the main mode of expression we have, the only way we can express ourselves. Even the blacks have their point of view told more readily, because they have greater access to the media.”

“Our ways of expressing ourselves in Chicano papers may not be in the patterns of traditional Anglo journalism,” he admitted, “but it is good to me. I read the Chicano papers and they articulate many of the things I feel.”

Dr. Acuna brought up an example of the *Los Angeles Times* on a typical morning. “I think I found one article on Chicanos in there this morning, and it has over one million Chicanos in its service area. Compare that with the society page. How many persons are really involved in that? But look at the coverage they get.” “I think it’s natural for us to have our own papers,” he said, “since we’ve been written out of most other literature.”

When queried, most CPA editors and writers are frankly unsure about whether they have real influence in their communities. The safest assumption is that they are most widely read among the younger Chicanos of high school and college age, and among community activists of all ages.

The contributors to CPA newspapers also tend to be young and/or activist. Dr. Acuna said there might be a disadvantage to this youth orientation. "A lot of the writers are inexperienced, and haven't learned to mix their materials," he said. "They tend to be too political, and don't mix in enough social news or human interest stories."

They also tend to use rough, militant language which Dr. Acuna said alienates many potential readers. Nevertheless, he said that there has been an improvement in most Chicano papers since they began, and he expects it to continue.

"You can see a marked evolution in *La Raza*, for example," he said, "It started out as a political rap sheet that made generalizations without backing them up. Now its articles present good points to back up logical arguments." "The longer these papers operate," he concluded, "the more good young writers will be attracted to them. I think the quality of these papers will continue to improve and may even become better than the conventional press."

However, at least some CPA members see newspapers—even quality ones—as only one part in an overall plan to build up *barrio* communications media. Raul Ruiz explained his hope that the *La Raza* offices might someday become a full scale publishing house. "Instead of having other people approve our writers before they can be published, we want to be able to print our own Chicano materials," he said.

While, with their arty layout and lack of objectivity ("We may be slanted as the establishment press defines it, but we tell the truth as the Chicano sees it," one writer said) the Chicano newspapers may not represent journalism at its best, they do represent the respect many young Chicanos have for the printed word as a tool to be used for the betterment of what they proudly call "la Raza," "el Movimiento," and "la Causa."

The names these Chicano newspapermen give their papers reflect both their militant cultural pride and their restless determination to better the lot of their people: *Bronze* in San Jose, Calif.; *Inferno* and *La Raza Nueva* (The New People) in San Antonio, Texas; *La Revolucion* in Uvalde, Texas; *Coraje* (Anger) in Tucson, Ariz.; *El Grito del Norte* (The Cry from the North) in Espanola, N.M.; *La Verdad* (The Truth) in San Diego, Calif.; and *El Yaqui* in Houston (named for an Indian tribe in northern Mexico that is noted for its fierceness).

As Ruiz put it, "The seriousness of the movement demands a dependable and consistent press, and we feel that we cannot rely on the establishment press to provide this."

The Chicano newspapermen of the CPA are not alone in this view. An increasing number of other young writers and potential newsmen in minority communities are going in the same direction (another example, one native American organization publishes *The Warpath* in San Francisco).

All of these minority representatives are in essence telling the outside world of the white majority that, if there is interpretation and uplifting of their communities and people to be done, they are going to try and do most of it themselves.



Chapter

8

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ADVERTISING

COUNTER-ADVERTISING, THE FTC AND THE FCC

Politics of Broadcasting

"I intend to talk only a few minutes this morning, and you'll be on the beach or golf course in about fifteen minutes," said the final speaker at the 1972 meeting of the American Association of Advertising Agencies at the Boca Raton Hotel and Club in Boca Raton, Florida. What followed from the lips of Edward M. Thiele, vice-chairman of the Leo Burnett agency, was enough to put the most thick-skinned ad man off his game.

As we look at our industry over the past 12 months we must agree that it has been an arduous year for all of us in the agency business. The harassments from government and from pressure groups have compounded the problems of running an agency as never before. Not only is our own agency world being attacked, but by the nature of our business, we are heir to the problems of each of our clients and the industries in which they compete. We feel like targets in a shooting gallery, knocked down, picked up, again and again—six shots for a quarter—until someone wins the stuffed panda, and then behind him comes another customer to start shooting all over again.

We have seen in the past twelve months, the culmination of several years of consumerism. . . . Politicians have been listening to the many discordant carping voices of the consumerist movement with most sensitive ears. Perhaps the reaction—or should I say over-reaction—of the Senate, the House and chain reaction as the echoes bounce off the FTC, the FCC, the FDA, and other government agencies, to these often irresponsible voices may be accounted for by the fact that this is an election year. Let us hope so.

Mr. Thiele went on to quote public opinion researcher Daniel Yankelovich:

In the minds of the public, the consumer protection issue and the pollution/ecology issue have merged into a single whole. In the public

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mind, the consumerist issues of product health, product safety, and truth in advertising are closely linked with pollution. Although these two burning issues—consumerism and ecology—are different from a technical point of view, they form a single whole in the mind of the public.

The consumer/ecology movement has had an enormous impact on the public.

In effect, business is engaged on two battle fronts simultaneously. One is the familiar competitive marketplace, the focus of most corporate policies and decisions. The other is represented by the new process described above. Let us call it "the public sector," where by public sector we mean the pressures on business that emanate from government, the general public, the consumer/ecology movement, the youth movement and similar sources. The great flood of demands directed at the corporation from the public sector have one common denominator: they all call upon business to make decisions which do not have the profit maximization of the company as their objective.

Earlier at the same meeting Dan Seymour, ex-broadcaster and presently head of J. Walter Thompson, the world's largest advertising agency, had spoken words that had a familiar ring to them.

Credibility, it seems to me, is the most important word in our business in 1972.

The concept of credibility recognizes the real world, the real customer, instead of some fictional, mythical creation existing only in Adland, and the minds of old-fashioned brand managers. . . .

That's where the so-called Fairness Doctrine lives and works—in the twilight area around credibility. It is hard for me to say the words Fairness Doctrine without choking a little; never was anything so misnamed, for there is nothing fair about it. We should have our own Fairness Doctrine; let us demand equal time against the FTC every time they indict by innuendo, every time they convict without trial, every time they make a McCarthy kind of mistake, as in the Zerex case, or with phosphates, or whatever—all those brutally damaging accusations which are shown to be false a year later. Just think of the beautiful commercials we could do about the FTC.

The alarm and bitterness in these speeches were justified. As Thiele had said, it had been an arduous year for advertisers. The most arduous part of it was the critical attention they received from the regulatory agencies in Washington. In the fall of 1971 the Federal Trade Commission held a series of hearings on modern advertising practices involving the testimony of ninety-one different individuals and organizations.

In January the FTC sent a communication to the FCC stating that it supported the concept of "counter-advertising," i.e., "the right of access in certain defined circumstances to the broadcast media for the purpose of expressing views and positions on issues that are raised by such advertising."

Submitting its suggestions as a contribution to the FCC's inquiry into the Fairness Doctrine, the FTC indicated that it felt advertising fell under the FCC's and the Doctrine's jurisdiction. For the FCC's guidance, the FTC had listed "certain identifiable kinds of advertising particularly susceptible to, and appropriate for, recognition and allowance of counter-advertising." They were:

Advertising asserting claims of product performance or characteristics that explicitly raise controversial issues of current public importance. Claims that products contribute to solving ecological problems, or that the advertiser is making special efforts to improve the environment generally.

Advertising stressing broad recurrent themes, affecting the purchase decision in a manner that implicitly raises controversial issues of current public importance. Food ads which may be viewed as encouraging poor nutritional habits, or detergent ads which may be viewed as contributing to water pollution.

Advertising claims that rest upon or rely upon scientific premises which are currently subject to controversy within the scientific community. Test-supported claims based on the opinions of some scientists but not others whose opposing views are based on different theories, different tests or studies, or doubts as to the validity of the tests used to support the opinions involved in the ad claims.

Advertising that is silent about negative aspects of the advertised product. Ad claims that a particular drug product cures various ailments when competing products with equivalent efficacy are available at substantially lower prices.

The FTC magnanimously deferred to the FCC concerning precise methods of implementing counter-advertising, although it suggested that it was not necessary to use thirty- or sixty-second spots for the ads and that "licensees might make available on a regular basis five-minute blocks of prime time for counter-advertisements directed at broad general issues raised by all advertising involving certain products as a way of fulfilling this aspect of their public service responsibilities." It also urged that the following points be embodied in any final plan:

1. Adoption of rules that incorporate the guidelines expressed above, permitting effective access to the broadcast media for counter-advertisements. These rules should impose upon licensees an affirmative obligation to promote effectiveness of this expanded right of access.

2. Open availability of one hundred percent of commercial time for anyone willing to pay the specified rates, regardless of whether the party seeking to buy the time wishes to advertise or "counter" advertise. Given the great importance of product information . . . licensees should not be permitted to discriminate against counter-advertisers willing to pay, solely on account of the content of their ideas.

3. Provision by licensees of a substantial amount of time, at no

charge, for persons and groups that wish to respond to advertising like that described above but lack the funds to purchase available time slots. In light of the above discussion, it seems manifest that licensees should not limit access, for discussions of issues raised by product commercials, to those capable of meeting a price determined by the profitability of presenting one side of the issues involved. Providing such free access would greatly enhance the probability that advertising, a process largely made possible by licensees themselves, would fully and fairly contribute to a healthy American marketplace.

The uproar that followed this detailed recommendation from one Washington agency to another was immense. The broadcasters were predictably outraged. One of the most elaborate responses came from a former Kennedy aide, Theodore Sorensen, who presented a brief on behalf of the Television Bureau of Advertising to the FTC. After a long, detailed argument Sorensen concluded:

Particularly affected would be commercial television's news, public affairs, and other public service programming. In 1970, the television networks spent over \$115 million for news and public affairs programming, more than 10 percent of total network broadcasting expenses incurred in that year, which amounted to approximately \$1.1 billion. . . .

These news, public affairs, and other public service announcements and programming, however, are largely unprofitable. As a result, the level of justifiable network and local station expenditures on such programming is necessarily sensitive to revenue fluctuations and profit constraints, and would surely have to be curtailed were even moderate losses of revenue to be experienced as the result of regulation discriminatory in purpose or inadvertent effect. Television news is the primary source of information on current events, politics and international affairs for more people than any other medium; and restrictions on the scope and quality of its coverage imposed by a serious diminution of advertising revenues would not serve the public interest.

These losses to the viewing public cannot be justified in the name of the consuming public. Inducing marketers to shift all or a portion of their advertising budgets to other media would not improve the overall quality of consumer protection. On the contrary, because television—in contrast to the print media—is almost entirely dependent on advertising revenues, it is particularly conscious of its need to maintain public confidence in its advertising. Television advertising is, therefore, privately regulated, not only by the National Advertising Review Board, but also by the Television Code of the National Association of Broadcasters. It is also subject to Federal Communications Commission supervision applicable only to broadcasting; and it is additionally subject not only to existing Federal Trade Commission rules applicable to all media, but also to special Commission rules . . . that are already but properly applicable only to TV. . . .

A determination to regulate advertising so as to compel advertisers in significant numbers to abandon commercial television is at the same time, and inescapably, a determination to diminish access thereto among the political candidates, their critics and the various commentators, writers,

and artists. Stripped of its ability effectively to promote lawfully sold products, reduced in strength, diversity, numbers and independence, commercial television could not serve as well those other voices whose undiluted right to constitutional protection no one would deny. Such regulation would surely raise substantial if novel First Amendment and other Constitutional questions. . . .

Any actions which jeopardize the viability of nearly 700 commercial television stations—the country's most important and influential national and local forum for political debate, social-economic commentary and literary and artistic expression—cannot be sustained by the generous standards sufficient for conventional regulatory action.

Sorensen had, of course, hit the heart of the matter. Although the pattern of protest—that any step damaging to network profits must necessarily hurt news and public affairs first and hardest—was wearily familiar, this time, perhaps, it carried the authority of true desperation. As everyone, including Sorensen, was eager to point out, the FTC's counter-advertising program, if carried out, would involve virtually all of network TV's 427 national sponsors plus all the thousands who supported the nearly 700 local commercial TV stations across the country.

WMAR-TV, Baltimore, stated, "It is difficult to conceive of a single advertisement which has been shown on any television station which would not come under the content of any or all of the . . . aspects of the FTC's proposal."

The Television Bureau of Advertising figured out that if counter-advertising had been required in 1970 at the same one-to-five ratio originally used for anti-cigarette commercials, the networks would have had, instead of \$453.8 million in pre-tax profits, an \$86.6 million loss. And this was based on the unlikely assumption that under such adverse conditions all the current advertisers would have continued to use television.

Less concerned about the informational and cultural functions of television were two Administration spokesmen, Clay T. Whitehead and Herbert Klein. Speaking at the National Association of Broadcasters convention in April, Whitehead said that the FTC's counter-advertising proposal amounted to a government-controlled right of access to state personal opinions on anything. Carried one step further, it could be applied to programs as well as to advertising. Klein followed:

I couldn't be more in accord with Mr. Whitehead in saying that counter-advertising is counter to the system. Counter-advertising would lead to the demise of the broadcast industry. Counter-advertising would lead, I think, to a great discredit to the United States because we lose the freedom which comes from the commercial values we have. . . .

And, while I'm being critical of the FTC, I'll go into . . . whether or not children are looking at the television ads and buying things they don't need. That's not the American way.

According to reports from the president's off-the-record meeting with broadcasters in June, Administration disapproval of counter-advertising went all the way to the top.

However, the fact that powerful forces were against counter-advertising was less reassuring than it might have been. The broadcasters and advertisers had no trouble recalling the days not so long ago when anti-cigarette ads led, first to a drop in sales, then to a legislative ban against all cigarette ads on radio and TV as of January 1971, costing broadcasters over \$200 million in annual revenue. Nor was there any comfort, at least to broadcasters, in reports that tobacco sales were on the rise again, without their help.

"We—at the FCC," said Chairman Dean Burch, "have a concern not only with the pure logic of whether there ought to be counter-advertising but whether this broadcasting industry can take the number of blows that are being administered to it by leaders of all stripes."

Besides its counter-advertising proposals, the FTC had had an active year. It instructed several firms, including Ocean Spray Cranberry Juice and Profile Bread, to go on the air with corrective advertising. According to Robert Pitofsky, director of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection, corrective advertising, which meant broadcasting a message indicating that your earlier commercials had been lies, was a productive advertising tool as well as an effective remedy for consumer deception.

The FTC had also asked for documentation on advertising claims from more than one hundred advertisers,* including auto-

*Just what sort of claims were involved was indicated by the list of detergent and soap claims ordered to be proved in summer 1972, which included:

Jergens extra dry facial cleanser is something new and contains moisturizers.

Easy Off oven cleaner effectively cleans dirty ovens, warm or cold, and has 33 percent more cleaning power than another popular foam spray.

Dial soap is used by many hospitals to bathe newborn babies and is the most effective deodorant soap on the market.

Arm & Hammer cleanser is pure, natural, has no chemical odors, and cannot cause scratches when used to clean counter tops.

A liquid bleach like Clorox kills more viruses and bacteria than any other type of household disinfectant.

Palmolive Crystal Clear effectively removes dried-on foods and is safe for fine china and delicate crystal.

Leon Fresh Down oven cleaner does everything better than old-fashioned oven cleaners.

mobile and appliance manufacturers, tire makers, drug firms, and soap and detergent companies. Such documentation could lead to no action, or an order for corrective advertising, or an out-of-court agreement, or, in rare instances, a court injunction to the advertiser to cease and desist.

In the case of the automobile companies, the FTC, according to Bess Myerson Grant, New York City's commissioner of Consumer Affairs, had not released a study made at its own request by an independent engineering concern which found that substantiation for 65 percent of the ads was irrelevant or inadequate.

Among the claims considered to have inadequate substantiation were:

Chrysler's contention that its torsion-bar suspension provides extra comfort, ease of handling, and extra safety.

General Motors' claim that the Chevelle has 109 advantages to keep it from becoming old before its time.

General Motors' claim that the front-wheel-drive Toronado provides greater smoothness, improved traction, and sure handling.

Toyota's and General Motors' claims that their compacts, Corolla and Opel, need no lubrication for the life of the cars.

Volkswagen's contention that its Super Beetle has more luggage space, is longer lasting, and stops faster.

Ford's claim that its Pinto never needs waxing and that its LTD is quieter than some of the world's most expensive cars.

The courts seemed even less friendly to the advertisers in some instances than were the regulatory agencies. In the case of Friends of the Earth (FOE) against WNBC-TV, the U.S. Court of Appeals overruled an FCC decision denying a request by FOE that the Fairness Doctrine be applied to automobile and gasoline advertisements in New York City. The court said the FCC should require WNBC-TV to broadcast balanced programming on the auto-pollution issue.

In April 1972, while WNBC-TV was responding to an FCC

Mr. Bubble cleans effectively and does not leave bathtub rings.

Lifebuoy soap is so lastingly active, its deodorant protection won't let you down.

Janitor-in-a-Drum is strong enough to effectively clean greasy stove hoods and mild enough to effectively clean wicker furniture.

Noxzema is greaseless, a moisturizer, and cleans as effectively as soap without drying as soap does.

Clothes that are so dirty they appear to be ruined can be effectively cleaned and restored by washing them in Tide.

Purex gets out dirt other bleaches leave behind.

A little Borateem rubbed into stains or added to a detergent effectively removes tough stains from clothes.

request for documentation of its coverage of auto pollution, the parties involved wrote a joint letter to the FCC asking the Commission to discontinue its examination of WNBC's past coverage of the issue. The letter explained that the request was based at least in part on WNBC-TV's decision to begin giving "substantial treatment" to anti-auto pollution programming.

In May, shortly after the two parties agreed to an "amicable termination" of their dispute, WNBC-TV was broadcasting an average of two anti-auto pollution messages a day. Although the frequency of the spots dropped to less than one a day by the fall of 1972, WNBC-TV was still broadcasting such spots more often than New York's two other network-flagship stations, WCBS and WABC, whose licenses were challenged for failing to present balanced programming on the auto-pollution issue.

Another case perhaps more disturbing to the broadcasters was that of the Business Executives Move for Peace in Vietnam (BEM) against station WTOP in Washington, D.C., which went all the way to the Supreme Court, where it was scheduled to be argued in October 1972. [Ed. Note: The Court decided in favor of the broadcasters.]

The last round had been won by BEM, when the U.S. Court of Appeals held that WTOP-TV was wrong in denying BEM paid commercial time to air its views on the war. According to the court, the First Amendment prohibits any broadcaster who sells time for commercial messages from having a policy against selling that time simply because the message contains controversial material. Set opposite rulings in favor of counter-advertising, this created a hall of mirrors at the end of which the beleaguered broadcasters might indeed disappear, with news and public affairs programming dropping out of the picture somewhere along the way.

To upset the broadcaster still further, counter-ads against everything from drugs and automobiles to strip mining were being prepared by such personalities as Burt Lancaster and Rod Serling in anticipation of the day when time would be allocated for their airing. Indeed, some of them had already been broadcast.

As for the basic problem of truth in advertising, and the credibility crisis in the advertising and broadcasting industries, few of those who should have felt concern showed it. Out of 1,275 marketing and advertising executives asked to participate in a "Truth in Advertising" survey by the American Management Association, only 150 were interested enough to answer in detail. Of these, 50 percent indicated some real concern about the issue; 31 percent felt it was "overblown"; 60 percent believed their advertising was always truth-

ful, although only 18 percent would give their competition credit for the same integrity.

Perhaps the indifference of advertisers was justified. Of the 427 major advertisers on network TV, only a handful had yet been required to change or eliminate their ads. The anticipated time for the FTC to mount any sort of punitive action was still four years. The famous Geritol case had gone on for more than ten. FTC demands for documentation of ads were perhaps more immediately troublesome.

However, Senators Frank Moss and Warren Magnuson had introduced legislation to permit the FTC to issue injunctions stopping false or misleading advertising, which would shorten the four years required to bring an advertiser to heel and otherwise strengthen the commission's hand.

Self-regulation, the industry's own proposal for solving the problem, was greeted with skepticism by radio and TV critics, who pointed to the industry's efforts to arrive at some sort of cigarette code, only to be outflanked by the action of a single private citizen, lawyer John Banzhaf, III, who had successfully invoked the Fairness Doctrine to force radio and TV to carry anti-cigarette announcements. The National Advertising Review Board (NARB), set up with considerable fanfare in the fall of 1971, with former UN ambassador Charles Yost as chairman, had yet to find it necessary to initiate disciplinary action against offending advertisers.

Complaints for the NARB were investigated by the National Advertising Division of the Better Business Bureaus (NAD). In the first year, the NAD had received 337 complaints against national advertising. Of the total: 112 were dismissed as being without merit; 72 were found to be justified (in all of the 72 cases the advertiser agreed either to withdraw the ad or to modify it), and 153 were still under investigation as of September 1972.

Six cases dismissed by the NAD and appealed by the complainants had been brought before the NARB. In two of the six, the American Dairy Association (ADA) and Miles Laboratories were judged to present misleading advertisements. No action was taken because the ADA promised not to use its ad again, and Miles Laboratories said it was getting out of children's television.

The red tape and frustration involved in the self-regulatory process had already caused one "public"* member of the NARB, LeRoy

*The membership of the board included ten from advertising agencies, plus ten agency alternates, thirty advertisers, and ten members representing the public.

Collins, former governor of Florida and one-time head of the National Association of Broadcasters, to resign. In his letter of resignation to NARB chairman Charles Yost, Collins said that he doubted that the advertising industry was prepared to accept the kind of agency that was needed for effective self-regulation.

Another "public" member, attorney Benny Kass, complained about the length of time it took to render a decision. Kass was quoted in *Television/Radio Age* as saying: "I know for a fact that too many complaints are lost, left on desks, or not acted on."

Furthermore, in the experience of most, the one brief mention that most consumer items usually got on the evening news did not have to be taken too seriously. The inattention and short memories of most viewers could work to the advertiser's advantage as well as his disadvantage.

Still, the unavoidable fact remained that in the past year a situation which had existed for decades and been ignored was out in the open and seemed unlikely ever to disappear again.

BROADCASTING'S HIDDEN POWER: THE TV-RADIO REPS

John Tebbel

While no one was looking, a business within a business has grown up in television and radio during the past two decades that, in the words of one trade journal, has become "the most far-reaching business influence in broadcasting today." This little known, and even less understood, power is national spot sales representation, embodied in the companies that represent television and radio spot advertising to national sales and marketing organizations.

It is not surprising that the viewing and listening public is almost wholly unaware of the "TV and radio sales reps," as they are known in the trade. The public reacts either with boredom or with varying degrees of interest to the ubiquitous "spots" that surround its entertainment, but has no idea how they got there, and in most cases, doesn't care. What is astonishing, however, is the degree of ignorance in the business community itself about the sales reps. Many businessmen would be unable to define what these companies are, and only a few have any real knowledge of what they do.

John Tebbel, professor of journalism at New York University and distinguished author, frequently has contributed articles such as this one on the invisible power of the broadcasting representative. The article (December 13, 1969) is published with his permission and that of *Saturday Review*, copyright 1969.

The general shortage of savvy stems from a lack of knowledge about the economics of broadcasting. It is widely assumed that local stations exist because of the bounty derived from their network affiliation, but this is far from the case. For example, in 1968, television's total advertising revenue was \$1,504,484,000. Of this figure, network revenue accounted for \$247,618,000, but national and regional spot advertising totaled \$998,036,000. Even more significantly, network sales were up only 0.7 per cent from the year before, while the figure was 14.5 per cent for the national regional spots.

In radio advertising, there is virtually no network business. In 1967, it represented only \$47-million out of a total revenue of \$946-million, or 5 per cent of all radio advertising, and the figure is declining. By contrast, national spot advertising accounted for \$289-million, or 31 per cent of all radio dollars in the same year, while local spots brought in \$609-million, or 64 per cent of the total.

Dealing in figures like these, it is all the more startling that a major industry should be operating in such virtual anonymity, so much so that even many advertising agency staff members, (outside the media department, of course) have only vague ideas about what the reps are and what they do. Not that the reps need the publicity. Quietly, they chalk up about \$882-million a year in time sales, and about 90 per cent of this business is divided among only fifteen firms. There are few, if any, industries where so few companies, employing such a small number of people, account for so many dollars of revenue.

What the increasing power and multiplying activities of the reps mean to the viewer lies in the major impact they have on programing. For a long time after the business began in 1937, the reps did little more than send out their rate cards, but now they profoundly influence a station's programs, since their job is to relate them to the station's market in terms of advertising. Thus, they decide such questions as when children's programs are best presented, whether the local news program should precede or follow network news, and what kind of shows are best adapted to the station's area.

In doing so, the reps have to take into account the nature of a broadcaster's audience, and it is fair to say that in an economy that has been market researched to the point of exhaustion, no audience for any product has been so thoroughly dissected and analyzed as the television and radio consumer. Nothing illustrates the antiquity of the Willie Loman image of salesmanship better than the massive jungle of statistics available to the TV sales rep as he goes about his work. Selling time in West Palm Beach, for example, is far different

from doing the same job in Hawaii. In the Florida city, not surprisingly, the most popular television show has been *Meet the Doctor*, a locally produced program appealing to the predominantly elderly population. In Hawaii, on the other hand, the approach is heavily concentrated toward young people. Moreover, since everything has to come on tape from the mainland, it is possible to juggle the programs into time slots calculated to catch the attention of the young audience. The reps play a major part in the juggling.

In other areas of broad popular interest, the reps have also become determining factors. That staple of broadcasting, motion pictures, was once largely in the hands of the networks, but the reps have shown the local stations that they can buy their own movies for less and the reps will sell the advertising time. This also makes it possible for the local stations to buy movies that will please the audience in their own area. Obviously, the tastes of predominantly rural or smalltown viewers will not always be the same as for a more sophisticated urban audience.

Such buying is part of the trend toward local programming, according to James F. O'Grady, vice president and general manager of RKO-Radio Representatives, Inc. This movement is currently being stimulated, O'Grady points out, by the challenge to station owners offered by local groups seeking to obtain the licenses from the FCC for themselves. The challenge is nearly always based on the contention that the station is not properly serving local interests with its programming (meaning, among other things, that too many programs are network originated). Consequently, owners and managers have been moving rapidly toward more home origination, a move in which the reps are taking an important part. As more and more stations pre-empt network programs for local shows, the reps will have an even larger role in the development of programming.

Here again the facts contradict popular belief that the networks own the stations. In fact, by law no one is permitted to own more than seven television stations, of which no more than five may be on the VHF band. The major networks have increasingly come to act as distributing agents for programs that they buy from producing organizations; they originate comparatively few of their own. But the reps can also be distributing agents, and more and more they are assuming this function. Network-produced shows—and these would include those done by RKO-General, Westinghouse Group W, Metromedia, Triangle Broadcasting, and Storer, as well as the major networks—are now made available to other stations in addition to their own affiliates.

Reps believe that major network football is doomed and that it is coming into their province, along with the motion picture business. The new sports network set up by Howard Hughes, they say, may well supersede the others in distributing the games, and the reps will sell the time on a local basis. Similarly, where the major nets once had the advantage in news programs and dominated the field, the moonshot demonstrated that the smaller organizations are coming into their own here, too. Westinghouse, Metromedia, and RKO all had their own broadcasting teams operating for this event. It is significant that RKO-General has one of the fifty desks in the White House newsroom, and one of the five precious darkrooms available to develop news film on the spot.

The influence of the reps, invisible to the public and to much of the broadcasting business as well, is felt everywhere. They are aggressive in their encouragement of advertisers both large and small to use spot TV; some of the largest rep companies have formal departments and full-time personnel who concentrate on companies that advertise very little or not at all in spot television. The stations themselves, it must be noted, are not geared to do this kind of selling to national and regional advertisers; if it were not for the reps, it would never be done.

Today there is scarcely a facet of station operation that does not involve the reps; the legal and engineering departments are the only exceptions. The reps are particularly active in rate setting, research, and audience and sales promotion. They furnish their stations with promotional and research data, sales brochures, and full-scale presentations. They go to the Census Bureau to try to add (or subtract) counties from Standard Metropolitan Areas, as this category is called, and they work constantly with the rating services to improve audience measurement techniques. Reps even work on billing and collection problems.

Unofficially, representatives are the bumblebees of the advertising world, disseminating information in the industry like pollen. Sometimes they are the first to know when advertising accounts are shaky, and they act as an effective if informal personnel bureau for media and account people.

There are about sixty "independent" reps, as they are known, and about six or seven "limited list" reps, usually associated with such group-owned operations as Westinghouse and RKO. There are also more than fifty regional reps. All told, the national reps maintain approximately 350 offices and employ about 2,000 people, of whom roughly 850 are salesmen. Total annual payroll for these firms

exceeds \$15-million, and they sell spot advertising for more than 2,000 radio stations as well as nearly 500 television stations.

Among the group owners in television, Westinghouse Broadcasting was the first to establish a bona fide rep organization, TvAR, a subsidiary of Westinghouse Electric, to represent its television properties. According to its president, Howard H. Marsh, TvAR also became the first such firm to represent outside stations, and it pioneered the concept of limited list representation. Since TvAR was founded in July 1959, five major station groups and one network have established their own national rep firms.

Spot television is the only broadcast medium competing with the networks, and reps are the only force that advocates and sells spots. Both national representation and spot are mutually dependent; neither could exist in their present form without the other.

Advertising agencies have traditionally regarded spots with mixed feelings. Undeniably, they admit, the medium is an effective seller of goods and services, but it is much more expensive to handle and administrate than most other media, including network TV and radio. Consequently, many agencies either do not purchase spots—particularly spot radio—in the volume warranted by the medium's efficiency, or when they do, it is in a manner without sufficient controls and checks. This situation has had two significant effects on the advertising community:

1. Television, and especially radio, reps have in some cases short-circuited the traditional procedures of selling exclusively in advertising agencies' media departments, and have made their selling approaches directly to the advertisers. In fact, some reps have instituted units designed for the purpose, and have concentrated directly on selling to advertisers on a concerted basis. Recently, large purchases of radio spots have been made by advertisers who have not even consulted their agencies, but the agencies get commissions on the buys (after the fact).

2. Time-buying organizations have been springing up recently, devoted only to that function. Already there are two major companies in the field, Timebuying Services, Inc., and U.S. Media, along with several smaller organizations. Their business is expanding so rapidly that the entrepreneurs can scarcely keep up in terms of space and personnel.

The significance of these changes can hardly be underestimated; they constitute a major trend in communications advertising. Until now the industry has witnessed the odd spectacle of advertisers who demand a careful accounting of every aspect of their businesses—

except for the \$10- to \$20-million a year they invest in spot television. Before, they had to pray they would get their money's worth. Sometimes they did; more often they did not. Today, say the reps, they are getting true value for the first time.

Some agency media people deny this contention, but those in the business informed enough to be concerned about it, understand that the position of the advertising agency in this particular area is being substantially eroded by the reps.

WHEN ADVERTISING TALKS TO EVERYONE

Fairfax Cone

When publicly contemplating the future of almost anything, there is nothing safer than to see in it all manner of drastic change, even to the point of disaster. Then, if trouble comes, the viewer with alarm can smugly regard the situation that he has predicted and be called a wise soothsayer. If, on the other hand, the prophet of crack-up and break-down turns out to be wrong, no one is hurt, and he need only say that his timing was off or that vastly changed circumstances made the difference. I am going to take the long chance.

If we are indeed entering an era of news monopoly in terms of both national and world news, it seems more than likely that regional and local news services actually will be increased. The development of small-town and suburban community newspapers at a time when many big-city newspapers have ceased publication has been a phenomenon of the last two or three decades. Now, with local cable television coming to communities of all sizes, it can be predicted that this new emphasis on local news and interests will be intensified.

A recent broadcasting event in Newport Beach, California, illustrates this. The cable television station there invited thirty candidates for public offices ranging from the U.S. Senate to the local village council to tell their stories in terms of their own interests. All accepted with the result that hundreds of citizens of this small southern California seaside community for the first time saw candidates in the light of their own problems.

In much the same way, I believe we are entering a time when much advertising also will become more local and more meaningful.

Fairfax M. Cone told the story of his forty years in advertising in 1969 when he published *With All Its Faults* (Boston: Little, Brown). The final chapter is recommended for its estimate of how advertising can better serve the society in which it exists. This article on the future electronic age (October 10, 1970) is reprinted with permission of *Saturday Review*, copyright 1970.

Advertising aimed precisely at what might be termed need-groups promises a new and welcome relevancy.

When advertising tries to talk to everyone, the result is no different than it is when any other form of communication is aimed at the largest possible audience. The days of yellow journalism at the turn of the century are an example. The heyday of the great mass magazines in the 1950s is another. Neither could last, for audiences tire of unchanging fare, and either break up into separate interest groups or find new sources for their enlightenment and their entertainment. Both of these developments are occurring in broadcasting at this moment, and their effect on advertising will be profound.

One of the unhappy concomitants of today's television, with its enormous time and production costs for advertising, has been the unwillingness of many major advertisers to depart from commercial routines that have proved to be successful economically, no matter how wearisome they may be to millions of viewers. It is a demonstrable fact that one's reaction to almost any advertising message breaks down into two parts: the form in which the message is presented and the promise itself. The result is that the form may be, and often is, a subject of ridicule (e.g., the white tornado that blows through the kitchen or the eye-winking plumber who clears a clogged drain with nothing more than a sprinkling of powder that is available from your nearest friendly grocer), while the proposition that is made for the product involved is totally accepted.

If this sounds impossible, or even improbable, I can only explain it in terms of noises to which one becomes accustomed to the point of not hearing them at all, while a special sound of much lesser intensity comes through loud and clear. However, this is hardly an excuse for the foolishness that makes so many commercial minutes seem ugly and interminable.

The trouble lies in the lack of creative ability in the people in advertising agencies and production studios, and among the advertisers, who are caught between two deadly dilemmas. One is to follow the leader with the implausible dramas of fun and games at the sink or in the bathroom or laundry; the other is to try anything at all that is different—for that reason alone. Of the two, it is questionable which is harder to take if one pays attention.

Both, however, may well be headed for the discard, for paying attention to the commercials is no longer a requirement of the television experience. In the beginning it was said, and it was probably true, that viewers gladly accepted the advertising as a reasonable price of admission to the shows they watched. But the audience has

become more sophisticated. There has developed a little mechanism in the brain of almost everyone of us that can automatically shut off our attention to a point where only certain sounds come through: mostly product names and promises and pertinent details of unusual services.

To be sure, there are exceptions to the general low interest in commercial messages. Some are full of fun and the fun is to the point. Others, such as commercials for many food and household products, present demonstrations that help the homemaker with her relentless job. Still others substitute dramatic facts for throaty claims for automobile tires and batteries and insurance, etc.

The changes that one can foresee in advertising in the next few years, and that should make much of it more attractive and useful for everyone concerned, are becoming apparent in an about-face in advertising philosophy that will bring it into line with growing interest in the consumer as an object of concern and respect and not a faceless, nearly mindless purchasing unit. To say this another way, I believe the impersonality is going out of advertising much as I believe that it is going to be replaced in business for the very good reason that this works both ways: Customer loyalty simply cannot be maintained by an impersonal supplier, and business and advertising must, in the long run, depend on that loyalty. That they must also earn it is the reason for the inevitable changes.

The alternative is the complete breakdown of an imperfect system. The imperfection may be the result of growth and standardization, and the temporary subjugation of the individual during a period of great economic change and concentration of power. Whatever the reason, no one can doubt that as a nation we have arrived at a time when skepticism may be our most outstanding characteristic. Vietnam is only one reason for this. Rightly or wrongly, the maturing generation believes that we have been lied to and manipulated by business and government, and even in our educational and legal systems, and the young men and women who supply this generation with its conviction and strength see advertising as one of the worst sins of a venal establishment. Nor is this a question particularly of dishonesty or sharp practice. Unhappily, these evils are largely taken for granted. The overriding objection is to the mass appeal of advertising at a time when all the emphasis our young people can muster is on individuality. There is a thing called life-style that simply cannot be dictated by anyone—advertisers least of all.

This will unquestionably mean more special-interest publications, both magazines and community news organs (either printed or

electronically reproduced), with special-interest advertising. Still, the biggest change will probably be in television and television advertising, where the messages for many products and services will be delivered almost as professional buyers' guides by a nationwide corps of competent local authorities who will evaluate and recommend products and services according to their own standards and experience. Products of only general interest (or those lacking interest at any given moment, such as analgesics) will continue to be advertised over the networks in national news and sports programs and the more popular comedy and variety and dramatic hours.

Despite considerable speculation to the contrary, it seems unlikely that either pay television or the cassette will mean the end of the big variety or dramatic programs or the ace news commentators as we have come to expect these from the networks. For one thing, entertainment that one must pay for must be a good deal better than entertainment that is free, and this may be hard to come by for more than a few hours in any week, for the costs will be considerable. Also, news cannot be canned; it must be contemporaneous. On the other hand, hundreds of independent cable television stations are going to compete, and successfully, I believe, with the run-of-mine programs by offering a conglomerate of special interest features for limited but extremely receptive audiences.

Cable television was introduced as a means of establishing or improving physical reception in remote areas, and this it has done very successfully. While no one knows precisely what its effect will be in metropolitan centers, where reception is satisfactory for the most part and where there is already a choice of channels and programs, the likelihood is that it will become not so much an extension of television as we now know it, but an essentially new medium.

It is not difficult to imagine the attraction of a station that performs service to the community by broadcasting purely local news and commentary and an almost unlimited number of programs of unique interest. The key factor, of course, is the freedom of the cable station operator from the demands for a large audience by any advertiser, for his audience is made up of paid subscribers. Such advertisers as there may be, and I expect there will be many, will be satisfied with any reasonable, and reasonably priced, audience whose special interest they share.

This, then, is where the greatest change in advertising is likely to take place. In recent years, most large advertisers increasingly have aimed their messages at the largest available audiences at the lowest possible cost per thousand. This led to the disastrous circulation

rages among the mass magazines, the strain of which caused the demise of half a dozen of them, and a gradual diminution in the number of daily newspapers. Neither could compete successfully with a medium that was wholly advertiser-supported and adored by advertiser and public alike. This was in television's long honeymoon stage. Today many an advertiser is beginning to wonder whether the large audiences are really worth the total expenditures involved, no matter how low the cost per thousand. The questions arise partly out of a desire to save money and so increase profits and partly out of a determination to talk only to one's most logical prospects. Clearly, such a change in advertising strategy should dictate a much more thoughtful and much less blatant use of all advertising media.

It is safe to say that television is today the principal source of news as well as entertainment for the majority of American families. If this presaged a monopoly of either one by a monolithic television system, I would be fearful of the result. But I think the imminence of community cable television negates the possibility, in the very same way that it promises advertising that is less dictated and confined by formula.

It is necessary here to remember that all advertising is not alike either in its making or intention. Manufacturers' advertising, for the most part, announces innovations and product changes and improvements, and this advertising appears mostly in magazines and on television and radio. The advertising of retailers, which is concerned primarily with the values in those products in terms of style, size, price, etc., makes up the bulk of newspaper advertising, except for want ads.

The changes that I foresee will have little or no effect upon the division of advertising between the various media. It should stay much as it is, with only some diversion of special-interest advertising from the general magazines to the growing list of special-interest publications.

On the other hand, I believe that advertising may be greatly changed by still another factor. With two-way communication established between receivers and cable stations, whereby subscribers may dial requests for any information under the sun, which will be available by computer, it is unlikely that consumer reports will not be included. No service could be more natural or have greater effect upon advertising. For the reply to the subscriber's query and the advertising that floats freely through the air on the same subject must allow no disparity. Both must serve the recipient in his own best interest.

This is something that advertising has always promised to do. But the promise has not always been kept. In large measure, it may now be.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

WE ARE ADVOCATES!

Joseph P. McLaughlin

For several decades the goal of achieving for public relations the status of a profession, accepted as such by government, the academic community, business and opinion leaders, other professional societies and associations and laymen generally has been an elusive one.

There is not even agreement among public relations practitioners and public relations educators as to what needs to be done in order to raise what now is regarded essentially as an art or trade to professional status.

This despite the fact that public relations practitioners constantly use the term professional in talking loosely about other practitioners and their qualifications.

The passage of time, alone, will not bring this goal closer as optimists among us continue to hope. But much can be accomplished, we believe, if the practitioner can be persuaded to regard himself as what he truly is—*an advocate*—and to act in accordance with that self-image.

Among the more frequently mentioned ingredients that many in the field contend are essential to the “mix” that spells professionalism are (a) a code of ethics with procedures and machinery for disciplining those who violate its provisions (b) an agreed-upon “body of knowledge” which undergirds public relations theory and practice and (c) a system of examinations to determine the basic knowledge of those entering the public relations field coupled with

Joseph P. McLaughlin is president of the Beacon Agency, Inc., in Philadelphia, an accredited member of PRSA, and the author of a number of articles in *Public Relations Quarterly*, in which this article appeared during the summer of 1972. Reprinted by permission of the *Quarterly*.

certification of their qualifications and character by a panel of their peers. Some also believe that a system of governmental licensing should be added.

Largely through the efforts of the Public Relations Society of America and its various sections, particularly the Counselor's Section, two of these ingredients already are in being, though perhaps not fully developed. PRSA has a code of ethics binding on all of its almost 7000 members with provisions for enforcement and penalizing of transgressors. Through its Accreditation Program, PRSA also requires all who seek active membership to pass an examination and to satisfy a panel of already-accredited members as to their qualifications and character. The desirability of requiring government licensing of public relations practitioners is under study.

But the problem of what constitutes an accepted "body of knowledge" and how it is to be developed remains largely unresolved and may continue to defy solution for some time.

It is the purpose of this article to set forth the proposition that there is still another ingredient necessary for achievement of professional status—an attainable one—that is little talked about but is at least as important as the others mentioned and, in the opinion of the writer, may be a pre-requisite for solving the knotty problem of developing a body of knowledge concerning which there can be general agreement. That ingredient is independence.

It can be achieved only if the individual practitioner, and the societies and associations to which he belongs, can sharpen their perception of the public relations man's fundamental role in a society dominated by public opinion, which in turn is molded largely by the mass media of communication. This role is shaped by the fact—indisputable, the writer thinks—that public opinion can impose sanctions that are sometimes more severe than legal ones.

The PR man should be an advocate in the same sense that lawyers are advocates. It may be that he also should be granted legally the privilege of confidentiality insofar as conversations with clients [are] concerned, but that is a separate question.

We may speak of the PR man's role as an interpreter to his client or clients of society and events; an evaluator of the meaning and consequences of social and economic change; a prognosticator of future troubles; a prudent and imaginative preparer of programs designed to deal with problems before they descend in full force upon his employer; a transmission belt to carry the client's messages to various publics and to convey back to the client the reactions of those publics to his programs and activities. He undoubtedly, at vari-

ous times, depending upon the scope of his responsibilities, is all of these. But primarily he is an advocate.

A fascinating chain of events that began in the fall of 1971 in Philadelphia, in which the writer was deeply involved, provided him an insight into the implications of the PR man's role as an advocate. Out of it grew a conviction as to how important recognizing this role is to the achievement of professional status.

Early in October of 1971, Philip Bucci, a highly-respected PR counselor with several decades of experience—an accredited member of PRSA and a member of its Counselor's Section—agreed to accept as a client a man who had been publicly described by the Pennsylvania State Crime Commission and other law enforcement officials as a leader in organized crime in Pennsylvania.

The man, Peter Maggio, owner of a South Philadelphia cheese plant, became the subject of controversy and newspaper headlines when he submitted what he thought was a routine request for a zoning change that would permit him to close a small street, unused by the public, so that he could expand his business. He asked the City Councilman representing the district in which the plant was located, William J. Cottrell, to introduce the necessary ordinance.

Cottrell did so, and the bill, after the usual hearing at which no opposition was voiced, was reported to the floor of the Council. District Attorney Arlen Specter then sent two assistant district attorneys to see Cottrell to inform him of the State Crime Commission characterization of Maggio and at the same time a story was leaked to the Philadelphia newspapers. Cottrell immediately backed away from the bill which was sent back to committee, presumably to die.

Mutual friends brought Maggio, who was smarting under the unfavorable publicity, and Bucci together. Maggio asked Bucci to help him. Before agreeing to do so, Bucci, in accord with his usual practice, researched the accusations to the best of his ability. He read all of the newspaper clippings and visited the South Philadelphia neighborhood to talk with district police officers, and Maggio's neighbors and customers.

He also read all of the available literature on the Mafia and the reports of the U.S. Senate (McClelland) Committee which had investigated organized crime.

He also wrote to the late J. Edgar Hoover, then Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, whom he knew and asked whether there was anything in FBI files to substantiate the accusation. Hoover sent him a letter stating that there was no derogatory infor-

mation on Maggio in the files. Bucci's first impulse was to make this letter public, but, on mature consideration, he decided to give it instead to City Council President Paul D'Ortona. By this time he was convinced that Maggio was the victim of character assassination and that he was entitled to public relations help in having his name cleared and in obtaining the necessary Councilmanic approval for his expansion plans.

Before accepting Maggio as a client—and aware of the possibility of censure by the public and colleagues—he discussed the advisability of doing so with several public relations practitioners who also were close friends, including the writer. We finally advised him to accept and also pledged that, should he encounter adverse criticism, we would come to his defense.

Bucci's first action on behalf of Maggio was to set up an interview with the Philadelphia Evening and Sunday Bulletin which was published over several columns with photographs of Maggio and his wife, a talented amateur artist, in the editions of Sunday, September 12, 1971. In the interview, Mr. Maggio denied any connection whatsoever with the Mafia, and said he doubted the existence of such an organization. He said he was harassed by governmental officials because he is the brother-in-law of Angelo Bruno, described by the FBI as a national leader of organized crime in the U.S. At the time Bucci was hired, Mr. Bruno was in prison in New Jersey following his refusal to answer questions at a hearing before a New Jersey commission investigating crime.

Two days later, the Bulletin carried a column-length story on page nine about Bucci and his representation of Maggio under the head "Maggio Hires PR Man For a New 'Image.'" It was factual and generally favorable to Bucci, detailing his representation of blue chip clients in the past, which included U.S. Senator Hugh Scott (R., Pa.), Superior Court Judge John B. Hannum (now a Federal Circuit Court Judge), the American Legion, Fraternal Order of Police, and sports personalities like heavyweight boxing champion Joe Frazier. The article also noted that among Bucci's references was one from Hoover, and one from former Pennsylvania Governor Raymond P. Shafer.

Meanwhile, armed with Hoover's letter, Council President D'Ortona wrote to Specter and demanded that he state publicly whether he had any evidence connecting Maggio with the Mafia. Specter wrote back a few days later stating that he had no such evidence.

The zoning bill then was revived in City Council and, at Cottrell's urging, passed unanimously. However, former Mayor James H.J. Tate did not sign it before leaving office. Cottrell was defeated

for re-election to Council but his successor, Natale F. Carbello, re-introduced the bill. It was passed by Council and signed into law by Tate's successor Mayor Frank L. Rizzo.

The signing was a personal victory for Bucci. Without his courageous public relations advocacy—at considerable risk to his own image—in Maggio's behalf, City Hall observers say that the zoning change would have been dead and Maggio would have suffered not only financial loss, but also his reputation would have been irrevocably damaged. As evidence of the sanctions that can be inflicted by public opinion, the Maggio firm showed a loss in excess of \$100,000 in 1971, the first such loss in 55 years of business. Because of the unfavorable publicity also, many of his customers had ceased doing business with him.

However, even before Maggio was cleared, Bucci and the writer agreed that a fundamental principle relating to the practice of public relations was involved, namely the right of a reputable public relations practitioner to represent any client without having attributed to him "the reputation, character or beliefs of the client." Even though Bucci believed, and publicly stated, that he was convinced that Maggio had no connection with the Mafia and had been maligned (as later developments were to demonstrate) we both agreed that the principle was important enough to have it endorsed by a professional public relations association made up of a jury of our peers.

We chose the Philadelphia Public Relations Association as the appropriate vehicle. This association, although it is unaffiliated with any state or national organization, is the largest group of public relations practitioners in the Philadelphia area (more than 225 members) and enjoys considerable prestige, particularly with the news media.

At the writer's request a meeting of the directors of the Philadelphia Public Relations Association was held at the Poor Richard Club on October 6, 1971 at which, after considerable, sometimes sharp discussion, the following statement was approved. It is reproduced here in full:

"A Public Relations practitioner, like an attorney, primarily is an advocate.

"An attorney seeks to represent his client in the most favorable light, consistent with the rules of evidence, his duty as an officer of the Court and the canons of ethics of the organized Bar in the various tribunals in the field of Jurisprudence. Through advice and consultation the lawyer endeavors also to help his client avoid situations which will involve him in litigation or criminal proceedings.

“A Public Relations practitioner seeks to represent his client in the most favorable light consistent with the facts and the ethical codes of professional Public Relations organizations, in the Court of Public Opinion.

“Except for the possible deprivation of his life or freedom, a client can be damaged as severely in the Court of Public Opinion as in a Court of Law.

“Many local and state bar associations have adopted resolutions which assert, in essence, that a lawyer may represent any client without having attributed to him the reputation, character and beliefs of the client. If, by virtue of such representation of an unpopular client, a lawyer incurs hostility, resentment or adverse criticism, the organized bar has committed itself to come to his defense.

“The Philadelphia Public Relations Association claims the same privilege for the Public Relations practitioner, operating in the Court of Public Opinion.

“It asserts that a Public Relations practitioner has the right to represent any client without having attributed to him the reputation, character or beliefs of the client.

“It asserts, also, the corollary right of any person who could benefit from such services, to representation by a competent Public Relations practitioner of good character and reputation.”

The statement in its original version read “present his client in the most favorable light”—not “represent”—but got changed in the final, somewhat confusing, moments of this meeting.

The action formed the basis of a news article the following day in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. The vote of the directors was 24-0 in favor of the statement. A small committee of the directors subsequently was appointed by Charles Ellis, president of the Philadelphia Public Relations Association, to draft a change in the association’s by-laws to incorporate into that document the principle outlined in the statement. The directors, incidentally, also approved a resolution expressing their confidence in and admiration for Bucci.

Meanwhile, the writer wrote to Paul M. Werth, a Columbus, Ohio, public relations practitioner who at the time was chairman of the Counselor’s section of PRSA, advising him both of the intention to have the matter considered by the Philadelphia Public Relations Association and of its subsequent unanimous approval of the statement. In reply, Mr. Werth described the situation as “very interesting” and said he would bring it to the attention of the Executive Committee of the Counselor’s section. Copies of the letters of Mr. Werth and the newspaper clippings also were sent to Dr. Robert O. Carlson, president of the Public Relations Society of America.

What are the broad implications of this chain of events for the practice of public relations in the United States?

As far as the counselors are concerned, we think it is obvious that, if they are to be recognized as members of a profession, they must come out from behind the shadow of the client. They must not be considered merely a part of the client's retinue, lumped together with those who write speeches, arrange schedules, or merely carry valises. They must be "in charge" of the case, just as a lawyer, because of his superior training, knowledge and experience, is in charge of his client's case. To their credit, some counselors already operate in this manner.

Even those who are corporate or association or foundation public relations directors or staff members, we believe, must come to look upon themselves as advocates. They have the same problem as lawyers who serve as house counsel for corporations—who have a single client. But if they look upon themselves primarily as advocates, some of the doubts and confusions that have troubled them may be removed. For instance, many corporate PR men have been at a loss as to how to resolve the inner doubts and the conflict produced by charges of magazine writers that it is the job of public relations always to present the client in the most favorable possible light—to ignore the bad and publicize only the good and beneficial. In short, always to tell half truths instead of the whole truth. If the PR man frankly accepts his role as that of advocate, these doubts and conflicts largely will disappear. No one expects a lawyer to present, even to a jury deciding the question of freedom, or life itself, information damaging to his client. As an officer of the court, the lawyer is bound not to tell untruths or to deny the truth if it is brought out under questioning of opposing counsel. As a man of conscience, bound by the code of ethics of professional associations like the Public Relations Society of America, the corporate PR Director or staff member is bound not to tell untruths to the media or any of his client's publics and to answer truthfully the questions of the representatives of the media.

Our job as advocate is to present our client in the best possible light. It is an honorable role, and we should not feel defensive about it.



Accelerating Change in
International Communications

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THE INTELSAT SYSTEM: ITS PRESENT AND FUTURE USE FOR BROADCASTING

Olof Hultén

Developments in satellite technology have awakened a good deal of optimism in the public debate surrounding international mass communications, and broadcasting in particular. Utilization of satellites is commonly foreseen to increase telecommunications capacity and to permit reduced costs, thereby promoting intercultural exchange and production of broadcasts for international audiences. Indeed, communications satellites are generally cited as one of the most hopeful prospects towards the promotion of a 'free flow of information'. As regards the communications needs of the technologically less developed regions, satellites have virtually been cast in the role of *deus ex machina*.

Nevertheless, the scale of costs of satellite utilization in the existing systems of international scope is such that use of the system by broadcasting organizations is restricted to transmission of items of the highest 'news' priority, transmitted by and for only the most well-to-do broadcasting organizations.

The operations and tariff policies of the Intelsat consortium—the only such system operating on a commercial basis—comprised the focus of this study, which was commissioned by the International Broadcast Institute and completed in the spring of 1971. Special attention was devoted to present utilization of the system by broadcast organizations and prospects for future use . . . The development in the satellite utilization field is seemingly very fast, but the underlying political, economical and institutional patterns have not changed and are not likely to change quickly.

The Intelsat consortium presently comprises some 80 member states. Since its inception in 1964 it has developed and operated four 'generations' of satellites. A consortium, Intelsat is jointly owned and operated by its members, each member or member-group wielding a

Olof Hultén is a member of the Audience and Programme Research Department, Swedish Broadcasting Corporation, coauthor of *Man and Mass Media* (in Swedish) and author of a report on satellite utilization for IBI, which was published in 1971. The article appeared in *Gazette* (1973) and is reprinted with permissions of the author and the *Gazette*.

vote proportionate to its share of Intelsat traffic.¹ During the so-called interim period since the birth of the organization the actual business operations of the consortium have been in the hands of Comsat, the US public corporation for civilian satellite development. This arrangement is to be formally terminated according to recent agreement.

Table 1. *Growth of capacity in the Intelsat satellites*

<i>Satellite (year)</i>	<i>Circuits</i>	<i>Design lifetime</i>	<i>Circuit/years of capacity</i>
Intelsat I (1965)	240	1 1/2 yrs	360
Intelsat II	240	3 yrs	720
Intelsat III	1,200	5 yrs	6,000
Intelsat IV (from 1971)	3,000– 10,000*	7 yrs	42,000

*Average: 6,000 circuits

Source: *Comsat Report to the President and the Congress, 1968.*

The volume of Intelsat telecommunications capacity has multiplied many times over during a very short period.² Demand for telecommunications service—generated by a complex interaction of political, economic, trade, social and cultural relations among nations—has tremendously increased in recent years. The normal rate of growth of interregional telecommunications traffic is high, between 10 and 20% annually, some routes showing even higher growth rates.

Intelsat is presently served by satellites of the third and fourth generations. Their configuration, through the lifetime of Intelsat IV, will remain as follows: two over the Atlantic Ocean, two over the Pacific Ocean and one over the Indian Ocean. Although the basic function of the satellites (through Intelsat IV) remains the same,

1. As recently amended. Previously, voting strength was based on members share of *total* international telecommunications traffic, an arrangement which favored large nations served by both satellite and cable at the expense of small powers who perhaps are totally dependent on satellite links.

2. Capacity is measured in terms of the telephone, or 'voice-grade' circuit. The telephone circuit can, of course, be utilized for other telecommunications services (telex, facsimile, etc.). A television transmission with full sound accompaniment uses some 240 circuits.

Illustrative of the enormous expansion of international facilities is the fact that while satellite circuit capacity has burgeoned during the period 1965-70, cable circuit capacity (measured in circuit-miles) has trebled.

namely point-to-point communication between standard ground stations, technical developments have allowed ever greater capacity and flexibility. And, while initial investment per satellite has quadrupled between the first and fourth generations, the growth in capacity has been still more rapid, resulting in a considerably lower satellite investment cost per circuit year.

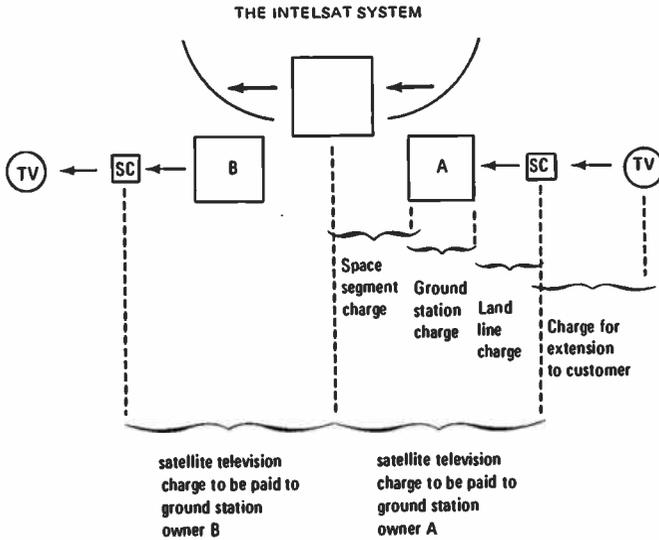


Figure 1.

Two aspects of the Intelsat system are vital to an understanding of the prospects of satellite mediated international mass communication. First, Intelsat was created and is operated in the interest of telephone and other telecommunications traffic rather than for broadcasting. Indeed, broadcasting accounts for but 2 to 3% of Intelsat traffic. This fact has direct consequences for Intelsat tariff policy, which in turn affects utilization patterns.

Secondly, Intelsat's formal jurisdiction as well as the consortium's tariffs apply only to the 'space segment' of satellite mediated transmissions (see figure 1, above). An examination of the cost structure of such transmissions reveals that Intelsat's share of costs is on the order of a mere 10 to 15%. The remainder is accounted for by the ground stations' land lines and switching costs—services under the authority of the respective telecommunications organs of the mem-

ber states.³ Consequently, often-voiced calls for a reduction in Intelsat rates cannot be expected to significantly alter the exclusive costliness of international broadcasting by satellite.

As demand for international telecommunications service is a direct function of economic development and international engagement, the general patterns of Intelsat traffic are reflected in the broadcast utilization of the system. While Intelsat traffic has grown impressively during its short history, this utilization is unmistakably concentrated to those areas of the world where the telecommunications infrastructure is already at an advanced stage of development. Roughly three-quarters of present leasable telephone capacity goes to or from the United States. This proportion will be sustained in the foreseeable future, i.e., through 1975. Only some 10% of total utilized capacity did not go to or from the United States or Western Europe in 1970.

As for television utilization, present technology permits point-to-point transmission or multiple-point service.⁴ From a modest beginning in 1965, television traffic has increased some 25 times over. (One should keep in mind that television nevertheless presently accounts for but 2 to 3% of total traffic.) As in the case of other telecommunications traffic the Atlantic region heavily dominates television traffic, in terms of both time and number of programs.

Table 2. *Television usage in hours, 1969, for each Intelsat region*

<i>Region</i>	<i>Number of programs</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>Transmission time</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Atlantic	460	52.1	449	58.9
Indian	9	1.0	12	1.6
Pacific	347	39.3	229	30.1
Atlantic/Indian	4	0.5	14	1.8
Atlantic/Pacific	1	0.1	2	0.3
Pacific/Indian	62	7.0	56	7.3
Total	883	100.0	762	100.0

3. It may be noted here that television tariff policies of the common carriers (i.e., ground segment operators) vary considerably around the world. Particularly striking is the contrast between the philosophy of CEPT in Western Europe and that of the U.S. ground station operator, Comsat.

4. Multiple-point service, i.e., one station simultaneously transmitting to multiple receiving stations, is becoming more and more common.

The main flows of traffic in the Intelsat system are, in descending order of magnitude (per transmission time): USA to Puerto Rico, USA to Hawaii, Europe to USA and vice versa, and USA to Latin America.⁵ Domestic US traffic (US Mainland to and from Puerto Rico and Hawaii) accounted for about 37% of total transmission time, but only about 10% of transmissions in 1970. (The relatively long transmission times derive from the almost exclusive use of these routes for transmitting sports events from the US Mainland.) The Europe-USA route in 1970 accounted for about 20% of total transmission time, and 34% of transmissions, which reflects the predominance of news items on this route.

In the Pacific Ocean region the westward traffic flows primarily from the United States to Japan and Australia, while at present about two-thirds of the flow eastwards emanates from Hong Kong to the United States. (The content primarily news from the wars in Indochina.) Ground stations in the Indian Ocean region originate or receive a negligible number of programs.

Without going into details of the actual costs of broadcasting via satellite, we may say that they are high, and, indeed, almost prohibitively high for the regions most in need of satellite service. In at least two aspects the present structure of the Intelsat system is poorly adapted to the needs of broadcasters.

First, a technological detail, which can be traced to the imbalance in the ownership structure of the consortium: namely, that Intelsat satellites require expensively large and powerful ground stations. As noted above, control of the system is distributed according to the member's respective share of the traffic. In practice, this has meant that heretofore the United States had had more than a 50% of the interest in Intelsat and thus has stood for more than 50% of the costs of the consortium. While the United States is bound to pay more than 50% of all costs arising in the space segment, costs arising in the ground segments are borne by the respective common carriers, and ultimately by Intelsat's customers. Thus, it has been in US interest to economize in the space segment (i.e., the satellite), while relying on more powerful ground stations to pick up Intelsat signals. One nation's cost-benefit balance would thus appear to have determined the structure of satellite services to the detriment of both *a.* small nations, who must invest inordinately large sums in ground stations to receive a relatively slight flow of traffic and *b.* broadcasters, who as customers of Intelsat assume the higher costs of larger stations.

5. The 1970 traffic from Latin America was of comparable magnitude due to broadcast of the World Soccer Championships.

The other complaint broadcasters raise against the Intelsat system concerns the system employed in deriving charges. Broadcasters base their demand for lower charges on the fact that broadcast transmissions make up a so insignificant fraction of total traffic. Claiming that ground station capacity—and the concomitant investments—would be the same even without television service, broadcasters demand not to be charged in the same way as the other telecommunication services. Ground station owners, on the other hand, aim to recover at least the marginal costs incurred by television service. The controversy arises over how sizable these marginal costs actually are. The situation is further complicated by technical differences in ground stations, which result in quite varying marginal costs.

There are also other criticisms raised against the system of charges employed, particularly from members in the Third World. But, pressure must be raised on the influential common carriers if any change is to be effected.

Use of satellites for television broadcasts actually represents a decision on the part of the broadcaster to 'buy time'. Indeed, one newsman described his organization's use of satellite technology as 'putting on an airmail stamp'. Content broadcast via satellite is thus primarily that which is extremely time-sensitive or for which the sense of 'actuality' or 'simultaneous presence' is important. Thus, two types of transmissions have become common: the short news 'flash', transmitted between the major news centers of the world, and longer special events type programs. Satellite transmission of news is increasing, but at a slower pace than during the first years, as the high charges strain the budgets of most news departments. The high charges likewise limit the transmission of special events to such programs as are of particular interest to certain broadcasting organizations (e.g., national sports team abroad) or, in commercial systems, such programs as can easily be sponsored. Multiple receptions and syndications are increasing.

The activities of the European Broadcasting Union and Eurovision provide an example of broadcasters' optimized response to the technical and cost structures of Intelsat service. First of all, it should be noted that European broadcasters are confronted by two particularly adverse circumstances, which perhaps have elicited EBU's efficiency: (1) The common carriers in the European region, strongly organized in the Conference of European Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT), have taken an ungenerous attitude toward satellite broadcast service. They charge, for example, 80% more for ground station service than does their US counterpart.

(2) Because of the proliferation of national entities (and there-with national telecommunication administrations), the European area is served by an unnecessarily large number of ground stations. The extra costs arising from this proliferation are naturally borne by European customers.

The exchange and cooperation under the Eurovision program has been expanded to include satellite broadcasts. By this means the members of EBU have managed to rationalize their use of European ground stations and have created an effective means of sharing costs. In addition to coordinated broadcasts of special events of broad general interest, Eurovision also coordinates exchange of short news items originated outside Europe. The volume of this traffic has grown.

In the regular Eurovision exchange of news items the larger European countries dominate as originating sources, while the smaller broadcasting organizations act as receivers. In the case of reception of satellite-fed news items, however, another pattern appears to emerge: all countries utilize the coordinated service via Eurovision to about the same extent, with possibly a slight bias in favor of the larger organizations. All in all, the majority of EBU members take the opportunity to provide their viewers with news material transmitted via satellite. EBU also arranges satellite feeds in the regular exchange with Intervision when members of the East European Broadcasting Union so wish.

Generally speaking, cooperation, either on the part of receivers (e.g., Eurovision) or among producers and/or sponsors (syndication), can achieve economic benefits. Given the present tariff level only such 'cooperative' transmissions would appear to have any sizable growth potential.

An important feature of broadcast utilization of satellites, namely, the world-wide traffic pattern of various types of program content, should not be overlooked. Generally speaking, satellite broadcast content is subject to the same social, cultural and economic factors as is other broadcast content. In the case of satellite mediated broadcasts, however, the extra expense acts as an additional filter in the selection or editorial process.

To summarize the flows on the principal routes of traffic: Taken as a whole (that is, including domestic US traffic), the largest share of transmission hours from US sources has no doubt been devoted to the space voyages and sports. Many transmissions have also been devoted to US political events. Among transmissions to the United States, the Middle East crisis in 1967, the Pope's journeys,

and the political events in France in 1968 took a large part of total time. Most transmissions to the United States carry news. Sports events dominate the route from the United States to Latin America, and sports and entertainment programs dominate the route between Europe and Latin America as well.

The choice of types of program content for satellite transmission as well as traditional 'news values' are, of course, products of the social and cultural context in which broadcasting organizations operate. Satellites do not and probably cannot effect changes in these non-quantitative factors.

The world-wide flow of news may be described as falling into three major categories:

(1) between the news centers of the world, that is, the political and economic capitals as well as hubs in the international communication network;

(2) between these news centers and the 'minor' news areas of the world, i.e., those which only sporadically generate any flow of news. Among the minor news areas are the less developed countries, but almost all small countries in the developed areas of the world fall into this category as well;

(3) between the minor news areas.

As for the first category, satellites have helped to expand the flow and have speeded it up.

The flow of news between major and minor news areas remains unsatisfactorily one-sided. News agencies, press wire services and television news services are often owned and controlled from the major news centers. Satellites have only provided these organs with another means of distributing their wares. The transmission of news from the periphery is scant, and what little news is generated is generally related to disasters, revolutions or such news as affects people or institutions in the major news areas. If anything, satellites have only confirmed the traditional patterns of flow.

The distribution of news between countries in the news periphery is even more rudimentary than the patterns described above.

Underlying these traditional news flows are traditional news values. In the words of one broadcaster, 'Satellites can and will do a lot for us. They will certainly do it faster and take it further. They won't necessarily do anything better'. While satellites make possible television news from countries previously inaccessible, the new technology would not appear to alter underlying news interests and news evaluation patterns.

Seen from the perspective of developing countries, satellite technology poses a complex of advantages and disadvantages, of promise and potential dangers. Satellite technology has been hailed as a new means of breaking the traditional telecommunication isolation of countries in the Third World. Theoretically, at least, satellites do offer effective telecommunication facilities in these regions characterized by low traffic density and often vast or difficult terrain, since these obstacles pose less of a hinder to satellite communication. Operating at the same economy, independent of Earth-surface distances, absorbing traffic from large regions, and with low marginal costs of expansion, satellites are indeed a promising technology for the developing regions of the world. But, the present international satellite communications system, developed to fit the scale of operations of the rich and advanced countries, requires expenditures—particularly for ground stations—far greater than can be justified by many developing countries. Some countries, however, value the social and political opportunities offered by satellite links so high as to justify the otherwise uneconomic investment.

Broken isolation, increased involvement in international flows of communication—oft-voiced ‘advantages’ offered by satellite technology—may also be seen as potential threats to national culture. Developing economics not only lack resources for investments in telecommunications, but the budgets of broadcasting organizations in these countries are also often very meager. Unable to finance original production of programming, they are vulnerable to the forces of so-called cultural imperialism. At best, economically disadvantaged broadcasters can merely decide whether or not they wish to receive someone else’s information. Particularly the growing trend toward commercial syndication of programs—especially commercial products of well-to-do Western societies—present tempting low-cost alternatives to local production of programs. Furthermore, many powerful institutions in the economically advanced countries, among them broadcasting organizations, advertising and national information agencies, are using and planning increased use of satellites, including direct broadcast satellites. Centripetal forces mount.

Thus, improved technology in the service of an imbalanced, and in many ways ‘imperialistic’ international mass communications structure is feared by many in the Third World. Until this imbalance is redressed, and until the economics of broadcasting via satellite can be placed within reach of the developing countries, Intelsat will not

contribute to a truly 'free flow of information', but rather merely to an increased and lubricated flow along present channels.

One should be careful not to overlook the positive potential which communication satellite technology offers. But socio-political-cultural factors—ethnocentric tendencies in combination with an imbalance of wealth among the nations of the world—conspire to limit the content and direction of information flows, preserving traditional privileges and prejudices. Social and institutional factors at both ends of the satellite 'bridge' are crucial for the development of television utilization of satellites, and these factors change slowly, if at all. Our modern belief in technological solutions must not blind us to these facts.

MADISON AVENUE IMPERIALISM

Herbert I. Schiller

Many currents feed the international flow of communications. Tourists, governmental agents and officials, student travelers, trade (exports and imports), international games and sports, religious organizations and cultural exchanges are only some of the better recognized contributors to international communications. While each element does not necessarily match the next in volume, force or impact, in theory, at least, there is supposed to be no dominant thrusting single component that overshadows the rest. There is, it is claimed, a diffusion of influence, with culture, entertainment, travel and commerce nicely balancing each other in an international equilibrium that offers advantage to all participants. We hear, therefore, that "Trade is good," "Cultural exchanges create understanding," and "Travel is broadening." All this folk wisdom contributes ultimately to the most mystical and revered concept of the "free flow of information." The free flow of information, until recently at any rate, has been regarded as the ultimate good for which all sensible nations should strive.

Herbert I. Schiller, professor of communication at the University of California, San Diego, originally published this article in the March/April 1971 issue of *TRANS-ACTION*. A full analysis of the "system" is found in his book, *Mass Communication and American Empire*, Beacon paperback, 1971. Schiller also wrote *The Mind Managers*, Beacon Press, 1973.

Actually, this view of beneficial and pluralistic international communications is about as realistic as the economists' model of free competition and the self-adjusting market economy. Not surprisingly, both systems are disrupted by the same force. Domestically, the giant corporation, as Galbraith and others have effectively demonstrated, makes a shambles of the notion of a free market of countless uninfluential producers and consumers. Internationally, the multinational corporation, the intercontinental extension of the domestic behemoth, now dominates similarly the global economy and has become the chief organizer and manufacturer of the international flow of communications.

The internationally active corporation is not an altogether new phenomenon but its extensive involvement in overseas communications is relatively recent. Since the end of World War II, both the volume and the character of international economic activity have changed considerably. Perhaps \$70 billion of direct overseas investment is owned and controlled by a few hundred U.S.-based companies, the so-called multinational corporations. The massive build-up of private U.S. investment abroad requires no elaboration here. Though American-controlled raw materials and extractive industries have maintained and even extended their holdings around the world, the largest part of the postwar American investment flow abroad has been into manufacturing and service industries in already developed regions and countries (Western Europe, Canada, Australia). The changing nature of this investment has affected directly and consequentially both the apparatus and content of international communications. A trade publication has commented on this shift of activity of private U.S. investment overseas:

For the international advertiser and marketeer, (for instance), this means expanded horizons. The shift in investment means a greater concentration by international business in the production of goods and services and a more rapid development of consumer markets. *Hence, a growing emphasis on the advertising and marketing of those goods and services is to be expected.*

U.S. raw materials and heavy goods producer interests overseas in the pre-World War II days availed themselves of some communications talent to provide their local activities with favorable imagery, but such expenditures were marginal at best. Today the situation is entirely reversed. Now the mass media, wherever U.S. manufacturing companies operate, have been summoned to promote the global expansion of American consumer goods sales and services.

The international community is being inundated by a stream of

commercial messages that derive from the marketing requirements of (mostly) American multinational companies. The structure of national communications systems and the programming they offer are being transformed according to the specifications of international marketeers.

Advertising requires total access to the mass media. It is through the multimillion circulation magazines, the car and kitchen radio and the home screen that the marketing message comes across incessantly and effectively. Advertising cannot tolerate, if it wishes to be successful, mass communications channels that exclude its commercials and its commercially oriented "recreational" programming. It strives untingly, therefore, to penetrate each available communications outlet that has a sizable audience. Advertising's appetite is insatiable and nothing less than the total domination of every medium is always its objective. Once subordinated, the medium, whatever its original attributes, becomes an instrument of the commercial culture.

Accordingly, one measure of a nation's loss of control of its own mass media, (apart from the obvious loss through foreign ownership), is the degree of penetration of foreign advertising agencies in the mechanics of national marketing. Such a penetration signals also fundamental changes in the country's cultural ecology, as a changed communications structure increasingly transmits and reinforces attitudes that fit nicely with the requirements of the multinational corporate goods producers that are financing the new system.

The emerging pattern reveals a mixture of economics and electronics that is enormously powerful.

Sophisticated communications methodologies—those which have proved themselves the most effective in regimenting and securing the attachment of the domestic population—are being applied internationally at an accelerating tempo. The culture of commerce, or more precisely, of corporate power, is radiating from its American base in a dazzling display of vitality. To sell its goods and products and itself, U.S. business overseas employs the familiar services of advertising, public relations, opinion surveys and market research. And to carry the carefully synthesized messages of these bought services, it enlists or subverts the mass media of the many national states in which it operates.

Take television, for example. A couple of years ago I described the process by which Western European broadcasting was being commercialized. "In Western Europe, the most stable noncommercial broadcasting structures of sovereign states are unable to resist the forces that are arrayed against them." Here is one description (from

Television Age) of how commercials defy national boundaries, especially in the compact North Atlantic region:

Of course, the continued expansion of commercial television, despite powerful opposition, is playing a major role in making unity of diversity. Although many important countries, particularly in Europe, still forbid TV advertising, there is a certain "spillover" effect that tends to spread commercials even to those countries that originally were adamant. Only in 1971 did the 11-year-old government-controlled Swiss TV service permit commercials on its three regional networks. The move was in large part prompted by the concern of Swiss manufacturers who knew their customers were viewing Italian and German TV across the border. The same process is expected to unfold in the Netherlands, a large part of which is open to German programming and advertising messages. If Netherland TV goes commercial, then Belgium is expected to follow shortly thereafter. Then France and Scandinavia will be the last big holdouts. . . If French television goes commercial, an executive at J. Walter Thompson remarks; then there truly will be a common market for the TV advertiser.

All of this has come true with a vengeance. In Western Europe today, the only countries that have not "gone commercial" are Sweden and Denmark. Beginning in Britain in 1954 and continuing on through the last 16 years, country after country has accepted some form or another of commercial influence. Around the world, except in the Chinese and Soviet blocs, commercialism in broadcasting is now the dominant mode of organization. In the less developed nations, the dependence on outside capital assistance makes it inevitable that commercial broadcasting be established, and such has been the case.

Advertising has become the indispensable adjutant of the business system. Not surprisingly, perhaps, its own organizational structure is not different in many ways from the corporations whose interests it promotes and represents. Ad agencies, like the rest of American enterprise, show the same pattern of consolidation and concentration. In 1968, less than 10 per cent of the firms in the industry received almost three-quarters of the domestic business (billings). International billings are much more heavily concentrated.

The major U.S. ad agencies, much like the manufacturing companies they service, possess resources and obtain revenues that put them far ahead of most of their international competitors. Of the world's ten largest agencies in 1969, only one was not an American firm, and in the top 25 international agencies, 23 were American companies.

The rich domestic consumer market in the United States was the original stimulus for the growth of these word and image fac-

tories. It hastened their initial development. Now they are grazing in pastures far from home. The stupendous growth of directly owned American business overseas, has brought with it, of necessity, the marketeers. American factories worth more than \$10 billion are manufacturing their products in Western Europe. Another \$10 billion worth of U.S. plant is in Canada. Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, though mainly still serving as raw material depots of Western enterprise, have some U.S. manufacturing capacity too. The ad men follow their manufacturing clients wherever the potential markets lead, generally where the capital investment is set down. In 1968 American ad agencies operating outside the United States had billings exceeding \$1.5 billion, a large part of which, though by no means all, was accounted for by the advertising programs of U.S. companies overseas. In 1971 U.S. companies advertising expenditures abroad are expected to reach \$5 billion.

And the big U.S. agencies got most of the business. J. Walter Thompson; McCann-Erickson; Ted Bates; Young & Rubicam; Ogilvy and Mather; Norman, Craig & Kummel; Leo Burnett Co.; Foote, Cone and Belding; Compton; and Kenyon and Eckhardt are the elite ten American agencies in the world marketing swim.

No part of the globe (except, and perhaps only temporarily, the socialist-organized sector) avoids the penetration of the internationally active American ad agency. In a special international issue of *Printers' Ink* in 1967 titled "Who's Where Around the World," 45 U.S. agencies were listed with hundreds of overseas affiliates. Consider, for example, the far-flung activities of the largest agency in the world, J. Walter Thompson. In 1969, JWT had \$740 million in billings of which \$292 million, a sizable 39 per cent, originated in 28 countries outside the United States. JWT world-wide has 700 accounts and employs 8,000 people in 42 offices, in some instances several in one country. It operates in Argentina, Uruguay, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, France, Denmark, Britain, India, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Japan, Mexico, Holland, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, South Africa (with five offices throughout the country and billings of \$10,000,000) and Venezuela. JWT is the largest ad agency in seven countries outside the United States.

As of 1970, only two of the top 25 U.S. ad agencies still did not have overseas offices. If anything, the expansion of U.S. ad agencies is accelerating and foreign competition is being brought increasingly under the American umbrella. For instance, Leo Burnett Company, fifth-ranked U.S. agency in 1969, announced the acquisition of the

two largest ad agency subsidiaries of the London Press Exchange—LPE Ltd., one of England's largest agencies, and LPE International, Ltd., a combination of 19 agencies in Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. "It is a natural alliance," said Philip H. Schaff, Jr., chairman of Burnett. "Leo Burnett is strong in the United States and Canada and very weak outside. London Press Exchange is strong outside but very weak here."

The internationalization of the American advertising business is an integral part of the expansion of U.S. industry abroad. It is the latter's voracious marketing requirements that elicit and support the agencies' world-wide activities. The client list of American ad agencies operating internationally is a roster of *Fortune's* Directory of the largest 500 U.S. nonfinancial corporations, supplemented by a heavy representation of major European companies.

In Canada, for instance, the main revenues of commercial radio-television broadcasting come mostly from the giant U.S. companies operating across the border. In 1969, the top ten broadcasting advertisers were: General Motors of Canada Ltd., Procter and Gamble of Canada Ltd., Canadian Breweries, General Foods Ltd., Imperial Tobacco of Canada, Colgate-Palmolive Ltd., Ford Motor Company of Canada, Lever Bros. Ltd., Government of Canada and Bristol-Myers of Canada.

Ninth-ranked U.S. ad agency Ogilvy and Mather, with one-third of its income earned outside the United States and with 30 offices in 14 countries, notes in its 1969 annual report that it serves 17 clients in three or more countries: Air Canada, American Express, Bristol Myers, General Foods, Gillette, Hertz, ICI, Lever, Mars, Mercedes Benz, Rountree, Schweppes, Shell Chemical, Shell, U.S. Travel Service.

In their 1968 Annual Report, the eighth-ranked U.S. agency, Foote, Cone and Belding includes among its clients abroad Monsanto, BOAC, Gillette, B.F. Goodrich, Clairol, Kimberly-Clark Corporation, International Harvester, GM, Hughes Aircraft, Smith-Kline & French, Mead Johnson, Singer Company, Armour-Dial, Kraft Foods and Zenith Radio Corporation.

The omnipresent advertising message, jarring or insinuatingly effective, now constitutes a major voice in international communications. The mass media are the ideal instruments of transmission, especially television which captures the viewer in his own, allegedly secure, living room. The media, if they were not commercial to begin with as they were in the United States, end up eventually as business auxiliaries. The lure of advertising revenues is too tempting. Further-

more, the business system cannot permit as influential a "sales tool" as radio-television to function noncommercially, free to reject the transmission of its consumer messages.

It is no surprise, therefore, to discover that American advertising agencies have made deep inroads in most of the already-industrialized states. In Great Britain, for example, according to the *Financial Times*, "The situation now is that of the top twenty London advertising agencies, only seven are totally British. All the rest are American owned, or, in a few cases, have strong American links. In the top ten, the U.S. dominance is even greater, with only two of the ten retaining total independence." In West Germany, France, Italy and even Japan, U.S. ad agencies now account for the bulk of nationally-placed advertising, says *Advertising Age*. On the other side of the world there is the same loss of national control of the image-making apparatus. A report from *Advertising and Newspaper News* notes that "Overseas agencies gain whole or partial control of 15 of 24 largest Australian ad agencies and Australians berate themselves for lack of self-faith."

In many of the less developed states, the control of internal communications by foreign (generally U.S.) business interests, is often overwhelming. *Le Monde* reports, for example, that in Peru "more than 80 percent of the advertising carried by Peruvian newspapers, radio and television is channeled through big American advertising firms, such as J. Walter Thomson (*sic*), McKann Erickson (*sic*), Grant Advertising and Katts Acciones, Inc." Venezuela is even more monopolized by U.S. agencies and a similar pattern, varying in degree, applies in Rhodesia, Kenya, Nigeria, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Thailand and many other low-income nations.

Advertising, and the mass media which it eventually traduces are, therefore, the leading agents in the business of culture, and the culture of business. Other services such as public relations, marketing research and opinion surveying, all of which are utilized to make the marketing effort more effective, feed further the stream of international commercial communications.

Public relations, a practice of American business since the early years of the twentieth century, also has become an international phenomenon, following the migration of American capital overseas. Compared with the growth of international advertising, PR is still a rather modest but steadily expanding activity. Whereas advertising commonly aims to sell the corporation's output, PR's goal more specifically is to sell the company itself—as a useful, productive and beneficial entity to the society in which it is located. As American

capital floods into a country and wrests control of key industries, this is no mean task. Here is the problem as seen by the executive vice-president of Hill & Knowlton, Inc., the most important American company engaged in international public relations.

Let us review the situation confronting the American corporation today in Western Europe, [Mr. William A. Durbin suggests:] For a time following World War II, American companies found European countries eager for dollar investment—and the markets seemed almost limitless. In the past decade or so, American business responded with a tremendous increase in direct U.S. investments in Western Europe. In 1965 the total approached \$14 billion, compared with \$1.7 billion in 1950 [closer to \$20 billion in 1969—HS].

In recent years the climate has changed: the 'welcome' sign has been replaced with one reading 'Yankee Go Home.' A recent survey of Opinion Research Corporation disclosed considerable pressures to restrict the growth of U.S. firms in four Common Market countries. Fifty-six percent of the *businessmen* (my italics) in Germany believe their government should discourage U.S. investment. For Italy the figure was 44 percent, France 40 percent, and the Netherlands, 31 percent.

... Under these circumstances, American corporations face difficult problems. They cannot merely withdraw—they must work harder than ever—and much of their attention must be given to the public relations aspects of their international operations.

Or put otherwise, it is the task of U.S. corporate-supported public relations to overcome widespread resistance to American penetrations of the national economy wherever they may be occurring.

The manipulation of symbols to achieve this objective is applied skillfully, generally unobtrusively and intensively by the professional image-makers. As noted in one business bulletin, "Worldwide PR is, quite simply, the art of using ideas and information through all available means of communications, to create a favorable climate of opinion for products, services and the corporation itself."

When PR has its way, the flow of communications becomes a stream of unidentifiable (by source) promotional messages for the sponsoring company or complex or even the entire business system itself. Years ago, a U.S. business periodical observed: "As expert communicator, PR plays a unique and quite startling role in the whole flow of communications between the business community and the public. This role is often glossed over, but the simple fact is that much of the current news coverage of business by the American press, radio and television is subsidized by company PR effort... one hundred thousand public relations practitioners serve as a tremendous source of communications manpower. Without them, only

a handful of newspapers and radio or television stations would have the staff or resources to cover business activities . . .”

Emphasizing the fanciful means that are required to promote modern business, a later study concluded: “The relative significance of public relations cannot be gauged by estimating total expenditures for this work. We have no such estimates, and the figure would probably be small in comparison with advertising proper. The most telling test of the significance would be to determine the portion of the contents of our newspapers [and television and radio programming—HS] that has originated from public-relations offices. This portion is probably quite remarkable.”

In this curiously inverted state of affairs, the public is supposed to benefit from the privately-prepared press releases which are fed into the mass media, because the latter would be unable, if left to its own resources, to produce enough of such material. Now the international community is receiving these communications benefits as well. *Business Week*, a decade ago, estimated that “among the top three hundred companies in the country, three out of four have full-fledged PR departments, a broad jump from the one out of fifty reported in 1936. New corporation PR departments are starting at the rate of one hundred a year.” The top 300 companies, it may be recalled, are the major exporters of capital and are the main owners of overseas plants and facilities. In a survey undertaken by Opinion Research Corporation in January 1968, the 500 largest industrial corporations listed in the *Fortune* directory were asked to fill out questionnaires about their foreign public relations programs. Only 153 replies were received and of these, 43 reported no overseas PR activities. The Survey therefore represents a self-selected response of 110 major U.S. companies engaged in foreign public relations. The basic findings with respect to these firms were:

The number of companies engaging in international public relations activities has increased markedly in recent years.

These companies are carrying out public relations programs on every continent and in every major country.

The programs are usually handled by staff members based in the overseas countries.

Only one-third of the respondents use either a public relations firm or advertising agency to implement their overseas public relations programs.

The principal activities are “press releases, product publicity, and exhibits and special events.” Other activities include community relations, employee relations and government regulations. *Public Relations Quarterly* sums up the study in these words: “Not only

are more companies entering the overseas public relations field, they also seem to be more active."

National and local mass media systems are infiltrated by business messages not necessarily identified by their sources of origin. Hill and Knowlton have prepared a guidebook to familiarize less knowledgeable PR-men with the techniques of overseas promotion and concern with the local media has the highest priority.

With the advent of space communications, the opportunity to achieve a world-wide audience for promotional ends has not been ignored. In June, 1969, for example, the space satellite system was used to herald the opening of an iron ore complex in Australia, owned and operated by an American multinational corporation in association with other business companies. "Co-ordinated planning, American techniques and Intelsat make Australian mine openings a world event," reported the *Public Relations Journal*.

Two other media-related services supplement the information-generation business which engages so much of the attention and resources of American companies active in international markets. These are the opinion survey organizations and the market research companies which are also involved in opinion-taking as well as in more detailed market analysis.

Opinion polls are considered generally as part of the contemporary political infrastructure of parliamentary-electoral societies. In fact, by volume and character of the work, market-economic undertakings account for a substantial part of the poll-takers' overall business. The distinction between survey and market research is often extremely thin, and the techniques of uncovering political attitudes and desires may serve to give orientation to economic activities and politics. For example, the Opinion Research Corporation recently announced the establishment of a new company, Market and Opinion Research International, Ltd., (MORI) with headquarters in London. This is a joint venture with NOP Market Research Ltd., London. MORI, the new outfit, is expected to provide facilities for research in North America, the United Kingdom and Europe.

The Gallup Organization, Inc., the most well known United States opinion-surveying company, identifies itself as providing "marketing and attitude research." Gallup-International, which includes its autonomous overseas associates in a loose network of affiliate relationships, "covers 36 countries or regions throughout the world. It undertakes surveys on a world-wide or European scale in the fields of marketing research and of public opinion and behavioral sciences, to be conducted on a contract and client basis."

A.C. Nielsen Co., the major market research company in the United States, engages in surveys as a matter of course and operates in 20 different countries on four continents. It supplies some of its research services to 86 international organizations with parent companies located in eight different countries. Its television audience research services have been established directly in Canada and Japan and through joint ventures in Ireland and West Germany. This rating service which creates frenzy amongst commercial TV broadcasters scrambling to achieve high viewing ratios, is described by Arthur C. Nielsen, founder of the company, in this way:

. . . (Since) this type of research exerts a significant and favorable effect on the efficiency of one of the most important methods of moving goods from producer to consumer (television)—it is lowering the cost of distribution and creating increased profits for manufacturers and greater values for consumers.

The view of television as essentially a “method of moving goods from producer to consumer” explains, of course, the pathetic condition of television in the United States. The “increased efficiency” that the medium provides for the marketing function can be balanced against the human dysfunction imposed on its audience.

Another firm, International Research Associates, Inc., (INRA) conducts market and opinion research in the United States, Latin America, Europe, Africa and the Middle East, Southeast Asia and the Far East. The company has a network of associated research organizations operating in more than 40 countries and principalities around the world.

The opinion survey—whether conducted under national or foreign auspices, which is, incidentally, no easy matter to ascertain—is ostensibly designed to acquire information, not to create it. In fact, however, it often creates not only information but attitudes that it is supposed only to poll. The problem lies not with faulty sampling or poor interviewing; even the questions can be phrased with complete objectivity. Deficiencies in these matters can and do appear, but with increasingly sophisticated polling techniques available, amongst well-established organizations, technical errors are likely to be minimal.

A less acknowledged consequence of opinion surveying, however, is what might be termed its legitimization effect. This means that once political, social or economic questions are put in a fixed perspective and called to the attention of the respondent, a validation of certain ideas or even of a frame of reference may occur. Consumer preference studies, for instance, inquire about choices between one product or another, not whether either or both of the

products should have been produced in the first place. Political inquiries ask individuals to choose between candidates thereby validating the electoral process rather than questioning its mechanics.

In short, in most instances, and not necessarily with a deliberate intent to influence, the question-answer format creates for the respondent (and the viewer, listener or reader of the poll's published results) a pattern with which to view reality. This is set according to the structure of the inquiry. The conditions of the response are set by the poll-taker in the way he already views the relationships he wishes to uncover. The respondent is forced into that mold once he accepts the role of participant in the survey.

A case in point as an illustration. A Roper poll, conducted and paid for by the National Association of Broadcasters (the commercial broadcasters), asked its respondents, "Do you agree or disagree that having commercials is a fair price to pay for being able to watch [television]?" Roper reports, no doubt to the great satisfaction of the NAB, that "people agreed, eight to one, with the concept that having commercials is a 'fair price to pay.'" Yet what has been learned from this question and the overwhelming affirmative response it obtained? Alternatives of having television without commercials were not offered to the respondents. A commercial structure of relationships was assumed by the question formulated by Roper, and those answering, by the very fact of responding, had to accept the underlying set of assumptions. In effect, the prevailing institutional pattern of commercial television was sanctioned in the very process of poll-taking.

In this way surveys of opinion too often either create opinion or inhibit opinion-creating by restricting the framework in which genuine alternatives can be expressed or considered.

Gallup-International, financed by whomever will foot the bill, conducts periodic omnibus surveys in:

Argentina (every other month); Australia (every other month); Austria (four times a year); Belgium (each week); Chile (every other month); Great Britain (every week); Greece (every two weeks); India (four times a year); The Netherlands (every week); Norway (every month); Philippines (once a year); Sweden (every month); Switzerland (four times a year); Union of South Africa (alternate months, when the "European" adult population is sampled); Uruguay, (every other month); Vietnam (four times a year); West Germany (every month).

Published findings may be expected to have the effect of solidifying status quo sentiments in a generalized though fundamental sense. Moreover, polls conducted under obscure sponsorship may provide information to those with limited social responsibility, which

increases their potential for further manipulation of local populations.

In any event, opinion surveys conducted for American corporations or governmental information agencies, present a twofold threat to the societies in which they are undertaken. The polls are structured commercially and when published as national sentiment cannot fail to aggravate the marketeering influence in the country, by legitimizing still further, existing inclinations to consumerism. Of more moment, perhaps, they probe surreptitiously for national opinions that may determine or increase the scope of U.S. official or private information makers' future policy in that country. Certainly, the information that is derived from American-financed overseas surveys hardly promotes the two-way flow of communication which is the objective of so much UNESCO rhetoric.

It should also be clear that in many advanced, industrial market societies, local market research and polling occur alongside of and sometimes without competition from American supported operations in the same territory. To the extent that they do exist independently, they provide for their domestic sponsors the same methodology of control and manipulation that these activities offer their American counterparts. Though this discussion is concerned primarily with the promotion of American business ideology overseas through advertising, PR, polls and market research, the imposition of a value structure riddled with commercialism is made easier to the extent that it finds societies already prepared and enmeshed in these practices.

The economic power of American corporate capitalism has long been manifest. Its postwar global expansion has made it an international system which affects, and is affected by, national decision-making in scores of countries on all continents. Its economic impact, if not thoroughly documented, at least is generally recognized and includes raw material flows and explorations, balance of payments conflicts, dividend and profit repatriation pressures, migrations of human talent ("the brain drain"), currency and gold speculation, and shifting shares of world markets. Political consequences of the international operations of American companies are also beginning to be appreciated. Instabilities or at least tensions in local political structures are sometimes analysed with respect to inflows of American capital.

Only the cultural-informational sphere has gone almost unacknowledged in the appraisal of America's global influence. Yet today the control of men and of societies requires, before anything else, the

manipulation of words and images. Whatever the degree of raw power that can be brought to bear on a people, it is unavailing in the long run (which may not be so very long in arriving) if it cannot make its objectives seem, if not attractive, at least benign to those it seeks to control. The methods and the messages of communications therefore are the most significant and indispensable instruments of modern power wielders. Neglect of communications in any analysis of contemporary international relations overlooks one of the sources of ultimate power in our time. For the attitudinal state of a population helps to determine its political behavior. And beliefs and opinions are remarkably vulnerable to the sort of modern mass communications which the American system of power uses with fantastic dexterity.

Commercially-produced entertainment and recreation are the chief channels that convey internationally the values and life styles of U.S. corporate capitalism, but the information generated directly by the sizable American business community overseas also is imposing and far reaching in its effects. It is difficult to overstate the impact of the promotional and "research" activities of the large corporations on peoples subjected to them. Moreover, since the agent of influence is often unrecognized as such, the more powerful though less measurable it is likely to be.

The great American stream of business-financed and commercially-saturated communications, pouring through the mass media, is aimed at protecting the physical operations of U.S. enterprises abroad as well as in fostering values and attitudes of privatism and consumerism, which are the ultimate supports of the business system. Few are the regions removed from this wave of commercialism. The culture of American business is enveloping everything in its path as it appeals to individualistic instincts while it reinforces its messages with the imagery of technological gadgetry and consumer delights.

It derives strength also from its utilization of two of the currently strongest human desires—the yearning of people everywhere for an end to bloody conflict and warfare and in their place some condition of universality, and the equally powerful popular impulse to freedom. Accordingly, the rhetoric of corporate communications, disseminated one way or another through the mass media, makes much of internationalism and freedom, of the special sort that maximizes private benefits. The identification of human freedom with property ownership and classifying the world-wide activities of business corporations as an inspiring model of internationalism, provide the chief ideological underpinnings of today's business-oriented

messages. For instance, the advice of Tom Sutton, executive vice-president-International of J. Walter Thompson Company, the world's largest advertising agency, on this subject is forthright: "I believe it is the job of international organizations such as [the] International Advertising Association and the International Chamber of Commerce to preach the gospel of freedom and to see that the best systems of control and restraint—in areas where there may have to be some—are exported for adoption everywhere, and not the worst."

On the internationalist theme, Robert Sarnoff, chairman of the board and president of RCA Co., the electronics supercorporation, invokes the image of a boundary-free world, accessible to everyone but especially to the undertakings of the few hundred multinational corporations. In a call for a "global common market of communications," Sarnoff enthusiastically recommends reducing national responsibility in communications so that it can be considered a "global resource." Such a development he claims "would foster an increasing worldwide flow of information that would bring benefits as tangible as the increasing trade among the countries of Western Europe. The distribution of knowledge by such a system would provide greater stimulus to growth than any conceivable program of economic aid."

"For the public of all countries, it would provide entertainment, cultural and informational programming from abroad as a routine rather than a rarity." And, furthermore, Sarnoff adds: "As data transmission becomes less and less expensive, we will see greater use of computerized controls and even long-distance time-sharing to strengthen the multinational firm as a vehicle for the transfer of technology. The increases in production and productivity, resulting from the global surge of business information, could parallel the economic advances made in the common market over the past 20 years."

All this would apparently occur in the absence of genuine international structures of control and alongside diminished national authority. Beneficiaries in this context could only be the giant, transnational corporations.

Economic output, technological mastery and military power have been the traditional strengths of the American corporate economy. Now, increasing reliance is being placed on communications control. The heavy informational flow produced and supported by American companies overseas makes a powerful contribution to the domestic maintenance and global extension of the business system and its value.

PART II

QUESTIONS FOR READING AND DISCUSSION

1. One of the major problems growing out of the new technology that is being used in printing a newspaper is that unions or jobs over which certain unions have jurisdiction are being eliminated. What is being done to solve this problem?
2. What is the “revolution” in home video systems or cartridge television? Why does Cliff Christians feel that cartridge television will not meet with the success that others have proclaimed for it? Do you agree?
3. What will be the probable effect of the domestic communications satellite on our communication system? Why?
4. Do you agree or disagree with what appears to be the present practice in your local press (and in Lee Smith’s article) regarding good taste? What are the reasons for your position?
5. The death of *Life* magazine was a national tragedy to some; a natural and long-delayed process to others. Chris Welles suggests that there were forces at work in the publication field that could not be countered or corrected. What were these “reasons” for the death of *Life*?
6. What does Paul Carrico mean by “mediated” violence? Do you feel that his solution to the problem is practical at this time?
7. Two important decisions were made in the Supreme Court’s 5 to 4 obscenity ruling, according to Paul Bender. What did the minority vote mean? What is the new definition of obscenity that the majority decided upon?
8. What are the changes—and the reasons for the changes—in the black press during the past few decades?
9. What is it that distinguishes the Chicano press from the Spanish-language press that already exists in various parts of the country?
10. Why does the television-radio spot sales representative (TV-radio sales rep.) have “power” in structuring the programs we see and hear?
11. Joseph P. McLaughlin proposes that public relations people re-evaluate their traditional approach and become vigorous advocates for people, institutions, and issues. What are the advantages of advocacy? What are its limitations? How might mass media representatives, through whom much PR work is conducted, react to such a change in concept?
12. The changes wrought by satellite communications so far have not been great, according to Olof Hultén. How has broadcasting used the satellite? What are some of the limitations to greater use by the mass media?
13. What is meant by Herbert I. Schiller’s concept of “media imperialism”? Do you agree with his analysis? What can be done to change the situation?

PROJECTS OR REPORTS

Newspapers. Study your local media to see whether any technical changes are being installed. If changes are being made, try to determine what affects those

changes may have on the people working on the newspaper. Seek information from those groups (unions, perhaps) which would have the most to lose.

Broadcasting. The article from *Broadcasting* magazine summarizes one of the most important books about television to be published in a decade. Read the article carefully, then write a short essay based on the findings in the tables. Use one or more tables upon which to base your essay or report. Avoid covering the same data that is discussed in the article. Seek new comparisons and conclusions based upon the available figures.

Prepare a report on the cancellation of the television program “Bridget Loves Bernie.” Examine the episode in the light of Kenneth S. Lynn’s assertion that in “Bridget Loves Bernie” the “Irish and Jewish people confront one another, so that we seem to be moving into a new phase. There is a kind of new consciousness of ethnic groups.” Do you agree with Lynn?

Black films. Black films with black artists and black writers have found a popularity on the screens of general theaters across the country. But the experience is bittersweet to many people in the black community. Read widely in periodicals to get views from black and white authors, then prepare a paper based on your research. If possible, interview college students who have viewed the films. You might also prepare a paper comparing the theatrical releases of black films with recent television programs such as “Shaft” and “Tenafly.”

Counter-advertising. The FTC, as explained in the article, “Counter-Advertising, the FTC and the FCC,” has increasingly applied pressure against advertisers and their advertisements. Now, the FTC has petitioned the FCC to apply its Fairness Doctrine against broadcast commercials. Prepare a paper explaining the concept of the Fairness Doctrine and include a discussion of its application to advertising. Or, examine advertisements for a specific time, say one network during prime time for five days, and apply the FTC’s proposed rules against the advertisements you see. Get help from friends, and be sure to get the approval of your instructor on your method of evaluating the commercials.

PART THREE



Multiplying Media Debates

For several years the disillusionment of many Americans with the performance of the news media seemed to parallel their unhappiness with the foreign and domestic failures of the government. But when the news media spearheaded the Watergate investigation and other investigations of the Nixon administration, the tide seemed to shift slightly in favor of the reporters and commentators. At least it appeared that the news media would be less vulnerable to charges of bias and sensationalism if just some of the allegations made against President Nixon, the Pentagon, and various government officials were proven to be true.

There remained, of course, the danger of a public opinion backlash against the media—the messenger of bad news—as the networks transformed the Watergate hearings into the greatest daytime serial in television history, and President Nixon tried to outfox his challengers.

The principles of the traditional press-government adversary relationship are well established. President Harry Truman's open but tough dealings with an aggressive press corps serve as an example. Yet observers such as James Reston of the *New York Times* feel press relations with the White House have been on a continual downhill slide since Truman's day.

Certainly President Nixon's bitter outbursts against television newsmen during a televised presidential news conference in late 1973—and the obvious hostility of some newsmen present—revealed a new low. The loser in all of these fights was the public.

The types of attacks against the press, suggested by the President's own attitudes and mounted by such officials as former Vice-President Spiro Agnew, H.R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, Patrick Buchanan, Clay Whitehead, Ronald Ziegler and others, were part of an overall campaign to combat and, if possible, discredit the news media. Walter Cronkite called it a "conspiracy."

Some of these attacks were made in the traditional mode, through tough statements by Agnew or Ziegler, the President's press secretary. Others were carried out through snide comments or leaked stories by Buchanan, the aide who prepared Nixon's daily news summary, or Haldeman and Ehrlichman, whose attitudes fostered an atmosphere which allowed the preparation of the so-called "enemies list"—revealed during the Watergate sessions. That list contained the names of newsmen and commentators. It also became known that phones used by newsmen were wiretapped by the administration.

While some historians argued that segments of the press had been under sieges of equal intensity, such as during the first years of the republic and the Civil War, others claimed the Nixon group had carried its threats to unprecedented lengths—not only in the Pentagon Papers case of 1971 but in an unrelenting and often subtle crusade against network news operations and public television.

In the television news area, Edith Efron's *The News Twisters*, a much discussed analysis of objectivity, symbolized this continuing debate. Agnew backed off from his heavy attacks against the networks and the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, but his original statements were echoed by others throughout the land, down to the county sheriff level. Getting into the act in a more moderate way was Edward J. Epstein, whose doctoral dissertation was turned into the popular *News From Nowhere: Television and the News*. A section of that book, dealing with all of the variables which go into the selection of television news items, leads off Chapter 11.

The most concise description of how it all works comes from NBC's David Brinkley. He says that all human beings perceive events in different ways and that the essential ingredient is "fairness"—something he claims most television newsmen somehow manage to achieve. Many disagree, including liberal critics of television news who claim that such attempts at "fairness" often are carried to the point of balancing a socially significant story against "the other side" and nullifying the effect of the interpretative reporting.

A part of the general debate about the quality of television news is the professional argument about “happy talk” formats. Initiated by the American Broadcasting Company and tried by some ABC stations, this loose, feature approach to the day’s events has run up against the majority viewpoint—that the world is not a happy place and a lot of the news is not happy; features are fine but an anchorman shouldn’t joke about newsmakers, throw puns at the weathergirl, and place bets with the sportscaster. The problem is not whether the on-camera newsmen occasionally talk to one another or show their personalities but whether they relate to the public in a professional and somewhat detached manner. As Brinkley says, every newsperson has personal feelings about a story. But it is another matter to show these feelings through jokes and other banter.

At stake in all of this is the credibility of both the news media and the government. At this writing, the media have taken a slight lead. As for the future, there is reason to believe readers will receive more frequent doses of aggressive journalism. The events of 1973 dictate this behavior.

The disclosure of Nixon’s secret bombing of Cambodia, coming in the middle of the Watergate sessions, was the final straw for some politicians and media observers. The President had told the nation on April 30, 1970 that the United States had observed the neutrality of Cambodia since the Geneva Agreement of 1954. What no one knew was that for the previous fourteen months B-52s had made 3,630 sorties and had dropped more than 100,000 tons of bombs on that “neutral” soil. It became known, not through the efforts of reporters or “news leaks” from “bothered” administration officials but through the testimony of a former Air Force officer. This is the challenge to journalists—to make the government afraid to lie by digging and uncovering early evidences of deception.

A red flag should be thrown up, however. In zealous attempts to show wrongdoing, some writers have neglected to check sources. And embarrassment has been suffered by honest officials and public-serving institutions. But revelation of errors should not deter newspaper editors and television news producers from their prime purpose: to report the news “without fear or favor.”

One aspect of news reporting—the gaining of information through undisclosed sources—continues to pose legal and ethical questions. Much of the published Watergate information was gained from “leaks” in the security systems of the grand jury and the Senate committee. The grand jury breakdowns were legally serious because of the reason for the establishment of such bodies of citizens to hear

wide-ranging testimony which may involve innocent persons before criminal indictments are issued. Other "leaks" involve ethics more than legalities, and it is well known that all government centers thrive on the secret passing of information, which often is done for self-serving purposes. It is the reporter's job to be involved in this activity, but on a higher plane than many of the participants.

To quote Senator Howard Baker's comment during a Watergate session when President Nixon refused to turn over tape recordings of office conversations with John Dean, "Thus the issue is joined." Will the news system respond to the challenges of covering politics, the environment, war, in a high level, responsible way so that national, state, or local governments involved will not be able to discredit embarrassing stories? And will those in the public "trust" continue to take advantage of the media's credibility gap and try to hide their dealings, sometimes in vicious and deceitful ways—blaming the media for "unpatriotic" or "negative" stories which actually resulted from their own blunders?

For a variety of viewpoints about this essential discussion, the student is encouraged to read from some of the following selections.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The chapter on government and the media is an attempt to focus attention on certain of the prevailing issues between the media and government that did not properly fit in earlier parts of the book. Many of the books previously mentioned in the bibliography can profitably be read in conjunction with this section. Our purpose here, however, is to direct attention to that cutting edge of media-government relationship, particularly the reporting of Watergate and the confrontation between the government and the press over the Pentagon Papers. While we do not deal with the issue of public television and government in the text itself, several bibliographical sources will be given here to ease the way for students who may wish to examine this still developing medium of communication, which is intended to serve certain segments of our population.

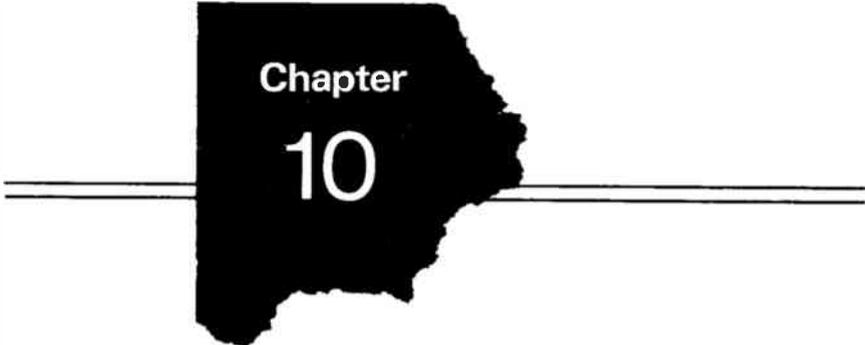
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Our final chapter, which is devoted to a discussion of the continuing controversy that surrounds television news and the issue of objectivity, reprints a selection from Edward J. Epstein's book on network news, based upon his doctoral dissertation. Our selection, from *The New Yorker*, was updated for publication by that carefully edited magazine. Epstein's complete study is detailed in his *News From Nowhere*, Random House, 1973. The issue of bias in television news is discussed in our readings. For additional views, consult Paul H. Weaver's, "Is Television News Biased?" *The Public Interest* (Winter 1972), pp. 57-74, Edith Efron's, *The News Twisters*, Nash, 1971, and Joseph Keeley's, *The Left Leaning Antenna: Political Bias in Television*, Arlington House, 1971, Weaver's article uses *The News Twisters* as a basis for discussing media bias. His analysis of the Efron study is a critical but fair presentation. He differs from her conclusions regarding the reasons for the perceived bias. Two useful books that should be read in conjunction with the above are William Small's, *To Kill a Messenger: Television News and the Real World*, Hastings House, 1970, and Fred W. Friendly's, *Due to Circumstances Beyond Our Control . . .*, Random House, 1967. Both are inside reports by CBS or former CBS personnel. To complement Greene's "case" study of a news program, read James MacGregor's, "How ABC's Av Westin Decides What to Show on the Evening News," *Wall Street Journal* (Nov. 22, 1972), pp. 1, 8.

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Chapter

10

Government and the Media

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HOW 'THE WASHINGTON POST' GAVE NIXON HELL

Aaron Latham

The men Bob Woodward was after had worked burglar's hours, and if he was going to catch them he would have to work burglar's hours, too. Sometime after midnight, the reporter would leave the newsroom on the fifth floor of the *Washington Post* building and ride the elevator down to ground level. He would get in his car and drive through the empty Washington streets. The streets were deserted because the residents of the nation's capital were afraid of getting mugged. The Nixon Administration had promised to do something about crime in Washington, but it seemed simply to have added more crime of its own.

Woodward would arrive at a dark garage and park outside. He would go inside the echoing building, where he would walk down ramp after ramp, deeper and deeper into a subterranean world which seemed like a metaphor for the twisting, convoluted, shadowy plots he was uncovering.

Two stories beneath ground level, Woodward says, a man would appear out of the shadows. The reporter and his wary informant would huddle between empty cars and talk about political espionage. The stories which the reporter would later write would in a literal sense be Notes from the Underground.

Woodward would climb back up out of the ground and drive back to *The Post*, passing near the White House. He would find Carl Bernstein waiting in the newsroom, anxious to learn what he had found out. The two reporters had worked together on the Watergate story from the beginning. They were both young—Woodward 30, Bernstein 29—and neither had been in the newspaper business very long. And yet it was they against the entire White House propaganda ministry. What happened was as unlikely as if the Hardy Boys had begun snooping into a burglary and ended up shaking the President and the Presidency. They helped force Richard Nixon, who went on television twenty years ago to announce that he was not going to give up his dog Checkers, to go on television [one] week and say that he

Aaron Latham, a former *Washington Post* reporter, restructured in the style of a traditional newspaper yarn the story of how the Watergate scandals made page one. His article is reprinted with the permission of *New York Magazine*, where it originally appeared May 14, 1973. © 1973 by NYM Corp. Reprinted with the permission of *New York Magazine*.

was going to give up Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Kleindienst and spaniel-like Dean.

But, best of all, Woodward and Bernstein forced a personal apology from the Administration and from White House press secretary Ron Ziegler, who had been accusing *The Post* of “shabby journalism” and “character assassination” since [October, 1972]. Such sublime vindication was not always forthcoming even for the Hardy Boys.

The White House is not the only institution that has been tormented by the two young reporters who are known around the newsroom as “the kids”: *The New York Times* has been rocked by them, too. One night a few weeks ago, word was passed in *The Times*’s New York newsroom to open up for an extraordinary eight-column head.

Reporters asked, “What happened?”

One reporter guessed, “The first edition of *The Washington Post* just arrived at the Washington bureau.”

He was right.

Night after night, for months, reporters and editors at *The Times* have been able to do little but sit around waiting for *The Washington Post*.

At one time, *The New York Times* reportedly platooned the Watergate story with a troop of reporters; *The Washington Post*’s combination of Woodward and Bernstein still beat them. *The Post*’s young reporters not only embarrassed their rival, *The Times*, but they also defeated a whole system of journalism. *The Times* covers Washington with correspondents who see themselves not so much as reporters but as ambassadors. News sources are expected to seek an audience with them.

Just before the boil burst, *The Washington Post* had planned a party to thank everyone who worked on the Watergate story. But then the resignations started coming. *The Washington Post* called its party off. Executive Editor Benjamin Bradlee said that he did not want it to seem that *The Post* was dancing on any graves.

But in the *Washington Post* newsroom, the reporters and editors could not hide their elation. The Nixon Administration had called the paper every kind of name. And everyone at *The Post* had known that if the paper was wrong about the Watergate, then it meant that Richard Nixon was right about *The Washington Post* and American journalism. It was beginning, however, to look more and more as if *The Post* was not only right but conservative in its coverage of the scandal.

The Weather

Tuesday—Partly cloudy, high in mid 60s. Low mid to upper 30s. Chance of rain near zero today, 10 per cent tonight. Wednesday—Partly cloudy, high in the 70s. Temp. near 70. Rain, 40 to 60. Thursday, 67 to 74. Friday 64 to 72. Saturday 67 to 74.

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FINAL

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President Refuses to Turn Over Tapes; Ervin Committee, Cox Issue Subpoenas

Action Sets Stage For Court Battle On Powers Issue

By Carroll H. Kinnick

President Nixon set the stage yesterday for a major constitutional confrontation by refusing to turn over presidential tape recordings to either the Senate Watergate committee or to Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox. Cox immediately issued a subpoena, and the tapes on presidential counsel J. Fred Buzhardt were most expeditiously turned over to the committee. The Senate committee followed suit, serving two subpoenas on another presidential adviser, Leonard Liggio.

The committee chairman, Sen. Sam Ervin (D-Tenn.), reacted to the President's decision with an emotional statement. "I don't regret that this situation has arisen, because I think that the Watergate tragedy as the gravest tragedy that our country has ever suffered. I would like to think that the Civil War was our country's greatest tragedy, but I do remember that there were some redeeming features in the Civil War in that there was some spirit of sacrifice and heroism displayed on both sides. I see no redeeming features in Watergate."

The committee's vice chairman Sen. Howard H. Baker (N.H.) expressed disappointment at being "on the brink of a constitutional confrontation between the Congress and the White House. He added that the material sought by the subpoena is essential, if not vital, to the full, thorough inquiry mandated and required of the committee."

It seemed certain last night that the confrontation between the President and the investigators ultimately would hinge on the central issues—executive privilege and the upholding of governmental process—in Nixon's hands.

The President made no concessions on those issues in a letter to Ervin yesterday. He would reply "at an appropriate time, to the extent called for by the Watergate Act and to the degree concerning his own involvement Mr. Nixon said in the letter. But the open-ended nature of tape recordings at private conversations is such that the President is unable to provide privilege logs with even greater force to tapes of private presidential conversations than to presidential papers," he declared.

The tapes on questions were made secretly and involved alleged conversations between Mr. Nixon and various of his associates on matters relating to the Watergate scandal and the subsequent efforts to cover up that crime.

The President said that contrary to the Ervin committee's assumption, the tapes could not finally write the events of Watergate because they would include the President's private conversations with a number of others.

The tapes also contain conversations with what is known to be the truth and what is false. He said he would be able to identify the tapes and inform the committee of the results. He said he would be able to identify the tapes and inform the committee of the results. He said he would be able to identify the tapes and inform the committee of the results.

See PRESIDENT, A11, T 1



Baker: "Sign of a constitutional confrontation."



Cox: "To withhold... is without legal foundation."



Ervin: "Gravest tragedy this country has ever suffered."

Haldeman Kept Close Check On Political Spies: Strachan

By Lawrence Meyer and Peter A. Day
Washington Post Staff Writers
When House chief of staff H. R. Haldeman told the Senate Watergate committee that he had no knowledge of the CIA's involvement in the Nixon reelection campaign, he was lying, according to a former Haldeman aide. Gordon Strachan, a former Haldeman aide, told the Senate Watergate committee that Haldeman had a "direct line" to the CIA's operations in the Nixon reelection campaign. Strachan said that Haldeman had a "direct line" to the CIA's operations in the Nixon reelection campaign. Strachan said that Haldeman had a "direct line" to the CIA's operations in the Nixon reelection campaign.



Ervin: "Gravest tragedy this country has ever suffered."

Ervin Panel Felt Backed Into Corner

By Herbert H. Brown
Washington Post Staff Writer
The Senate Watergate committee's vice chairman, Sen. Howard H. Baker (N.H.), said yesterday that the committee's investigation of the Watergate scandal has been "backed into a corner" by the President's refusal to turn over presidential tapes. Baker said that the committee's investigation of the Watergate scandal has been "backed into a corner" by the President's refusal to turn over presidential tapes.

Symington Charges Pentagon Deception

By Michael Corbett
Washington Post Staff Writer
Sen. Warren E. Hearnes (D-Mo.) charged yesterday that the Pentagon had deceived the Senate Armed Services Committee on the cost of the Vietnam administration's military operations. Hearnes said that the Pentagon had deceived the Senate Armed Services Committee on the cost of the Vietnam administration's military operations.

Prices Zoom On Chicken, Eggs, Pork

By Helen E. Smith
Washington Post Staff Writer
Prices for chicken, eggs, and pork jumped sharply yesterday, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Prices for chicken, eggs, and pork jumped sharply yesterday, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Skyjackers Take Jet On Mideast Odyssey

By David J. Egan
Washington Post Staff Writer
A Boeing 747 jetliner was hijacked yesterday by five men in the Middle East. The plane was flying from London to New York City. The hijackers demanded a ransom of \$2 million. The plane was flying from London to New York City.

Court Sets Resumption Of Subsidized Housing

By Paul Hester
Washington Post Staff Writer
The Supreme Court yesterday set aside its decision in the case of the National Housing Conference v. United States. The court set aside its decision in the case of the National Housing Conference v. United States.

Katharine Graham, the publisher of *The Washington Post*, had come under especially heavy pressure and criticism. John Mitchell, the former Attorney General of the United States, had told a *Post* reporter, "Katie Graham is going to get her tit caught in a big fat wringer." It would seem, however, that Mitchell may have been the one who got caught where it hurts, and much of the rest of the Administration with him. The grand jury and the Ervin committee have turned into wringers through which the Nixon men must pass.

Ten months ago, another wringer—Woodward and Bernstein—had gone to work on the saboteurs in the Nixon Administration.

On June 17, 1972, Howard Simons, the managing editor of *The Washington Post*, got a call at about eight in the morning. It was a tip. Someone told him that there had been a break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters. Simons was especially intrigued by one detail: the burglars had been caught wearing surgical gloves.

Since it was a local crime story, Howard Simons called Metropolitan Editor Harry Rosenfeld at home and alerted him. Then Simons called Mrs. Graham and told her, "You will not believe what is going on."

Harry Rosenfeld called Barry Sussman, his District of Columbia editor. Sussman called two people: Alfred Lewis, one of his most experienced reporters, and Robert Woodward, one of his least experienced.

Bob Woodward graduated from Yale in 1965 and then went into the Navy for five years, working his last year in the Pentagon. He had planned to go to law school but he managed to get a job at *The Montgomery County [Maryland] Sentinel*. After six months or so, Woodward began calling Harry Rosenfeld at *The Post* to ask if there were any openings. Rosenfeld said no. Woodward would call every three or four weeks. Rosenfeld always put him off. Then Rosenfeld went on vacation. He spent it at home painting his basement. One boiling afternoon, Rosenfeld was up on top of a ladder with paint all over him, mad at the world, when his wife yelled to him that he had a phone call. It was Woodward. Rosenfeld transferred his anger about the weather and the ladder and the paint to the young reporter and told him, more or less, don't call us, we'll call you.

When Rosenfeld angrily hung up the phone, his wife, Annie, said, "Isn't this just the kind of reporter you're always saying you want?"

Rosenfeld decided that she was right. In September of 1971, he

hired Woodward, who by then had worked for *The Sentinel* for a year. Woodward went to work for Rosenfeld and began bothering other people with his insistent and persistent phone calls. His first day at *The Washington Post* he made close to a hundred calls looking for a story. He did investigative pieces on restaurant health violations, the drug traffic, and police corruption. Someone in the newsroom told Katharine Graham that Woodward was going to be the next managing editor of *The Post*. Mrs. Graham told her son, Donald (the heir apparent to the *Post* empire who has worked for the paper in every capacity from reporter to assistant production manager), but he disagreed about Woodward's future. He said that Woodward would not be the next M.E. because he would be dead first. He would work himself to death.

When Woodward went to work on the Watergate break-in, he had been with *The Washington Post* for only nine months. That first morning, Barry Sussman sent Al Lewis down to the Watergate. All of the other reporters from all of the other papers and television and radio stations waited downstairs for someone to come out and tell them what had happened. Al Lewis went upstairs to the Democratic National Committee headquarters. The police let him, perhaps because they had seen him around the police station for so many years that they thought he was a cop. Lewis called Sussman to report that two ceiling panels were out near the office of Democratic National Committee Chairman Lawrence O'Brien. Right away they suspected bugging.

Bob Woodward was dispatched to a hearing given the burglars caught inside the Watergate. He sat up in the very first row. The judge asked McCord what he did for a living. McCord said that he was a "security consultant." The judge asked for whom he had worked in the past. McCord whispered: "C.I.A." Woodward, sitting in the front row, overheard.

Meanwhile, Carl Bernstein was back at the office hovering around Sussman. Bernstein always had a nose for a good story and he was not shy about sticking that nose in whether it was wanted or not. He wangled an assignment writing a sidebar on who the suspects were. Bernstein's story included the information that Woodward had overheard: McCord had worked for the C.I.A.

Woodward and Bernstein, who were to work together on the story from then on, could hardly be more different. Other reporters call them "the odd couple." Woodward is a preppie Yalie; Bernstein dropped out of the University of Maryland after three years without a degree. Woodward is a neat, patrician WASP, the son of a Republi-

can judge; Bernstein is Jewish, sloppy, and looks like a delivery boy. Bernstein started at *The Washington Evening Star* as a copyboy and came to *The Post* in 1966. He had been the protege of a former city editor until the editor walked into the District Building newsroom one afternoon and found Bernstein fast asleep on a couch. Since then he had had mostly sleepy assignments.

On the morning of June 18, *The Washington Post* carried the Watergate as the second lead of the paper. Their coverage included 83 inches of copy. *The New York Times* carried a thirteen-inch story on an inside page. The pattern for the next ten months had already been established.

Two days later, Eugene Bachinski, a *Post* police reporter, found the name E. Howard Hunt in two address books which had been in the possession of captured Watergate conspirators. In one book, someone had written "W.H." beside Hunt's name; in the other, the name was followed by the notation "W. House." It did not take Bachinski long to guess that the W. House might be the White House.

Bob Woodward telephoned Richard Nixon's residence to find out. A White House switchboard operator located Hunt's extension and rang it. No one answered. The operator then volunteered, "There is one other place he might be—in Mr. [Charles] Colson's office." She dialed the number.

A secretary said, "Mr. Hunt is not here now."

The operator then suggested that Woodward try calling Robert R. Mullen & Co., a public-relations firm right across the street from the White House where Hunt moonlighted as a copywriter. Woodward tried Hunt there and got him. The reporter told the White House spy about the address books.

E. Howard Hunt said, "Good God!" Then he hung up and disappeared.

The Washington Post had established a tenuous link between the Watergate and the White House and the story was developing nicely, but then the vacations started coming. While reporters and editors went to the beach or painted their basements, the story seemed to sag and presumably the President's men sighed with some relief.

In July, Howard Simons went to Barry Sussman and told him that he did not think the paper was working hard enough on the Watergate story. Sussman decided to put Bernstein and Woodward on the story full time.

Woodward and Bernstein say that their first job was knocking down all of the misleading "leaks" that were coming out of the

White House, seemingly designed to throw them off the trail. Most of the leaks had to do with what came to be called the "Cuban connection." The White House leaked a story that the whole operation was organized by a right-wing Cuban exile group known as Ameritas. Ameritas turned out to be a real-estate firm.

(*The New York Times* wasted even more time on the "Cuban connection" than did *The Post*, and that was evidently one of the reasons they got so far behind that they could never catch up. They assigned their Cuban expert Tad Szulc to the story. He was the reporter who uncovered plans for the Bay of Pigs invasion before it happened—but *The Times* ["down played"] the story. The Watergate "Cuban connection" was to prove his own Bay of Pigs.)

Carl Bernstein wanted to go to Florida. The request gave Barry Sussman some pause because, as the editor says, "Bernstein had spent more money covering the Virginia Legislature than Murrey Marder had spent on the peace talks in Paris." Sussman finally agreed to send Bernstein south, but he warned the reporter that if the expenses were too high, he would be off the story for good—the Republicans might throw money away but the Washington Post Co. did not. Since Bernstein was considered a spendthrift, Sussman did not tell his superiors that he had sent him to Florida until he was already gone.

Bernstein located a Florida prosecutor investigating several of the Watergate suspects who lived in the state. The reporter nagged the prosecutor endlessly, with no luck, while Woodward and Sussman waited nervously in New York for some kind of break in the story. Finally, the prosecutor, pestered to distraction by Bernstein, threw up his hands and said something like: "I have a murder I have to go out on. Here's the file."

Bernstein looked through the file and found a copy of a \$25,000 check signed by Kenneth Dahlberg. He called Sussman at about 9 p.m. on the evening of July 31. No one had ever heard of Kenneth Dahlberg. Racing against deadline, Sussman and Woodward immediately searched the *Washington Post* morgue for old newspaper stories about anyone with that name. They found a five-year-old yellowing picture of a Kenneth Dahlberg posing with Hubert Humphrey.

By checking directories, they managed to locate two Kenneth Dahlbergs, one in Florida and one in Minnesota. They suspected that the Florida Dahlberg was the one they wanted, but he did not answer his phone, so they tried the Minnesota Dahlberg.

Bob Woodward's first question to the Kenneth Dahlberg who

answered the telephone in suburban Minneapolis was: "Mr. Dahlberg, I was trying to reach you at your home in Florida. What is that, a winter home?"

Kenneth Dahlberg said, "Yes."

Fortunately for Woodward, he happened to call Dahlberg on a day when he was particularly upset and off guard. Dahlberg's neighbor was the Minneapolis socialite who had just been kidnapped in a celebrated ransom case. (She would later be found handcuffed to a tree in the wilderness.) Woodward and Dahlberg talked about the kidnapping and then they talked about what interested the reporter: the mysterious check.

Dahlberg said that it was a campaign contribution that he had personally handed to Maurice Stans, former Secretary of Commerce and Nixon's chief fund-raiser. For the first time, *The Post* had evidence that the Watergate conspirators had been paid with money contributed to the Nixon re-election campaign.

When Woodward told Sussman what he had found out, the editor said, "We have never had a story like this." (*The New York Times* reportedly had had the Dahlberg check for over a week but had not known what to make of it.)

The Washington Post's Dahlberg-check story triggered an audit by the General Accounting Office which located a safe in Maurice Stans's office from which hundreds of thousands of dollars were doled out secretly for clandestine operations. The secret fund was reported by Philip S. Hughes of the G.A.O., who immediately became a hero to *Post* reporters.

Woodward and Bernstein settled down to weeks of gumshoeing. They got a G.A.O. report that listed all of the employees of the Committee for the Re-election of the President (C.R.P.). The list also gave vague titles, home addresses, and salaries. Rather than attempting to reach these people in their official capacity during working hours, they went out in the evenings and knocked on doors. They were usually turned away, but occasionally someone would invite them in "for a few minutes" and they would end up staying until midnight. They began to look to see who had resigned from the re-election committee and knocked on their doors. Most of the people to whom they talked only knew a piece of the story, but slowly they were able to put together the pieces.

Their first important sources were Republicans who worked inside C.R.P. ("Creep," as reporters call it) but were upset about what was happening. Finally Woodward and Bernstein got hold of a "Creep" telephone directory. Since so little of the story was on

paper, they were delighted to have something that they could really study, even if it was only a phone book. They pored over it as though it were a Rosetta Stone or a Kremlin Letter. (Bernstein says, "C.R.P. was set up like the K.G.B.") They were able to work out who shared offices and who shared secretaries. Slowly they branched out from C.R.P. and developed sources in the Justice Department and the White House itself.

They found one source right inside the *Washington Post* newsroom. Marilyn Berger, an attractive *Post* reporter whose beat is foreign affairs, happened to talk to Ken Clawson, who had been a reporter at *The Post* but had quit to take a job as deputy director of White House communications. Ms. Berger will not say what the circumstances of the conversation were, but while they talked, Clawson bragged to her that he had written the famous "Canuck" letter to *The Manchester Union Leader*. The letter charged that Senator Edmund Muskie condoned calling Americans of French-Canadian descent "Canucks."

Marilyn Berger did not know what to make of Clawson's admission and decided to wait until David Broder returned from covering the campaign trail and ask him what he thought. When he did return, Broder listened to Ms. Berger and then told her that "the boys" on the metropolitan desk were working on a story into which her information might fit. As it turned out, Woodward and Bernstein had already traced the letter to the White House.

At about the same time, someone mentioned to Woodward and Bernstein casually that a friend of his had been approached by someone trying to enlist political spies and saboteurs. The reporters contacted the source's friend and discovered that the recruiter's name was Donald H. Segretti. They also learned that F.B.I. reports estimated that there were at least 50 undercover Nixon spies and saboteurs who were attempting to disrupt the Democratic campaign.

On October 8, a Sunday, Woodward and Bernstein, under the direction of Sussman, went to work writing what was to be their seminal story. Executive Editor Ben Bradlee had already laid down the rule that the paper would not print anything about the Watergate or political espionage that could not be confirmed through two or more sources. They checked and double-checked facts. Sussman and the two reporters worked until two o'clock in the morning so that they would have a finished story to show their bosses on Monday morning.

The next day, Bernstein, Woodward and Sussman were virtually put on trial. Harry Rosenfeld, Howard Simons, and finally, Ben

Bradlee each cross-examined them. When they were satisfied with the story, Bradlee called Mrs. Graham and told her what the paper planned to publish. He was not actually asking permission to print the story, but he knew and she knew that she could stop it. She didn't. Nor did she ask to read it before it went into the paper.

The next morning, October 10, Mrs. Graham, Richard Nixon, and other readers of *The Washington Post* read a lead story which began: "F.B.I. agents have established that the Watergate bugging incident stemmed from a massive campaign of political spying and sabotage conducted on behalf of President Nixon's re-election and directed by officials of the White House and the Committee for the Re-election of the President."

The Post followed its October 10 story with later reports that Dwight Chapin, the President's appointments secretary, was Donald Segretti's White House contact; that Herbert Kalmbach, the President's personal attorney, was authorized to approve payments out of the secret political espionage fund; that H.R. Haldeman, the President's White House chief of staff, was also authorized to approve such payments. In the last story, *The Post* made its one acknowledged mistake: the paper said Haldeman had been accused of approving secret payments in testimony before the grand jury. *The Post* still stands behind its story that Haldeman was authorized to approve these payments but concedes that there was no such testimony before the grand jury.

The Nixon Administration treated *The Washington Post* as though it were the one guilty of a felony. Administration sources accused *The Post* of "guilt-by-association," "hypocrisy," and of being George McGovern's "partners-in-mud-slinging."

Some evidence suggests that the Nixon Administration may have decided to put the stock of the Washington Post Co. through a wringer. On December 29, that stock had reached an all-time high, \$38. Since then it has fallen drastically to \$23 1/2. While Nixon has been losing credibility, the Post Co. stockholders have been losing money. The fall in the price could be traced in part at least to challenges to the renewal of the licenses of the Post Co.'s two television stations in Florida. The challenges have reportedly been led or planned by a former counsel of C.R.P., a Nixon fund-raiser, and a man who made his house available to Agnew during the Republican Convention. Even if the company successfully rebuffs the challenges, the cost of defending itself in hearings which could go on for years could be half a million dollars.

Mrs. Graham will not attribute the license challenges directly to

the White House, but she does say, "I've lived with White House anger before [Lyndon Johnson's] but I've never seen anything that achieved this kind of fury and heat." She says she never considered putting a brake on *The Post's* Watergate coverage, but she does concede, "There was a private point with me when I got a congealed feeling that there was a High Noon situation developing, that this really was for keeps, that this was the toughest thing you had ever faced, by far tougher than publishing the Pentagon Papers. We asked ourselves if there was some enormous Kafka plot, if we were being led down a road to discredit the paper. The reputation of *The Post* was totally at stake."

It was about two years ago that *The New York Times* broke the Pentagon Papers story. *The Washington Post* picked up the story but attributed it to *The Times* from one end of the article to the other. Ben Bradlee says, "There was blood on every paragraph."

Now things have changed. Bradlee says, "In the Pentagon Papers case, we were second, a strong second, but second. In the Watergate story, we were first and we were way first. And we were alone."

This time *The New York Times* is the one that has been beaten and it has not always been a graceful loser. For example, when *The Post* printed its October 10 story about widespread political sabotage carried on by the Republicans, *The Times* picked up the story but wrote it in such a way that *The Washington Post's* name did not appear until the article had jumped inside the paper.

Managing Editor Howard Simons says of *The Times*, "It is awfully hard for the Yankees to swallow the fact that the Senators are just better."

The Post's coverage of the Republicans' political sabotage story is in many ways a much more impressive reporting job than *The Times's* coverage of the Pentagon Papers because there is no "Ellsberg" figure in the Watergate story to simply dump all of the relevant documents in their laps. In fact, other than an occasional internal directory, there have been very few documents at all.

One of the few "scoops" *The Times* has gotten reportedly came in a phone call from Mitchell to William Safire, a former White House special assistant whom the paper had hired to write a column. Safire passed along the message that Mitchell admitted to sitting in on meetings where bugging was discussed although the former Attorney General claimed that he had been against it. Safire reportedly bypassed Managing Editor Abe Rosenthal and called R.W. Apple Jr. in the paper's Washington bureau. After an internal squabble, *The Times* ran the story with no by-line. *The Times's* answer to Wood-

ward and Bernstein had turned out to be a former Nixon press agent. (*The Times's* coverage has dramatically improved, however, since it put Seymour Hersh on the case.)

Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward recently went to the White House press corps' awards dinner to pick up first prize. The President sometimes hands out the awards, but this year he was late arriving at the ceremonies. The prizes were given out before he got there.

Woodward and Bernstein, who are, after all, city reporters, and who have never risen very high on the Washington dinner party circuit, did not know many people at the banquet. Reporters who knew the ropes escorted them around the hall, introducing them to various dignitaries. Woodward and Bernstein found themselves being introduced to two of their sources, men they had talked to on the telephone but had never met. Absolute lack of recognition was feigned on both sides.

A few days later, Woodward went up to the White House to check on something. While he was there, he was introduced to a high government official. He pretended not to know the man. But again the official was one of Woodward's sources.

Since the scandal has broken in earnest, Woodward and Bernstein have developed more and more White House sources. Almost everyone, it seems, wants to open a line of communication with them, to plant his version of what has been going on, to try to find out how much the young reporters know. Woodward says, "We've just about been invited to the prayer breakfasts."

The reporters' White House sources may soon shrink, however, if they have not shrunk already. Bernstein says, "Some of our people may be in the slam."

I was in *The Washington Post* cafeteria having lunch with two *Post* reporters. One of them said that working in the same newsroom with Bernstein and Woodward was "like living next door to Fabian." A color television was turned on and it played daytime soap operas. Suddenly CBS interrupted its regular programming to broadcast a special news bulletin. Patrick Gray had just resigned as acting director of the F.B.I. Then CBS returned to its regular programming—*As the World Turns*, *The Guiding Light*, or whatever it was. One soap opera had been interrupted to bring the nation a chapter of an even better soap opera. Not only was it important, scandalous, faith-shaking—it was also entertaining. Richard Nixon had become the Clifford Irving of 1973.

We left the cafeteria and went upstairs to the fifth-floor newsroom. Reporters and editors were gathered in front of long strips of

A.P. and U.P.I. wirecopy which had been hung on the walls. They could hardly believe it: the Gray resignation, the Ellsberg caper. *The Washington Post* had plugged away almost alone when every story required a dozen nocturnal visits and now, suddenly, the scandal was rising like the Mississippi, flooding the whole Administration. They were swimming in stories. Vic Gold, Agnew's former press secretary, wandered about talking to reporters; suddenly news was walking in off the street through the front door.

The Watergate flood may not have crested yet. . . .

[Eds. Note: The stories continued in 1974 as Congress and the courts continued to seek full disclosure on Watergate and other 1972 campaign activities.]

WATERGATE: THE AMERICAN PRESS' FINEST HOUR?

Haynes Johnson

In these post-Watergate days of self-congratulations among members of the American press, it is popular to hear all the old journalistic chestnuts about rugged independence and the people's right to know and the special adversary role that must exist between journalists and public officials. Watergate, it is being said, was the American press' finest hour, a classic example of what freedom of the press is all about.

This is heady material for the American press, particularly as the accuracy of so many controversial Watergate reports continues to be confirmed. The trouble with these accolades is that, with a few shining exceptions, they aren't deserved. Far from being the fiercely independent government interrogator of vaunted legend, by and large the press has been a permissive tabby-cat. Its record on Watergate, as media critic Ben Bagdikian has said, is hardly praiseworthy. The vast majority in the press, as he has noted, were only spectators at "the biggest political story of our time."

For the press, Watergate was only a symptom of a larger pattern of behavior, a pattern that permitted it to be used by government, a pattern that exalted and sanctified the Presidency into an office that

Haynes Johnson won a Pulitzer prize for national reporting in 1966. This article appeared in the *Washington Post—Outlook*. Copyright 1973, Los Angeles Times—Washington Post News Service. Reprinted with permission.



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could do no wrong, a pattern that led many in the press to think of themselves either as important adjuncts of government policy-making or key components of a patriotic team.

In spite of its breast-beating stance of independence and unrelenting government criticism, for years the Washington press corps was a willing accomplice of government secrecy, official trial balloons and justifications for policy failures. It was, for the most part, a staunch supporter of government policies, especially in foreign affairs.

(It is hard to realize now, but as late as Aug. 8, 1967, Sen. J. William Fulbright was describing the *Washington Post*, the present *bete-noire* of the government, as “a newspaper which has obsequiously supported the administration’s policy in Vietnam.”)

Over the years, a cozy relationship developed between the working press and Washington officials. The press cooperated—indeed, often helped draft the rules—for mutually advantageous private meetings in which public officials were allowed to advance positions, many dubious, many purposely political, under a cloak of anonymity. These background meetings, as they came to be known, were both the grist for the Washington press and the vehicle for Washington officials.

The officials quickly learned they could promote pet projects and policies anonymously, and pass on tidbits of gossip for which they would not be held accountable. Journalists came to like the informality and the close association with the cream of Washington officialdom. Out-of-town publishers and editors relished having their men in Washington set up meeting with major figures, including an occasional presidential session. Reporters could glory in the social relationships they were able to develop. It was heady wine to be able to call the eminent secretary or ambassador by his first name, and even more seductive to be referred to in turn on a first-name basis. (Even now, I hardly know a prominent journalist who doesn’t say, with casual and familiar pride, “Henry” when referring to Henry Kissinger.)

As a corollary to these kinds of relationships, the lines between press and government often became blurred. A generation ago, few who went into daily journalism thought of their work as a springboard to government service. A young reporter might have wanted to follow the example of an Ernest Hemingway and leave journalism to become a novelist; but he didn’t look to the government for the fulfillment of his ambitions. In recent years, this has changed. Not only do journalists go into government, primarily as press or public relations aides, but often they consciously take that step in hopes it will lead to a more powerful role in the press.

Carl Rowan went from reporter to government official to columnist and commentator. John Chancellor followed a similar route and returned to network television in a higher position. James Hagerty was a reporter, press aide, and then a network executive. Robert Manning, editor of the *Atlantic*, and James Greenfield, Foreign editor of the *New York Times*, had come to prominence as state Department officials. Herbert Klein has moved from newspaper

work, to a Nixon press spokesman's role, and now into an executive position in television. John Seigenthaler, publisher of the *Nashville Tennessean*, and Edward Guthman, national editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, had worked in Robert Kennedy's Justice Department. John Scali left TV to become ambassador to the UN.

Nor is lack of professional journalistic background any bar to climbing into journalism's elite for those who served as government press aides. Bill Moyers, Lyndon Johnson's press secretary, became publisher of *Newsday*, and is now a TV commentator. Tom Johnson, a press aide to LBJ, recently was named editor of the *Dallas Times-Herald*. William Safire, a New York PR man who helped stage Richard Nixon's 1959 "kitchen debate" with Nikita Khrushchev in Moscow, went on to become a White House speech writer; he is now a columnist for the *New York Times*. Kevin Phillips worked for John Mitchell in the Justice Department; he, too, has become a syndicated columnist. Ken Clawson, a *Washington Post* reporter who joined the Nixon PR team in the White House, frankly said his move could turn out to be advantageous in later obtaining a more prominent position in journalism.

It isn't merely rustling the dead leaves of the past, or saluting the good old days of American journalism, to suggest that these moves once would have been unacceptable, and often viewed with contempt. Anyone who thinks the present state of the press in America is outrageously critical of everyone in government from the President on down should go back to look at the earlier record. The modern American press comes out of a tradition of savage independence and caustic, often unfair, criticism characterized by a belief that no official is above rebuke or hard examination.

Certainly that pugnacious spirit existed for a long time. Shortly after George Washington's farewell address, a Philadelphia paper, the *Aurora*, paid its respects to the first President by saying:

"If ever a nation was debauched by a man, the American nation has been debauched by Washington. If ever a nation has suffered from the improper influence of a man, the American nation has suffered from the influence of Washington. If ever a nation was deceived by a man, the American nation has been deceived by Washington. . . ."

Some 80 years later the *New York Sun* commonly referred to President Rutherford B. Hayes as "The Fraudulent President." The word "fraud" was reiterated throughout the paper in scores of connections.

I think it fair to say that such pugnaciousness has not been a hallmark of the American press in recent years.

So pin no laurels on the press as a whole for Watergate. Salute a few, if you will, but remember that for large segments of the press the Watergate story was basically unexplored. In retrospect, it should have come as no surprise last fall, months after the break-in, that only about half of the American people had heard or read about Watergate. Or that the President's popularity remained at such high levels for so long while the story was unfolding.

Finally, as the press began to pay more attention and the cumulative weight of the story took hold, those conditions changed. Now, Gallup says, 97 percent of the people have heard or read about Watergate. As that general knowledge has increased, so has the President's popularity curve continued to plummet.

In the end, the press has done its job, but like so many others involved in Watergate, it has been a most reluctant hero.

TV AND WATERGATE: WHAT WAS, WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Edwin Diamond

The newspapers, television, and the newsmagazines are overflowing with Watergate now; but all the backpatting and tributes to the "vigorous free press" ought not to obscure the fact that it was a different story during the last presidential campaign. Benjamin C. Bradlee, executive editor of the *Washington Post*, recalls how lonely he felt last Summer and Fall when very few other news organizations were bothering with the story. Just how exposed the *Post*—and, to a lesser extent, its national news service partner, the *Los Angeles Times*—really were can be seen now, with hindsight. Ben H. Bagdikian, for example, has calculated that, of the 433 Washington-based reporters who could, in theory, have been assigned initially to Watergate, only some fifteen actually were ["The Fruits of Agnewism," *CJR*, Jan./Feb.]. *Post* ombudsman-critic Robert C. Maynard, in a survey of some 500 political columns written between June and November, 1972, found that the columnists—the Restons, Krafts, Buckleys, et al.—had produced fewer than two dozen Watergate pieces [*Washington Post*, Apr. 19].

In a somewhat parallel quest, members of the Network News

Edwin Diamond is a media critic for the Post-Newsweek Stations, and a lecturer and co-director of the Network News Study Group at MIT. Richard Parker and David Olive, MIT students, assisted in this project. Reprinted with permission from *Columbia Journalism Review*, 1973.



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Technicians—and the nation—watched the proceedings of the Senate Watergate committee. Members of the committee are in middle at back. Newsmen, photographers and spectators made up the rest of the audience. James McCord is on the screen.

Study Group in the department of political science at Massachusetts Institute of Technology checked national TV coverage of Watergate during the 1972 campaign. We have previously reported on the overall TV election coverage ["Fairness and Balance in the Evening News," *CJR*, Jan./Feb.]. Our analysis of network performance on Watergate makes for only slightly less depressing reading than the Bagdikian and Maynard findings.

Our replay of the videotape shows that, on Watergate, the more than 50 million early evening news watchers by and large received:

- (1) A fairly straight serving of headlines from the *Post* and other newspapers. There was little original reporting by any network and almost nothing that could be called investigative reporting.

- (2) The usual evenhandedness that has come to mark the style of the evening newscasts. On Oct. 10, for example, when the *Post* broke a major story on the role of Nixon men in alleged political sabotage, NBC's John Chancellor noted the charges at length and then reported: "The Republicans say it's all fiction and we'll have their side in a minute (*Break to Commercial*). Our analysis also shows that there was one major exception to this superstraight, superjudicious coverage: two special reports on Watergate within the CBS *Evening News*. In one report, Walter Cronkite

spoke of “charges of a high-level campaign of political sabotage and espionage apparently unparalleled in American history. . . .”

Quantitatively, during the seven-week pre-election period beginning on Thursday, Sept. 14, CBS devoted almost twice as much air time to Watergate as either of its competitors. The figures:

CBS	71 minutes, 9 seconds
ABC	42 minutes, 26 seconds
NBC	41 minutes, 21 seconds

More than half of NBC's stories were less than a minute in length; slightly less than half of ABC's were; CBS did minute-or-less items only five times. More than one-third of NBC's Watergate coverage came on two nights, Sept. 15, the date of the grand jury indictments of the Watergate Seven, and Oct. 10, the date of the *Post* story on sabotage. Among the longer ABC stories were an interview with a lawyer who knew alleged political saboteur Donald Segretti (5:10) and man-on-the-street interviews about Watergate in the “ABC city of Columbus, O.” (4:13).

Richard Parker, a student monitor who watched four separate replays of all three networks' coverage, thought that ABC and NBC News “treated Watergate just like another ordinary news story . . . it seemed to be on the air only because the lawsuits, the grand jury, and *Post* stories had to be reported. . . .” CBS, on the other hand, seemed to extend itself with film and arresting graphics.

On Sept. 15, the day of the Watergate indictments, all three network news programs led with long reports. All showed interviews of various principals, but CBS also found and interviewed some of G. Gordon Liddy's associates from his days as a hard-line prosecutor in Dutchess County, N.Y.

On Oct. 3, when Rep. Wright Patman's banking committee voted 20 to 15 not to investigate Watergate, CBS allotted 3:18 to the story; Lesley Stahl's strong summary said, in part: “the debate itself focused on the questions of infringement of civil liberties and the right of the voters to know the truth before the election. . . .” NBC allotted 0:34 to the same story, with John Chancellor stating simply that the Democrats “will not get something they wanted badly. . . .”

On Oct. 10, when the story of alleged political sabotage surfaced in the *Washington Post*, NBC's report was twice as long as that of either of its rivals. Balance is evident throughout: the *Post* says a White House aide wrote the “Canuck” letter to damage Sen. Muskie . . . the aide denies the report. On CBS, by contrast, the *Post*'s charges were not only repeated but Daniel Schorr reported

further accusations by Democrats. On Oct. 25, when the *Post* named H.R. Haldeman in connection with Watergate, both CBS and NBC gave major attention to the story; ABC dealt with it in 12 seconds.

In the last week of the campaign, CBS' two Watergate special reports appeared; the first was fifteen minutes long; the second, reportedly planned originally to be almost that, ran for eight minutes. After the first report, White House aide Charles Colson angrily phoned CBS chairman William Paley; CBS, however, denies that this influenced the followup.

One of the fascinating "what ifs" of the whole scandal is, what if one or two or all three of the network news organizations had behaved like the *Washington Post*? What if the voters had fully realized the extent of corruption and coverup? Former McGovern strategist Frank Mankiewicz suggests that if all of Watergate had spilled out, the margin of the Nixon victory might have been smaller but nothing would have prevented President Nixon's reelection. That may be so; but the press' chief job in a campaign is not to elect, or to defeat, but to make sure that sufficient information, in understandable form, is available to the voters who do the electing. Each network news organization ought to ask itself if in 1972 that job was accomplished.

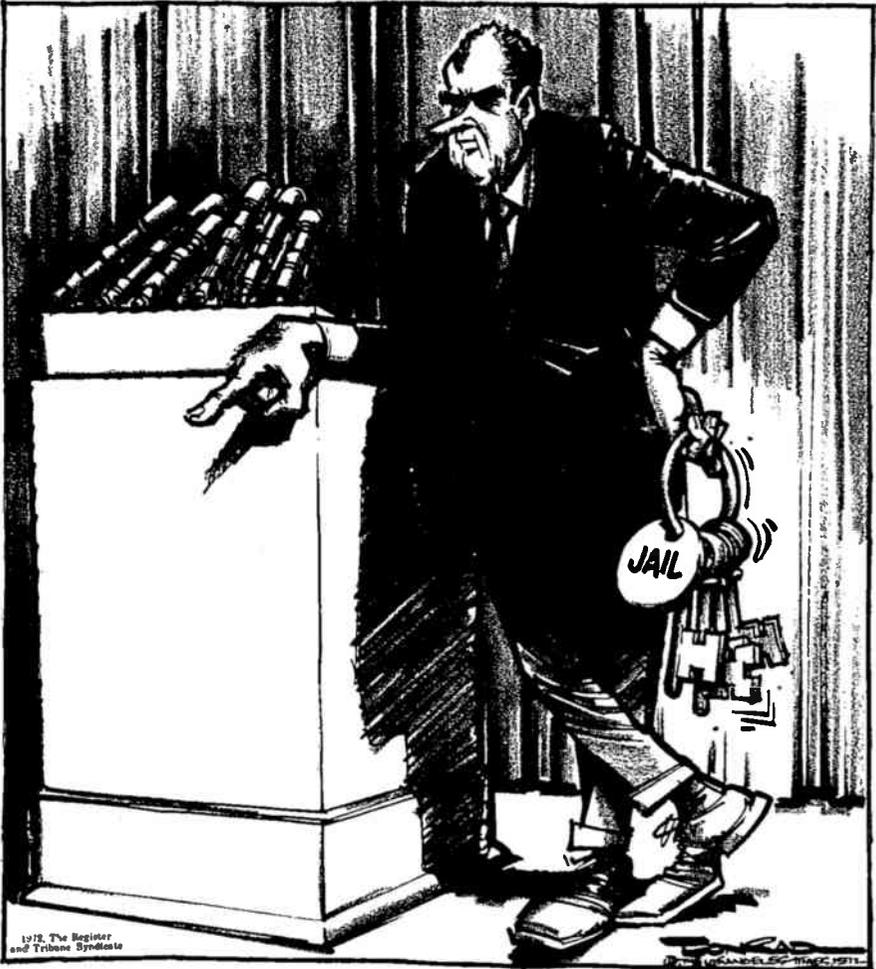
THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRESS

David Wise

President Richard Nixon was in a good mood.

He had left Bucharest that afternoon; now his plane touched down at Mildenhall Air Force Base, England, the last stop on what had been a successful journey around the world. The crowds cheered the President along the way. Only two weeks earlier, on July 20, 1969, the United States had become the first nation to land men on the moon.

Prime Minister Harold Wilson had gone to the Air Force base, eighty-five miles north of London, to greet the President. As he chatted informally with Wilson at a reception at the officers' club,



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**"WHEN THIS ELECTION'S OVER, DICK NIXON WON'T HAVE THE PRESS
TO KICK HIM AROUND ANYMORE!"**

Nixon said he planned to send moon rocks to every chief of state. At the time, there was a good deal of concern, later discounted, that germs might exist on the moon to which earthlings had no immunity. Because of these fears of real-life Andromeda Strain, the Apollo 11 astronauts had been sealed up in a capsule and quarantined upon their return from outer space. Well aware of this, Nixon told Harold Wilson that he also had another gift in mind. He might find a few "contaminated" pieces of the moon, he said, and give them to the press.

Nixon was, of course, joking, but the story revealed with clarity his attitude toward, and relations with, the news media. Nixon's bitterness toward the press is legendary, perhaps best symbolized by his now classic remark after his defeat in the 1962 gubernatorial race in California: ("You won't have Nixon to kick around any more. . .") On the other hand some of the men who went to work for Nixon after he became President have often left the impression that they would very much enjoy kicking around the press.

On election night, 1968, fifteen minutes after Richard Nixon issued his victory statement, about twenty GOP advance men gathered in the empty ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria in New York to accept congratulations from John Ehrlichman, their chief. The happy, elated Nixon workers next heard from J. Roy Goodearle, a tall, beefy Southerner who was Spiro Agnew's chief advance man (and later the Vice-President's principal political liaison with Republican Party leaders).

"Why don't we all get a member of the press and beat him up?" he asked. "I'm tired of being nice to them."

Unbeknownst to Goodearle, Ehrlichman, or the other advance men, Joseph Albright, then Washington bureau chief for Long Island's *Newsday*, was standing in the room and wrote down the remark. Goodearle does not deny it; Agnew's former press secretary, Victor Gold, speaking for Goodearle, insisted to me that "it was a joke." "Perhaps so," says Albright, "but nobody laughed."

In the spring of 1972, columnist Nicholas Thimmesch of *Newsday* was invited by Jack Valenti to a private advance screening of *The Godfather* at the Washington headquarters of the Motion Picture Association of America. Seated in the small theater, Thimmesch suddenly felt someone grab his hair from behind and yank his head back sharply against the seat.

When Thimmesch was able to turn around he saw that the hair-puller was the President's chief of staff, Bob Haldeman, about whom Thimmesch had recently written a somewhat critical profile.

(The article termed Haldeman's manner "brusque" and "clinical," and quoted Haldeman as saying: "I guess the term 'sonofabitch' fits me." Haldeman's crew cut, the profile added, "hasn't changed since the beginning of the cold war." Despite this column, Thimmesch was held in exceptionally high regard by the Nixon Administration.) Apparently Haldeman did not approve of the length of Thimmesch's hair.

"Oh, pardon me," said Haldeman, "I thought it was a girl sitting there."

It was the newspapers that broke the story of the "Nixon Fund" during the 1952 presidential campaign—the \$18,235 collected from wealthy contributors to help pay for his political expenses, or as Nixon put it, "to enable me to continue my active battle against Communism and corruption." As pressure mounted over the fund, General Eisenhower threatened to force Nixon to resign as the Republican nominee for Vice-President. Nixon prepared to deliver his famous televised "Checkers" speech.

"My only hope to win," he wrote in his book *Six Crises*, "rested with millions of people I would never meet, sitting in groups of two or three or four in their livingrooms, watching and listening to me on television. I determined as the plane took me to Los Angeles that I must do nothing which might reduce the size of that audience. And so I made up my mind that until after this broadcast, my only releases to the press would be for the purpose of building up the audience which would be tuning in. Under no circumstances, therefore, could I tell the press in advance what I was going to say or what my decision would be. . . . This time I was determined to tell my story directly to the people rather than to funnel it to them through a press account."

And so Nixon went before the television cameras. He invoked Pat's Republican cloth coat, his little girl, Tricia, and his little black and white cocker spaniel dog ("regardless of what they say about it, we are going to keep it"). The public response was overwhelmingly favorable; Nixon flew to Wheeling, West Virginia, to meet Eisenhower, wept on Senator William Knowland's shoulder, and stayed on the ticket.

But the lesson of all this was not lost on Nixon: the newspapers had threatened his political career; television had saved it. The words in *Six Crises* remained a manifesto and guideline to his dealings with the press. The way to deal with newspapers was to tell them very little, build up suspense, and then go over their heads to the people via television.

Nixon can keep track of what the networks and news media are saying about him through the "President's Daily News Briefing," the highly detailed private digest prepared for him by his speechwriting staff. Copies are not meant for public consumption, of course, but when the President was in China in February, 1972, a reporter got hold of one, and it showed that, even in Peking, Nixon could read what was being written and said about him in fantastic detail.

Television reports, for example, had obviously been clocked with a stopwatch, since the precise number of minutes and seconds of each network story was given, for example: "NBC led with 5:20 from the banquet . . . 1:30 of RN toast and 1:20 by Chou." This meant Nixon could tell by a glance at the summary that American viewers watching NBC-TV got ten seconds more of Nixon than of Chinese Premier Chou En-lai. The log, which covered February 25, went on to say that NBC's Herb Kaplow had done a two-minute report from the Forbidden City. "Both better film and audio of RN than was the case in live coverage." For the "2nd night in a row," the summary noted somewhat sourly, "CBS led with busing story."

In discussing coverage by CBS—which has not been the Nixon Administration's favorite network—the digest said: "Still frustrated in getting news was Cronkite . . . as he said reporters were again turning to sightseeing." White House correspondent Dan Rather, the log said, did a report on acupuncture. "We saw a fellow under lung surgery—no pain. Then Dr. Dan in his operating room outfit concluded if it was all as it had been demonstrated, and he gave no reason to cause one to think it was otherwise, the operations witnessed were 'amazing.'" The sardonic reference to Rather as "Dr. Dan" implicitly questioned his ability to make medical judgments; and the tone of the President's news summary suggested that Rather had clearly been taken in by acupuncture and those clever Chinese. The log concluded with several single-spaced pages of reports on newspaper coverage of the trip, quoting headlines and going into great detail about treatment of the news, photographs, cartoons, and editorials.

One can only speculate about the cost, the tremendous effort, and the man-hours it must take to monitor the television networks and dozens of newspapers in such minute detail every day, then boil it down into written form, assemble it, and—when the President is out of Washington—transmit it to him.

The Administration sees political advantage in attacking the press, says Hugh Sidey of *Time*, "but don't discount their general hostility toward the press. It bubbles to the surface all the time. I

★ WANTED ★



NAME: WALTER CRONKITE, CBS NEWS.
ALIAS: JOHN CHANCELLOR, DAVID BRINKLEY, TOM BROKAW, NBC;
ERIC SEVAREID, DAN RATHER, DANIEL SCHORR, CBS;
HARRY REASONER, ABC.
CHARGED WITH REPORTING: WATERGATE BREAK-IN AND COVER-UP;
OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE; COMPILING ENEMY LIST; FAKING OF
STATE DEPT CABLES; PERJURY (NUMBER OF COUNTS UNDER
INVESTIGATION); WIRETAPPING; SECRET CAMPAIGN FUNDS;
THE ITT SETTLEMENT; GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO IMPROVE
HOMES AT SAN CLEMENTE AND KEY BISCAYNE; NUMEROUS
RESIGNATIONS OF WHITE HOUSE STAFF; FINANCIAL DEALS
AND RESIGNATION OF SPIRO AGNEW; JUSTICE DEPT RESIGNATIONS.
ARMED AND DANGEROUS WITH MICROPHONES AND CAMERAS.

• NOTIFY •
PROSECUTOR RICHARD M. NIXON
OR
LOCAL COMMITTEE TO REELECT THE PRESIDENT


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once asked JFK what ever possessed him to call the steel men SOB's. He said, 'Because it felt so good'. Some of that is here in the attacks on the press. Under Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson, the staff guys would bitch and moan about us, but there was always a sense of public trust, that they were awed by the responsibility given to them, and they understood this and would talk about what they were doing. They would talk about things. You could talk, write about, or disagree with them, but at the end of the day you

could have a drink with them. There is no sense of that with these people.

"This crowd came in like an occupying army. They took over the White House like a stockade, and the Watergate, and screw everybody else. They have no sense that the government doesn't belong to them, that it's something they're holding in trust for the people."

"We feel the general pressure," says Tom Wicker, associate editor and columnist of the *New York Times*. "No administration in history has turned loose as high an official as the Vice-President to level a constant fusillade of criticism at the press. The Pentagon Papers case was pressure of the most immense kind. You have the Earl Caldwell case. If they indict Neil Sheehan, it will be pressure. In a sense, even the Ellsberg indictment is a form of pressure.

"There is a constant pattern of pressure intended to inhibit us. What the lawyers call a chilling effect. To make us unconsciously pull in our horns." In December, 1971, Wicker said, he had received a telephone call from James Reston: "Scotty called me from Washington. I was in New York, and something had come up about the Sheehan case. I said, 'I don't think we ought to talk about this on the phone'. I don't know if they were listening. But if they can make us feel that way, hell, they've won the game already."

One comes away from an interview with presidential press secretary Ronald Ziegler with the feeling of having sunk slowly, hopelessly, into a quagmire of marshmallows. But unless a newsman is out of favor, Ziegler is at least accessible to the press. To an unprecedented degree in the modern presidency, President Nixon is not.

Ziegler says that there has been no intent to intimidate the press. "Unless the press can point to efforts on the part of the government to restrain them, they shouldn't care. I suppose if we were in a debate, someone would point to the Pentagon Papers. I feel the government had to take that view, do what they did." Ziegler paused. "And after all," he said, "the Pentagon Papers were published."

The executive suite on the thirty-fifth floor of the Columbia Broadcasting System skyscraper in Manhattan is a tasteful blend of dark wood paneling, expensive abstract paintings, thick carpets, and pleasing colors. It has the quiet look of power.

Over breakfast in the small private dining room of the executive suite, Frank Stanton, the president of CBS for twenty-five years, talked candidly about the relationship between government and the television industry. I was interested, I explained, in pressure by government on the TV networks. I particularly wanted to know about

telephone calls from Presidents; I recognized that this was a delicate subject, but I assumed that as head of CBS he had received some. He had, as it turned out, from several Presidents.

"I had a curious call from LBJ," he said. "It was one night back in 1968, at the time of the Democratic platform committee hearings in Washington." Johnson called on a Tuesday, Stanton said; it was August 20, and Dean Rusk was scheduled to testify at an evening session of the committee. As Stanton recalled the conversation, it went as follows:

LBJ: Are you going to cover Dean Rusk tonight?

Stanton: Yes. We're covering the whole thing.

LBJ: No, I mean are you going to cover it *live*?

Stanton: Why?

LBJ: Rusk has an important statement.

Stanton: If you're saying Rusk is going to have an important statement, we'll cover it live. But he has to be there on time.

LBJ: OK, just tell me the time—I'll have him there.

Stanton: Well, 9:00 P.M. But you really have to get him there on time. We'll be cutting into the Steve Allen show, and people are going to be furious if there is nothing going on.

Stanton knew that the Steve Allen show (which on that night starred Jayne Meadows and the Rumanian National Dance Company) began at 8:30 P.M. and ran for one hour; viewers would naturally be disappointed, he reasoned, if time were preempted for a political broadcast and the screen showed an announcer doing "fill." The CBS president had visions of the Secretary of State arriving late and the television audience getting nothing: no Steve Allen, no Jayne Meadows, no Rumanian dancers, not even Dean Rusk.

The conversation with President Johnson continued:

Stanton: How long will Rusk speak?

LBJ: Not long—why?

Stanton: We've got a special on blacks coming on at 9:30 P.M. and I don't want Rusk to collide with that.

The President assured Stanton there was no need to worry; the Secretary of State would be there on time, and he would be off before the special.

Johnson was true to his word. Precisely at 9:00 P.M. CBS correspondent Roger Mudd began introducing the broadcast from a booth in the hall. "Suddenly," Stanton said, "you could see Mudd look up, startled. Rusk was starting in right at 9:00 P.M., straight up."

The President of the United States had called the president of CBS and sweet-talked Steve Allen off the air and the Secretary of

State on the air, in prime time, for a specific political reason, which he did not share with Stanton. That afternoon Democratic liberals had circulated a draft plank for the party platform calling for a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam. Lyndon Johnson wanted Dean Rusk on nationwide television, at an hour when he would have maximum exposure, to head off the inclusion of any such plank in the platform.

Rusk followed his marching orders. "We hear a good deal about stopping the bombing," he said. "... If we mean: Let them get as far as Dupont Circle but don't hit them while they are at Chevy Chase Circle, that would be too rude, let us say so." The party platform, Rusk said, should "state objectives" but not outline "tactics or strategy." In other words, no antibombing plank.

Rusk, in fact, made no important announcement; but presumably Johnson had to tell Stanton *something* to justify handing over the network to the President at 9:00 P.M. As it turned out, however, viewers were treated to a drama that was entirely unexpected, even by the President. Just as Rusk was finishing his twenty-five-minute statement, he was seen being given a piece of wire copy announcing the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

In plain view of the television audience, Rusk huddled with platform committee chairman Hale Boggs for a moment, and then announced: "I think I should go see what this is all about." And he hurried away.

Stanton, of course, had been watching CBS, waiting for that important statement. About twenty minutes later he got a call from the President. Did Rusk show up on time? Johnson wanted to know. Yes, said Stanton, hadn't the President been watching?

"No. Dobrynin came in to tell me what happened [in Czechoslovakia], and I've been tied up. I've just convened the National Security Council."

"Can I use that?"

"Yes."

"Excuse me, I want to tell our people this."

Stanton hung up and passed on his scoop to CBS News.

It eventually became known that a summit meeting between Johnson and the leaders of the Soviet Union was to have been announced at the White House the next morning, August 21. But the Czech invasion killed the projected meeting, to Johnson's bitter disappointment, and there was never any White House announcement that it had even been contemplated. In retrospect, Stanton harbored

some suspicion that Rusk had planned to announce the summit meeting that night on CBS. Now Stanton was a very old and close friend of Lyndon Johnson's, and he was understandably reluctant to think that the President might have been fibbing to him about Rusk having an "important statement."

When the President of the United States wants network time, he calls up and gets it. Or he has one of his assistants call. Not only Lyndon Johnson, but *all* recent Presidents have had a consuming interest in television. The medium has a fascination for Presidents, an interest that is easily understood, since so much of their political success depends on the skill with which they use it.

A telephone call from a President to the publisher of the *New York Times*, for example, is not an unknown event, but one cannot, somehow, picture Lyndon Johnson calling up Arthur Ochs Sulzberger and saying: "Punch, Dean Rusk is going to have an important announcement tonight, and I want you to give it page-one treatment, eight-column head with full text and pictures. What time does your *Late City* close?"

But when a President calls the head of CBS, or NBC, or ABC, it is not easy, or even advisable, to brush him off. In the fall of 1971, Julian Goodman, the president of NBC, went to Rome for a staff meeting of NBC correspondents in Europe. One of the reporters at the private meeting complained that Nixon was "using" the television networks to speak to the American people whenever he pleased, for free; he had done so something like fourteen times up to that date.

Goodman agreed. But the correspondent persisted. "Julian, what is your attitude toward President Nixon's requests for television time?"

"Our attitude," said Goodman evenly, "is the same as our attitude toward previous Presidents: he can have any goddamn thing he wants."

Sometimes a presidential aide or appointee manages to act as a buffer between the White House and the networks. Newton Minow, the Chicago attorney whom President John Kennedy made chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, recalls that Kennedy once expressed dissatisfaction with NBC News.

One night in April, 1962, Minow said, in the midst of Kennedy's fight with the steel companies, the Huntley-Brinkley show on NBC included "a long speech by somebody who took the President apart. I happened to have watched it. We were having a small

dinner party at home and I was getting dressed when my wife said, "The President is on the phone." As Minow recalled the conversation, it went this way:

JFK: Did you see that goddamn thing on Huntley-Brinkley?

Minow: Yes.

JFK: I thought they were supposed to be our friends. I want you to do something about that. You do something about that.

Minow said that the President did not, as the story later got around in the television industry, ask that the FCC chairman take Huntley-Brinkley off the air. But, said Minow, the President "was mad."

Minow added: "Some nutty FCC chairman would have called the network. Instead I called Kenny O'Donnell [Kennedy's appointments secretary] in the morning and I said to him, 'Just tell the President he's very lucky he has an FCC chairman who doesn't do what the President tells him.'"

When a President desires to make a television broadcast, there are standing arrangements to handle his request, procedures worked out between the White House and the Washington bureaus of the major networks. At the time Lyndon Johnson was President, the networks told the White House they needed six hours to make the technical arrangements for a White House broadcast; they could do it in three, they said, but could not guarantee a good picture, or any picture. Despite this, Johnson often demanded instant access to the networks and got on the air within one hour.

Johnson used TV so frequently that finally he asked for—and the networks agreed to provide—"hot cameras," manned throughout the day in the White House theater, with crews continually at the ready. Johnson could then walk into the theater and go on the air live, immediately. During the Dominican crisis he went on television on such short notice that he burst into the regular network programming with almost no introduction, startling millions of viewers.

"Once Johnson went on the air so fast," an NBC executive recalled, "that we couldn't put up the presidential seal. When a network technician said we need a second to put up the seal, Johnson said, 'Son, I'm the leader of the free world, and I'll go on the air when I want to.'"

There is a seeming paradox in Richard Nixon's view of television. On the one hand, television saved his political career in 1952, and he has often had kind words for the medium. Note, for example, that in his 1962 false exit ("You won't have Nixon to kick around any more"), he stated: "Thank God for television and radio for

keeping the newspapers a little more honest.” As President, he told Cyrus Sulzberger in 1971: “I must say that without television it might have been difficult for me to get people to understand a thing.”

On the other hand, as President, Nixon criticized the networks. It was with Nixon’s blessing that Spiro Agnew launched his celebrated attack on network news analysts. Nixon’s Administration has made systematic efforts to cow the networks and destroy the credibility of the press, including television news.



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“Lights! Camera! Obfuscation!”

There is no inconsistency, however, if one understands that in Nixon's view television ideally should serve *only* as a carrier, a mechanical means of electronically transmitting his picture and words directly to the voters. It is this concept of television-as-conduit that has won Nixon's praise, not television as a form of electronic journalism. The moment that television analyzes his words, qualifies his remarks, or renders news judgments, it becomes part of the "press," and a political target.

In discussing Nixon and television, therefore, one must distinguish between television as a mechanical means of communication and television as an intellectual instrument. "Pure" television is OK, television news is not. As President, Nixon's use of television flows logically from these basic premises. Thus at every opportunity Nixon solemnly addresses the nation, but he has usually avoided the give-and-take of the televised news conference. Only in the first setting does Nixon have total control—except for the analyses afterwards by network newsmen, which Spiro Agnew's attacks were specifically designed to discourage. In short, to Richard Nixon, television ideally is the mirror, mirror on the wall.

In April of 1971, John Ehrlichman, the President's chief assistant for domestic affairs, complained in person to Richard S. Salant, the president of CBS News, about Dan Rather, the network's White House correspondent. Ehrlichman was in New York to appear on the CBS Morning News with correspondent John Hart. Afterwards Hart and Ehrlichman adjourned for breakfast at the Edwardian Room of the Plaza, where they were joined by Salant. The President's assistant brought up the subject of CBS's White House reporter.

"Rather has been jobbing us," Ehrlichman said. Salant, seeking to inject a lighter note into the conversation, told how Rather had been hired by CBS in 1962 after he had saved the life of a horse, an act of heroism that resulted in considerable publicity and brought him to the attention of the network. It was then that Rather went to work for CBS News as chief of its Southwest bureau in Dallas. When President Kennedy was assassinated in that city, Rather went on the air for the network, and his cool, poised coverage of the tragedy gained him national recognition. After Dallas, Salant explained to Ehrlichman, CBS brought Rather to Washington, in part because the new President, Lyndon Johnson, was a fellow Texan.

"Aren't you going to open a bureau in Austin where Dan could have a job?" Ehrlichman asked Salant. He then accused Rather of never coming to see him in the White House, and he suggested it might be beneficial if Rather took a year's vacation.

That evening, following a presidential press conference at the White House, Ziegler told Rather cryptically that President Nixon's obvious failure to recognize him at that conference had "no connection" with something that "you are about to hear."

Rather heard the next morning. Salant telephoned William Small, head of the CBS Washington bureau. Small called Rather in and told him about the breakfast at the Plaza; he assured Rather that his standing with CBS was not affected. He said he was mentioning the episode simply because sooner or later Rather was bound to learn about it. Rather told Small it was true he had not seen much of Ehrlichman at the White House—because Ehrlichman would not see him.

Now, however, Ziegler urged Rather to see Ehrlichman and talk the situation over. When Rather walked into Ehrlichman's office, he found Haldeman waiting there as well. The conversation, with just the three men present, was blunt on both sides. As Rather reconstructed it, the dialogue proceeded as follows:

Ehrlichman: I wanted to tell you to your face I wasn't in New York for this purpose. . . . I didn't know there was going to be a breakfast. When the conversation went in the direction it did, I told them what I thought, which is I think you're slanted. I don't know whether it's just sloppiness or you're letting your true feelings come through, but the net effect is that you're negative. You have negative leads on bad stories.

Rather: What's a bad story?

Ehrlichman: A story that's dead-assed wrong. You're wrong 90 percent of the time.

Rather: Then you have nothing to worry about; any reporter who's wrong 90 percent of the time can't last.

Haldeman (breaking in): What concerns me is that you are sometimes wrong, but your style is very positive. You sound like you know what you're talking about, people believe you.

Ehrlichman: Yeah, people believe you, and they shouldn't.

Rather: I hope they do, and maybe now we are getting down to the root of it. You have trouble getting people to believe you.

Ehrlichman: I didn't say that.

At one point Ehrlichman complained that "only the President, Bob, and sometimes myself" knew what was going on, and "you're out there on the White House lawn talking as though you know what's going on."

At the Plaza breakfast with Richard Salant, Ehrlichman had also singled out CBS correspondent Daniel Schorr for criticism. Schorr, said Ehrlichman, reported what the critics said about Nixon's domestic programs, but not the Administration's side. A few months



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THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

later Schorr was under investigation by the FBI. Early on the morning of August 20, 1971, Ellen McCloy, Salant's secretary, received a telephone call at CBS News headquarters on West Fifty-seventh Street in Manhattan. The call was from one Tom Harrington, "He's the CBS FBI man," Miss McCloy explained. "He always opens up his conversations by saying 'Tom Harrington FBI.'" "

He did so on this occasion, explaining to Miss McCloy that she would be getting a call from another FBI man "who is checking on Dan Schorr." Salant was not in yet, so his secretary called him at home to alert him to the fact that the FBI was on the trail of a CBS correspondent. When the second agent called Miss McCloy, she gave him Salant's listed number in New Canaan, Connecticut. "He was in a big rush," Miss McCloy recalled. "He gave the impression he had to have the information right away." The FBI man then called the CBS News president at his home, asking for the names of people who knew Dan Schorr. In the meantime Miss McCloy called Bill Small in Washington, Schorr's boss, to let him know what was happening.

The FBI agent called Miss McCloy back twice. With Salant's permission, she provided the names of other officials for him to talk to at CBS. Salant confirmed that the FBI agent who telephoned him presented the matter as "very urgent." The sort of questions he was asked about Schorr, Salant said, were: "Was he loyal? Did he go around with disreputable people?"

Schorr, a gray-haired, bespectacled family man of fifty-five, and a veteran of twenty years at CBS, definitely did not have the reputation of hanging around with disreputable people. A serious, hard-working newsman, he specialized in covering health, education, welfare, the environment, and economics.

As Schorr recalls the sequence of events, it began on Tuesday, August 17, when Nixon, in a speech to the Knights of Columbus, promised that "you can count on my support" to help parochial schools. The producer of the CBS Evening News—the Walter Cronkite show—called Schorr and asked for a follow-up story. Schorr went to see a source, a Catholic priest active in the field of education, who told him the Administration was doing nothing to aid Catholic schools.

On Wednesday night Cronkite ran a film clip of Nixon's speech promising to aid parochial schools, then cut to Schorr saying there was "absolutely nothing in the works" to help these schools. On Thursday, Alvin Snyder, the Administration's deputy communications director for television, telephoned Schorr, asking him to come to the White House because "Peter Flanigan and others thought I

didn't have the facts." Late in the day Schorr met at the White House with Pat Buchanan, Terry T. Bell, deputy commissioner of education, and Henry C. Cashen II, an assistant to Charles Colson, who was then special counsel to the President. "They began reading figures off very rapidly," Schorr said. He suggested that they put their main points down on paper and said he would try to get it on the air.

On Thursday, the same day that Schorr was summoned to the White House, a member of the White House staff requested the FBI to investigate the CBS correspondent.

On Friday morning Schorr reported to the CBS studios in Washington. An FBI agent was already there questioning Small, who declined to answer until he knew the reason. "I don't know except it has to do with government employment," the FBI man said. Not having learned much from Small, the agent then wandered over to Schorr's desk and started asking routine questions—age? family? occupation?

Without thinking, Schorr began answering, then suddenly stopped and said he would not say anymore until the agent specified what employment he was talking about. Since the agent would not or could not, Schorr refused to answer any further questions.

"Is that what you want me to report?"

"Yes."

"Do you mind if I ask other people about you?"

"Yes."

Schorr explained to the agent that he was in a "highly visible" occupation; it would soon get around that he was being investigated and it might seem as though he was looking for a job. And that, Schorr explained, could be harmful to his reputation and position at CBS.

"All the rest of the day," Schorr said, "calls came in from all over from people who said they had been approached by the FBI. Fred Friendly [the former president of CBS News] called from his vacation home in New Hampshire. They had telephoned him and asked to see him, but he said he would not talk to them without checking with me. They called Bill Leonard and Gordon Manning, both vice-presidents of CBS News. They called Ernie Leiser, the executive producer of CBS specials. Sam Donaldson of ABC was called. Irv Levine of NBC, who was with me in Moscow, was called; they wanted to know how I carried on as a correspondent in Moscow." When some of those questioned asked why the FBI was making these inquiries, they were told that Dan Schorr was being considered for a high government post, a position of trust.

Then Schorr discovered that “the FBI had talked to my neighbors, including Marjorie Hunter of the *New York Times*.” One neighbor reported that Schorr’s home had apparently been under surveillance. By now Schorr was determined to know more. “There were two theories at CBS: first, that it was a real employment investigation, and second, that it was an adverse investigation as a result of my stories on Catholic school aid. But if there was a job involved, where the hell was it?”

On November 11, the *Washington Post* published a detailed front-page story about the FBI investigation. The story said the probe had been initiated by the office of Frederic V. Malek. As personnel man in the White House, Malek earned a reputation as “the Cool Hand Luke” of the Nixon Administration.

The storm broke over Ron Ziegler at the White House morning press briefing. Schorr, Ziegler told newsmen, was being checked for a job in “the area of the environment.” Malek, Ziegler added, was in charge of searching “across the nation” for “qualified people.” Claiming “I am trying to be forthright with you,” Ziegler nevertheless repeatedly ducked the simple, direct question of who had ordered the FBI investigation. He kept saying that “. . . it was part of the Malek process.” But the transcript of the briefing does include this exchange:

Q: Is it your understanding Mr. Malek was aware that an FBI check was under way?

Ziegler: Yes.

In an interview published the next day, Malek seemed to imply that there had been a full field FBI probe. Malek said someone on his staff—again unidentified—had asked the FBI to investigate Schorr but “the message somehow got bungled. Somehow something went wrong. Either I wasn’t clear on what I wanted or the staff wasn’t clear or the FBI. A breakdown occurred.”

Something indeed had gone wrong, and Senator Sam J. Ervin, Democrat of North Carolina, a Southern defender of constitutional liberties, announced a Senate investigation of the episode.

“Job or no job,” Schorr told the Ervin committee, “the launching of such an investigation without consent demonstrates an insensitivity to personal rights. An FBI investigation is not a neutral matter. It has an impact on one’s life, on relations with employers, neighbors, and friends.”

Considering the Administration’s protestations of innocence, it was surprising how little cooperation Ervin received. The President

declined to let any staff member testify—Malek, Herbert Klein, and Colson all refused invitations—but the White House sent a letter to Ervin, saying that Schorr “was being considered for a post that ‘is presently filled.’” The letter was signed by John W. Dean III, counsel to the President. Nixon, the letter added, had decided that such job investigations in the future would not be initiated “without prior notification to the person being investigated.” On the same day the letter was published, the *Washington Post* quoted an unnamed White House official as saying that the job for which Schorr had been investigated was that of assistant to Russell E. Train, the chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality. The story indicated that the Administration thought Schorr might produce a series of television programs on the environment.

The leak was not entirely convincing, since Train had no assistant producing TV shows, and the White House letter to Ervin distinctly said the job was “presently filled.” In fact, the council had no one with the title or duties of assistant to the chairman; no such job existed.

Much of the pressure by government on the networks takes place out of public view. The telephone calls from White House assistants and the visits to network executives by presidential aides are seldom publicized. For the most part, however, it is CBS that feels the greatest pressure under the Nixon Administration. The official who bears the brunt of that pressure is Richard Salant, the president of CBS News.

Salant, a lawyer turned news executive, occupies a high-pressure job; he wears glasses, has a receding hairline, and chain-smokes. Unlike some network executives, he is unusually outspoken. Salant reeled off a list of pressures from and contacts with CBS emanating from the Administration.

In February of 1971, he said, CBS did a segment on Agnew on the program *60 Minutes*. Narrator Mike Wallace reported that Agnew’s grades at Forest Park High School “were mediocre at best.” CBS asked to see the grades, Wallace added, “but school principal Charles Michael told us Agnew’s record was pulled from the file when he became Vice-President.” The program, tracing Agnew’s early career, also noted that he once served as personnel director at a supermarket and, like other employees, “Agnew often wore a smock with the words ‘No Tipping Please’ on it.”

After the broadcast, Salant said, the President’s director of communications, Herbert Klein, telephoned him. “Klein called and said he wanted to see me. He came to New York and came to my office

and made small talk. Then he got around to the point; he said the Vice-President didn't see *60 Minutes*, he never looks at those things. *But Mrs. Agnew saw it and didn't like it.*"

Salant told Klein that *60 Minutes* had broadcast letters from viewers who did not like the Agnew program; CBS would be happy to receive a letter from Mrs. Agnew.

Once Klein telephoned Reuven Frank, then president of NBC News, to protest a broadcast by David Brinkley. Frank became so furious that he stormed next door into the office of Richard C. Wald, then vice-president of NBC News (later Frank's successor), to let off steam.

"Relax," said Wald, "he gets *paid* to call you."

A few days later on a Saturday morning, the White House telephoned Frank at home. Frank was annoyed since he was kept waiting on the line, it was his day off, and he hadn't had his breakfast yet. He started to do a slow burn again. Finally Klein came on. He was calling, he announced cheerily, to say he had seen something he *liked* on NBC; he just wanted Frank to know.

It may be that no single example of government power directed at television news means very much—Dan Rather survived John Ehrlichman's bemoanings, Salant's sympathy for Judy Agnew was limited, and so on—but taken together, such incidents constitute a pattern of pressure that has dangerous implications. It is by means of such contacts that political leaders attempt to influence the presentation of the news so as to put the government in the most favorable light.

The First Amendment clearly protects the printed press. But the Founding Fathers, after all, did not foresee the advent of television, and the degree to which broadcasting is protected by the First Amendment has been subject to shifting interpretation. Technology has outpaced the Constitution, and the result is a major paradox: television news, which has the greatest impact on the public, is the most vulnerable and the least protected news medium.

Only economics limits the number of newspapers and magazines that may be published. But the number of radio frequencies and television channels is finite; the rationale for government regulation is that stations would otherwise overlap and interfere with each other. Cable television may one day erode the technological argument for government regulation by opening up an unlimited number of channels, but for the moment the networks remain under government supervision and the Dean Rusks will continue, when they want

to, to replace the Steve Allens and the Rumanian dancers on short notice.

The government's ultimate power over the networks is its ability to take away a license at renewal time and give it to someone else. Public television, dependent on Congress for funds, is even more susceptible to government intervention than the networks; the Nixon Administration has made no secret of its discontent with public television.

Walter Cronkite believes the Nixon Administration attacked the news media "to raise the credibility of the Administration. It's like a first-year physics experiment with two tubes of water—you put pressure on one side and it makes the other side go up or down." He added: "I have charged that this is a 'conspiracy'. I don't regret my use of that word."

By applying constant pressure, in ways seen and unseen, the leaders of the government have attempted to shape the news to resemble the images seen through the prism of their own power. The Administration's attacks, Richard Salant acknowledged, have "made us all edgy. We've thought about things we shouldn't think about."

THE PACIFICATION OF THE PRESS

Joseph Lyford

At the outset of the American experience, newspapers were plentiful, diverse, and cheap to publish. Each had a special personality reflecting the disposition of its owner or patron—a Jefferson, a Hamilton, or, as time went on, a Pulitzer or Hearst. For the most part our news enterprises, whatever their shortcomings, were the discoverers and evaluators of what passed for news. Although newspapers might join forces with a particular administration or become the mouthpiece of a special interest, their cooperation was by choice: they were not involuntarily and permanently enmeshed in the web of government.

Sometimes, in fact, the territory of government was invaded by the press. Henry Luce and Time, Inc., succeeded in imposing on

Joseph P. Lyford, a consultant to the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Santa Barbara, California, teaches journalism at the University of California, Berkeley. His article is reprinted with permission of *The Center Magazine*, a publication of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Santa Barbara, California, where it appeared in longer form in the March 1973 issue.

government and the public in the 1950's and early 1960's a distorted view of history which contributed heavily to our costly China policy.

But in the last two decades, the power of centralized bureaucracies has greatly increased and along with it their disposition to intervene actively in the news process. Government intervention has become more pronounced with the rise of the electronic media. The competition of radio and television has drastically reduced the authority of the newspaper press and created divisions within the news media which have weakened their capacity to resist governmental intrusion.

Chain ownerships, monopolies, mergers, and the acquisition of many broadcasting and publishing enterprises by conglomerates have absorbed the mass media into an industrial-commercial system which accents the marketing functions of the media while diminishing their roles as information and education agencies. A significant consequence of the industrialization of the mass media has been their pacification. While broadcasting has been the more obviously responsive to economic and governmental pressures because of its relationship to the Federal Communications Commission and its dependence on mass audience, the printed news system—with some important exceptions—has become a conduit for more and more institutionally inspired, mass-produced information and propaganda—what might be called “supernews.” The industrialization and pacification of the mass media were neither predestined nor the result of a conscious conspiracy. They were the result of an interplay between power, money, technological and economic change and a series of accidents.

This obliteration of the news by paid political broadcasts was even more apparent last year, when the President, refusing almost all direct encounters with the press, took unprecedented amounts of television time on which he and his surrogates could appeal for support without questions from reporters.

Television's coverage of his campaign seemed to consist largely of commercials, and the text of some of these commercials—particularly the President's speeches—provided the print media with the basis of their most important campaign stories. The impact of this avalanche of paid political time was heightened by a corresponding decline in the amount of television documentaries on campaign issues: whereas in 1960, 1964 and 1968, CBS aired an average of seven election specials, it broadcast only two in 1972, a fact which Ben Bagdikian attributes to the Nixon-Agnew attacks on the networks.

Technological and economic changes have also assisted in the

pacification of the mass media. The speed and operational patterns of the news media are often determined without reference to the professional people directly involved in the media. In a sense it is the supernews business and the neutral, automated character of the news-transmission system that determine what cargo is being carried and how it is processed.

Seen from this perspective, our information transmission systems begin to take on the aspects of the very computers to which the systems have assigned more and more of the responsibility for ingesting, indexing, storing, recalling, and disseminating data. Like the computers, the information systems are programmed by political and economic agencies to perform certain tasks in special ways, to provide only specific types of data, to deal with only restricted sets of questions. One of the many institutions into which the news media have been programmed is the Presidential press conference where—as one distinguished Washington correspondent has described it—a reporter is not expected, out of deference to the office of the Chief Executive, to pursue the President if he does not wish to be pursued.

Although the mass media have been programmed by the political and economic power, they do not always tell us what we might expect to hear, or what we would like to hear. The mass media, like the computers, may give us messages that may surprise or displease both us and the programmers. But the continuous transmission of unsettling signals is an infrequent occurrence. For a brief period a few years ago, CBS televised film segments of Americans being killed and wounded in Vietnam, but the programmers (in this case, the public) protested, and CBS returned to its practice of reporting a war in terms suitable for home viewing. Programming in “the national interest” even extends to sports spectacles.

Just as material threatening to morale is programmed out, material in the national interest is programmed in. There are indications, for instance, that the invisible side of the present Administration’s highly publicized interest in sports has been a planned and very successful campaign to convert the pre-game and half-time ceremonies of nationally televised football games into occasions for flag worship.

The Cold War and the war in Vietnam played a decisive role in the pacification of the press and its subordination to the public and private bureaucracies involved with the prosecution of these wars. Senator Joseph McCarthy demonstrated how the news media could be manipulated, and his activities helped promote the Cold War in which, during the Eisenhower and Kennedy Administrations, the

press felt itself obliged to enlist. From the moment the press became an exponent of United States Cold War policy, the rate of its deterioration as an independent critical force increased.

While the press grew more amenable to official Cold War communiques, the executive branch improved and expanded its apparatus for the suppression of information and the production of supernews. The furtive nature of our involvement in the Vietnam war necessitated an escalation of the government's propaganda and censorship activities, much of it centered in the Department of Defense, whose information and propaganda budget, according to an unpublished Twentieth Century Fund report, surpassed that of the combined news budgets of the three major TV networks.

All this caused further decline in the autonomy of the news media. By the time of Nixon's second term of office, the government's news control practices had become institutionalized, and the press was discovering that its addiction to supernews was hard to break.

If the news media have been pacified, why has the Vice-President complained so bitterly about the press? Why does Daniel P. Moynihan argue, in *The Presidency and the Press*, that muckraking journalists have seriously impeded the President in his efforts to discharge the responsibilities of office? The answer is that an analysis of the remarks of the Vice-President and Moynihan shows their annoyance is not with the mass media but with what they consider an elitist minority of journalists who work for the likes of the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times*.

There are of course media managers, as Mr. Agnew and others have said, and there are quite a few varieties of them. For instance, the term is not applied by the Vice-President to the information activities of the Department of Defense, the House Military Affairs Committee, the American Medical Association, or the oil industry. What is currently meant by media managers are reporters, editors, and an occasional broadcaster whose news agencies have not been wholly converted by government public relations.

The extent to which these people are able to "manage" the news is questionable. Although they have the power to make the spot decisions on the selection and treatment of specific news items, their choice is limited by the fact that they have to pick and choose their material from a flow of signals largely generated by people who have nothing to do with the journalism profession.

One of the most prominent and controversial of the so-called "media managers" is Walter Cronkite of CBS. His case is instructive

because he has been charged by people in high places with putting irritating noises into the news flow. One begins with the fact that he is a professional journalist and that he has final authority to decide what appears on his program and how it shall be presented. But his authority is subordinate to all kinds of higher authorities. The flow of news and supernews relayed to him every day is very much the same as that received by every other large news organization.

Because of this, his newscasts cannot stray consistently outside the general news pattern. His decisions and his treatment of news are also affected by the nature of the medium. The material must be good pictorially, have entertainment value; it must be condensed without spoiling its meaning, and there must be enough time available on that day's news broadcast to do justice to the story. Cronkite must also take into account the importance of the person or institution making a claim for attention. A Cabinet officer's news conference or a communique from the Joint Chiefs of Staff almost automatically requires coverage. To do well in the ratings Cronkite must attract the widest possible audience by providing a mixture of the same elements that make a newspaper popular: human interest, controversy, surprise, entertainment, violence, and humor. He cannot afford a bias which, over a period of time, will narrow the base of his audience. Cronkite is more programmed than programmer.

Nevertheless, Cronkite has been accused of taking the news into his own hands during the Democratic National Convention in 1968, when he featured film segments of the manhandling of a CBS floor correspondent and police conflicts with demonstrators outside. In retrospect, Cronkite would seem to have had little choice in the matter. The conventional standard of what constitutes news required that he, like other correspondents there, emphasize the conflicts. CBS could no more have avoided demonstration coverage than it could have refused to televise the assassinations of Lee Harvey Oswald and Robert Kennedy. In his *Corridor of Mirrors*, Thomas Whiteside reported that the newspapers relayed more information about the rioting than did CBS; apparently CBS came in for the greatest criticism because its reporting reached the greatest number of people. If there was news management, it was the work of demonstrators who organized the confrontation with the police to attract the media, and of the police who assaulted reporters and concealed badge numbers.

All this does not mean that Cronkite is a mechanical man. Although his options are restricted, a great deal depends on his discretion and judgment, and the personal and professional qualities he

brings to his job are good reasons why CBS news broadcasts have never descended to the hack level of journalism characteristic of so many local television and radio stations. The same can be said of other network correspondents. But although Cronkite's qualities as a newsman and editor make a difference in how the game is played, they do not change the game itself.

The question arises: If the information systems have been programmed by government and economic power, how does one account for the appearance of anti-Establishment and "revolutionary" propaganda in the mass media? For one thing, information not congruent with our economic or political consensus is not always suppressed, but the dissonant messages are frequently deformed in order to satisfy media standards. One test of marketable news is that it have a high violence quotient, or shock value. At the same time, the shock conveyed must be tolerable to a general audience. Many critiques of the social and political order cannot satisfy these standards. Thus, they can be rejected. The more dissonant the message, the less likely it is to be circulated. An example of such rejection was *The New York Times's* suppression of the fact that the Central Intelligence Agency was planning and financing an invasion of Cuba in 1961. [Ed. Note: *The Times* "downplayed" the story.]

On the other hand, the more grotesque and incredible the "hostile" data, the more likely its chances of being circulated by the media. Instead of critiques that have some degree of plausibility, we receive caricatures of these critiques. The caricatures are not always inventions by the media. They are more often constructed by professional extremists in a tacit bargain with the media for recognition. An example of this type of bargaining was the informal collusion between the news media and the leaders of violent demonstrations at the University of California in 1969.

Organizers of both the Third World and the People's Park confrontations constructed a scenario designed to provoke massive police intervention as a way to attract the media. Black Panthers made similar bargains with the media, having learned that pistol rhetoric and paramilitary costumes meant headlines and guest appearances on talk shows. The bargains between super-militants and the media insured that persuasive and rational expositions of deep social grievances would be drowned out by the most grotesque proclamations. The tactic is called "grabbing the mike."

Rational and radical criticism that does filter into the mass media is affected by the context in which it appears, especially in the television medium which blurs the distinction between reality and

fiction. What appears in the news is countered by what Robert Daley calls the subliminal weight of the entertainment which take up most of television. Daley says the image of the police conveyed by such semi-documentaries as "Dragnet" is a continuing contradiction of reports on police corruption.

Another example of drama as a counterforce to reality was the pre-game spectacular of last year's Orange Bowl football game, the centerpiece of which was a long-haired young man who assured the TV audience that the youth of America are as patriotic as their parents.

The general tone of newscasts also exerts a subliminal effect on hostile data. Even the most unsettling information takes on some of the color and tone of its surroundings, a fact which painters perhaps understand better than journalists.

A ten-second report from Hanoi on the effects of a carpet-bombing of homes and a hospital, hemmed in by denials from the Defense Department and pharmaceutical commercials, becomes less believable, if indeed the viewer remembers the message at all. The texture of a newscast is somewhat like that of a pointillistic painting, in which each dot loses its identity in the general pattern. Dissonant messages potent enough to resist this loss of definition are likely to trigger a rising level of supernews sufficient to neutralize the original message. It was the potency of the My Lai story which accounted for its initially cool reception by the mass media and later set in motion the counter-propaganda which subverted the meaning of the episode.

As the story developed through the trials of the defendants the supernews system began to generate an impression of the "understandability" of the soldiers' action, and the process of official rationalization and obfuscation was underway. As My Lai became more "understandable," the various guilts of the defendants and of their superiors became less clear. By the time Calley was convicted the shock of My Lai had been replaced by public indignation at the "scapegoating" of the chief defendant. So he was spared the inconveniences of prison confinements, and a ballad praising him had become a best-selling recording.

The great difficulty in discussing the mass media is that there are many ways of looking at them, and each perspective conveys a different impression. Analyzed as a system of communications related to the whole of American society, the media appear to be functional and neutral, something in the nature of a public utility. But looked at as a collection of individualized newspapers and broadcast channels, run by professional people with differing capacities and ideas, one may get quite the opposite impression. The conflict

now going on between the press and the government would seem to contradict the theory that there is growing symbiosis between the mass-communications system and the bureaucracies that dominate so much of American life. And any conclusion that our information media have been subordinated to the political and economic system must deal with the fact that publishers and broadcasters constantly proclaim their opposition to government regulation or any other interference in their business.

The resistance of so many media owners to proposals for change is that they tend to view such proposals only in their most extreme formulation. A suggestion to change emphasis or to explore a new way is interpreted as an all-or-nothing demand to revolutionize the situation, with no consideration for what are referred to as the harsh realities of the business. It is true that the mass media must consider the taste and sensibilities of their audience, but it is an audience capable of growth and curious about the unknown.

To ask that the news media bring us a more unconventional, denationalized view of the world "out there" is not to demand that they secede from American society and address their subscribers in a foreign language. What is suggested is that we be given a new perspective on the world outside the West that might sensitize us to those people inside and outside our own country whose ideas are unknown to us and whose situation we ignore. What is suggested is that the news media withdraw from their excessive intimacy with centers of private and public authority, and reduce our intake of supernews.

Arrayed against the practical people who justify or resign themselves to the industrialization of our mass communications system and all the accommodations to power and popular superstition that go with it is the vision of the press as set forth by a man who knows very little about our newspapers. Writing about art and literature which, for him, obviously includes journalism, he says: "But woe to the nation whose literature is disturbed by the intervention of power. Because that is not just a violation against 'freedom of print', it is the closing down of the heart of the nation, a slashing to pieces of its memory. The nation ceases to be mindful of itself, it is deprived of its spiritual unity, and, despite a supposedly common language, compatriots suddenly cease to understand each other. . . ."

We can be grateful for the fact that there is at least one American newspaper which saw fit to print the text of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Prize statement. In his own country his remarks are unpublished and unheard, and his countrymen are the poorer for it.

REGULAR USE OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

Max Frankel

The government's unprecedented challenge to the *Times* in the case of the Pentagon papers, I am convinced, cannot be understood, or decided, without an appreciation of the manner in which a small and specialized corps of reporters and a few hundred American officials regularly make use of so-called classified, secret and top-secret information and documentation. It is a cooperative, competitive, antagonistic and arcane relationship.

Without the use of "secrets" that I shall attempt to explain in this affidavit, there could be no adequate diplomatic, military and political reporting of the kind our people take for granted, either abroad or in Washington, and there could be no mature system of communication between the government and the people. That is one reason why the sudden complaint by one party to these regular dealings strikes us as monstrous and hypocritical—unless it is essentially perfunctory, for the purpose of retaining some discipline over the federal bureaucracy.

Presidents make "secret" decisions only to reveal them for the purposes of frightening an adversary nation, wooing a friendly electorate, protecting their reputations. The military services conduct "secret" research in weaponry only to reveal it for the purpose of enhancing their budgets, appearing superior or inferior to a foreign army, gaining the vote of a congressman or the favor of a contractor. High officials of the government reveal secrets in the search for support of their policies, or to help sabotage the plans and policies of rival departments. Middle-rank officials of government reveal secrets so as to attract the attention of their superiors or to lobby against the orders of those superiors. Though not the only vehicle for this traffic in secrets—the Congress is always eager to provide a forum—the press is probably the most important.

In the field of foreign affairs, only rarely does our government give full public information to the press for the direct purpose of simply informing the people. For the most part, the press obtains significant information bearing on foreign policy only because it has managed to make itself a party to confidential materials, and of value

Max Frankel, *New York Times* Sunday editor, was chief of the paper's Washington bureau during the Pentagon Papers case of 1971 when he submitted an affidavit in U.S. District Court, excerpts from which explain the unique relationship of government documents and the flow of information.



The press chief of the *Washington Post* signaled victory, holding the "first edition" which told of the Supreme Court's decision in favor of the *Post* and the *New York Times*. William Frazee and pressroom workers on all of the papers publishing the Pentagon Papers had to go back many years to match the excitement and suspense. (Used with permission of Wide World Photos, Inc.)

in transmitting these materials from government to other branches and offices of government as well as to the public at large. This is why the press has been wisely and correctly called the Fourth Branch of Government.

I turn now in an attempt to explain, from a reporter's point of view, the several ways in which "classified" information figures in our relations with government. The government's complaint against the *Times* in the present case comes with ill-grace because government itself has regularly and consistently, over the decades, violated the conditions it suddenly seeks to impose upon us—in three distinct ways:

First, it is our regular partner in the informal but customary traffic in secret information, without even the pretense of legal or formal "declassification." Presumably, many of the "secrets" I cited above, and all the "secret" documents and pieces of information that form the basis of the many newspaper stories that are attached hereto, remain "secret" in their official designation.

Second, the government and its officials regularly and customarily engage in a kind of *ad hoc, de facto* "declassification" that normally has no bearing whatever on considerations of the national interest. To promote a political, personal, bureaucratic or even commercial interest, incumbent officials and officials who return to civilian life are constantly revealing the secrets entrusted to them. They use them to barter with the Congress or the press, to curry favor with foreign governments and officials from whom they seek information in return. They use them freely, and with a startling record of impunity, in their memoirs and other writings.

Third, the government and its officials regularly and routinely misuse and abuse the "classification" of information, either by imposing secrecy where none is justified or by retaining it long after the justification has become invalid, for simple reasons of political or bureaucratic convenience. To hide mistakes of judgment, to protect reputations of individuals, to cover up the loss and waste of funds, almost everything in government is kept secret for a time and, in the foreign policy field, classified as "secret" and "sensitive" beyond any rule of law or reason. Every minor official can testify to this fact.

Obviously, there is need for some secrecy in foreign and military affairs. Considerations of security and tactical flexibility require it, though usually for only brief periods of time.

But for the vast majority of "secrets," there has developed between the government and the press (and Congress) a rather simple rule of thumb. The government hides what it can, pleading necessity

as long as it can, and the press pries out what it can, pleading a need and right to know.

Some of the best examples of the regular traffic I describe may be found in the Pentagon papers that the government asks us not to publish. The uses of top secret information by our government in deliberate leaks to the press for the purposes of influencing public opinion are recorded, cited and commented upon in several places of the study. Also cited and analyzed are numerous examples of how the government tried to control the release of such secret information so as to have it appear at a desired time, or in a desired publication, or in a deliberately loud or soft manner for maximum or minimum impact, as desired.

TONKIN: WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN ASKED

Don Stillman

On the stormy night of Aug. 4, 1964, the U.S. Navy destroyers *Maddox* and *C. Turner Joy* were cruising the Gulf of Tonkin off North Vietnam when the *C. Turner Joy* reported radar detection of ships closing in fast for a possible attack. Sonarmen reported tracking torpedoes from the ships. Seaman Patrick Park, the main gun director of the *Maddox*, scanned his sensitive radar for signs of the enemy. But as the destroyers maneuvered wildly for three hours in heavy swells he detected nothing. Then suddenly he reported picking up a "damned big" target, and was ordered to fire. Park recalled later:

Just before I pushed the trigger, I suddenly realized: that's the *Turner Joy*. This came right with the order to fire. I shouted back, "Where's the *Turner Joy*?" There was a lot of yelling, "Goddamn" back and forth, with the bridge telling me to "fire before we lost contact. . . ." I finally told them, "I'm not opening fire until I know where the *Turner Joy* is." The bridge got on the phone and said, "Turn on your lights, *Turner Joy*." Sure enough, there she was, right in the crosshairs. I had six five-inch guns right at the *Turner Joy*, 1,500 yards away. If I had fired, it would have blown it clean out of the water. In fact, I could have been shot for not squeezing the trigger. . . . People started asking, "What are we shooting at? What is going on?" We all began calming down. The whole thing seemed to end then.

Don Stillman is a member of the journalism faculty of the University of West Virginia and editor of the Appalachian monthly *The Miner's Voice*, a publication calling for reform within the United Mine Workers. His documentation of the Gulf of Tonkin "turning point" is reprinted here with his permission and that of *Columbia Journalism Review*, where it appeared in a special Vietnam issue, Winter 1970-71.

But it didn't end there for Park, whose statements were reported by Joseph Goulden in his excellent book *Truth Is the First Casualty*, or for the rest of the world. Hours later, President Johnson ordered the first U.S. bombing raids against North Vietnam. Within the week, he had demanded and received a Congressional resolution that authorized him to "take all necessary steps" to "prevent further aggression" in Vietnam.

The massive American buildup in Vietnam dates from that crucial week in the Gulf of Tonkin, and in retrospect the events there proved to be a turning point in the war. At the time of the incidents, only 163 Americans had died in action in Vietnam, and the 16,000 American troops there ostensibly were serving as "advisers" rather than full combat soldiers. But within a year President Johnson began to use a Congressionally approved "Tonkin resolution" as a functional equivalent of a declaration of war in an escalation that ultimately brought more than half a million U.S. troops to Vietnam. More than 40,000 were killed.

What really happened that dark night is unclear; but persistent digging by Senator J.W. Fulbright and his Foreign Relations Committee staff, by then-Senator Wayne Morse, and by a handful of persistent reporters like Joseph Goulden has given us a view of at least part of the iceberg of deception that remained hidden for years.

Reporting of the first attack on the *Maddox* on Aug. 2 and the second alleged attack on both the *Maddox* and the *Turner Joy* on Aug. 4 was extremely difficult because the only real sources of information were Pentagon and Navy officials and the President himself. Slowly and painfully over four years, as the private doubts of Senators and reporters became public, the American people learned that in fact the *Maddox* was not on a "routine patrol in international waters," but was on an electronic espionage mission to gather intelligence information on North Vietnamese radar frequencies. As part of that mission, the *Maddox* would repeatedly simulate attacks by moving toward the shores of North Vietnam with its gun-control radar mechanisms turned on to stimulate enemy radar activity. In addition, years after the incidents stories revealed that the territorial waters recognized by North Vietnam (twelve miles) were repeatedly violated by the *Maddox*.

Two days before the first attack on the *Maddox*, the South Vietnamese for the first time conducted naval shelling of North Vietnam. Using U.S. "swift boats," they attacked the islands of Hon Me and Hon Ngu. The night following the raids, the *Maddox*, approaching from the same direction as the South Vietnamese, came within four nautical miles of Hon Me. The captain of the *Maddox* inter-

cepted North Vietnamese messages reporting the possibility of "hostile action" because the enemy believed the *Maddox* to be connected with the South Vietnamese shelling of the islands. The *Maddox* cabled: CONTINUANCE OF PATROL PRESENTS AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK. That day it was attacked.

The *Maddox* was joined by the *Turner Joy* and, after again requesting termination of the mission because of the likelihood of attack, it reported two days later that the two ships had been ambushed by North Vietnamese PT boats. The black clouds and electrical storms during that night prevented any visual sightings of hostile craft, and contradictory sightings on radar and sonar added to the confusion. The commander in charge cabled:

Entire action leaves many doubts except for apparent attempted ambush. Suggest thorough reconnaissance in daylight by aircraft.

After lengthy questioning of crew members on both ships, the doubts grew larger. The commander cabled:

Review of action makes many reported contacts and torpedoes fired appear doubtful. . . . Freak weather effects and overeager sonarmen may have accounted for many reports. No actual visual sightings by *Maddox*. Suggest complete evaluation before any further action.

That evaluation did not occur, and hours later American bombers took off for North Vietnam.

Thus the espionage mission of the *Maddox*, its violation of territorial waters, its proximity and relationship to South Vietnamese shelling, and major questions about whether the second attack occurred, all combine to give a much different picture of the incidents than the Administration fed the country through the news media. How well did the media handle reporting and interpretation of the Tonkin incidents?

Perhaps the worst excesses in reporting were committed by *Time* and *Life*. Both viewed the event as if the *Maine* itself had been sunk. The week after the encounter, *Life* carried an article headlined FROM THE FILES OF NAVY INTELLIGENCE that it said was "pieced together by *Life* correspondent Bill Wise with the help of U.S. Navy Intelligence and the Department of Defense." Wise was clearly fed only a small smattering of cables that contained none of the doubts about the second attack. He stated (Aug. 14, 1964):

Despite their losses, the [North Vietnamese] PTs continued to harass the two destroyers. A few of them amazed those aboard the *Maddox* by brazenly using searchlights to light up the destroyers—thus making ideal targets of themselves. They also peppered the ships with more 37 mm fire, keeping heads on U.S. craft low but causing no real damage.

Senator Wayne Morse, in a speech on the floor of the Senate Feb. 28, 1968, denounced the Pentagon's "selective leaking of confidential information" and *Life's* gullibility in accepting it. "I don't know who leaked, but I can guess why," he said. "The 'why' is that someone in the Pentagon decided that the American people should see some of the messages confirming that an unprovoked attack had occurred on innocent American vessels. . . . The *Life* magazine reporter was taken in. He was 'used.' The press should be warned."

The next issue of *Life* went even further in embellishing events. It carried a picture spread headlined HEROES OF THE GULF OF TONKIN that praised the pilots who had bombed North Vietnam. "Most of the young Navy pilots had never seen combat before, but they performed like veterans," *Life* said. The planes, with two exceptions, "got back safely and their pilots, the nation's newest battle veterans, would be remembered as the heroes of Tonkin Gulf."

This kind of irresponsible puffery was evident in *Time*, too. Despite thorough and restrained files from its Washington bureau, *Time* (Aug. 14, 1964) constructed its typical dramatic scenario of events which, though lively, was grossly inaccurate:

The night glowed eerily with the nightmarish glare of air-dropped flares and boats' searchlights. For three and a half hours the small boats attacked in pass after pass. Ten enemy torpedoes sizzled through the water. Each time the skippers, tracking the fish by radar, maneuvered to evade them. Gunfire and gun smells and shouts stung the air. Two of the enemy boats went down. Then, at 1:30 a.m., the remaining PTs ended the fight, roared off through the black night to the north.

Joseph Goulden, one of the few writers to interview crew members, reports that when the *Maddox* and *Turner Joy* arrived at Subic Bay several weeks after the incidents, one crew member had occasion to read both the *Life* and *Time* accounts. He quotes the seaman as stating:

I couldn't believe it, the way they blew that story out of proportion. It was like something out of *Male* magazine, the way they described that battle. All we needed were naked women running up and down the deck. We were disgusted, because it just wasn't true. It didn't happen that way. . . .

Newsweek, which generally waved the flag far less than *Time* in its coverage of the Vietnam War, was just as overzealous in its dramatization of the second Tonkin incident (Aug. 17, 1964):

The U.S. ships blazed out salvo after salvo of shells. Torpedoes whipped by, some only 100 feet from the destroyers' beams. A PT boat burst into flames and sank. More U.S. jets swooped in. . . . Another PT boat exploded and sank, and then the others scurried off into the darkness

nursing their wounds. The battle was won. Now it was time for American might to strike back.

Even the usually staid New York *Times* magazine was caught up in the adventure of the moment. Its Aug. 16 picture spread on the Seventh Fleet, which had launched the planes that bombed the North, had the look of a war comic book. Headlined POLICEMEN OF THE PACIFIC, it showed planes streaking through the sky, missiles being fired, and Marines landing on beaches. It carried captions such as, "A component of the Marines is always on sea duty, ready when the call comes."

The New York *Times* news sections handled the story with restraint and, after the Aug. 2 attack, even mentioned claims that U.S. destroyers like the *Maddox* "have sometimes collaborated with South Vietnamese hit-and-run raids on North Vietnamese cities." The *Washington Post*, like the *Times*, was thorough and incisive in its reporting. Murrey Marder's superb accounts even mentioned the South Vietnamese shelling on Hon Me and Hon Ngu as a possible cause for the then seemingly irrational attack on the *Maddox*.

Because transcripts of TV news shows from this period are not available it is difficult to evaluate broadcast media performance. But the accounts of TV coverage printed in government bulletins and elsewhere indicate that some perceptive reporting did occur. NBC carried an interview with Dean Rusk Aug. 5 in which Rusk was pressed on the question of whether the U.S. ships might have been operating in support of the South Vietnamese shelling units. But for the most part the broadcast media, while perhaps more responsible than some print outlets, fed viewers the same deceptive Administration leaks.

Editorial comment almost universally supported the President's response. The New York *Daily News* speculated that "it may be our heaven-sent good fortune to liquidate not only Ho Chi Minh but Mao Tse-tung's Red Mob at Peking as well, presumably with an important assist from Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist Chinese forces on Taiwan."

The Los Angeles *Times* praised U.S. actions as "fitting in selectivity, proper in application, and—given the clear, long-standing statement of U.S. intentions—inevitable in delivery." William Randolph Hearst, Jr., praised the bombing as a "fitting reply to one of the more outrageous—and implausible—aggressions committed by communism in many years." He went on to suggest that rather than limit the bombing it might be better to continue until the North Vietnamese surrendered.

The New York *Times* said: "The attack on one of our warships that at first seemed, and was hoped to be, an isolated incident is now seen in ominous perspective to have been the beginning of a mad adventure by the North Vietnamese Communists." But the *Times* did warn that "the sword, once drawn in anger, will tend to be unsheathed more easily in the future." When the Tonkin resolution went before Congress, the *Times* perceptively cautioned that "it is virtually a blank check."

The Washington *Post's* editorial page saw the Tonkin resolution much differently. Earlier editorials mentioned "the atmosphere of ambiguity" that surrounded the first attack on the *Maddox*, but when the resolution was considered the *Post* said: "That unity (against Communist aggression) has been demonstrated despite the reckless and querulous dissent of Senator Morse. There is no substance in Senator Morse's charge that the resolution amounts to a 'predated declaration of war'. . . . This means of reasserting the national will, far short of a declaration of war, follows sound precedent. . . ."

One of the few newspapers to attack the President's account was the Charleston, W. Va., *Gazette*, which stated that the Tonkin attacks were probably caused by the South Vietnamese naval strikes and complained of the "air of unreality" about the incidents. But the overall failure of the press to raise questions about the incidents in the editorial columns, although in keeping with the mood of the country at the time, was part of the general breakdown of the media's responsibility to act as a check on the actions of the Government.

Foreign coverage of the incidents raised some of the significant points being ignored in this country. *Demokreten*, of Denmark, stated:

To create a pretext for an attack on Poland, Hitler ordered the Germans to put on Polish uniforms and attack a German guard. What the Americans did in North Vietnam was not the same. But the story sounds doubtful. . . . Why was the vessel off North Vietnamese coasts? In any case its presence there could indeed be interpreted as provocative.

New Statesman of Britain also raised doubts:

There is so little trust in official [U.S.] accounts about Vietnam that suspicion is surely understandable. . . . Is it not possible that the destroyers could not be distinguished from South Vietnamese craft that were engaged in another raiding mission?

One American journalist who raised continuing doubts about the veracity of the Administration's accounts was I.F. Stone. In his

small, outspoken sheet, Stone reported the South Vietnamese attacks on Hon Me and Hon Ngu. He was the only one to cover in detail the charges raised by Senator Morse about the incidents and the Tonkin resolution, and he even raised questions about whether the second attack even occurred. While *Time* and *Life* were adding readable embellishments to the nineteenth-century theme of "they've sunk one of our gunboats," I.F. Stone was asking the crucial questions.

One of the major shortcomings of columnists and opinion writers was their failure to ask the broad question: does the punishment fit the crime? The total damage in both attacks was one bullet hole in the *Maddox*. No U.S. ships were sunk, no American boys were killed or even wounded. In turn, we not only claimed to have sunk four North Vietnamese vessels but went on to the bombing of the North, sinking the major part of the North Vietnamese navy, and wiping out more than 10 per cent of its oil storage tanks.

The overwhelming response of the editorialists was that President Johnson should be commended for his restraint in limiting the bombing. Among Washington journalists only Stone opined that indeed the American response was "hardly punishment to fit the crime." His small-circulation sheet received little attention.

The record of the media improved measurably as public doubts about the Tonkin incidents began to grow. Senator Fulbright, who managed the Tonkin resolution through Congress for President Johnson, began to question the facts and, in May, 1966, wrote in *Look* that he had serious doubts about the Administration's account. But the media didn't follow this up very extensively. Despite the importance of the Tonkin incidents, they were content to pass over opportunities to interview crew members of the two ships—the only first-hand witnesses—some of whom had left the service or were otherwise accessible for interviews. The first real breakthrough came in July, 1967, when Associated Press sent a special assignment team headed by Harry Rosenthal and Tom Stewart to interview some three dozen crew members. Their superb 5,000-word account was the first real enterprise reporting on the Tonkin affair.

AP revealed for the first time that the *Maddox* was carrying intelligence equipment, and also cited for the first time that the *Maddox* had not fired any warning shots, as claimed by Secretary McNamara, but had shot to kill instead. The crew interviews indicated that there was a great confusion on board the two ships during the incident. At this point, however, there was little client interest in the story. Urban riots broke out the day it was to run. As a result, the AP report was not used by major metropolitan newspapers such as the *Washington Post*, *Washington Star*, *New York Times*, or others

which might have given it the exposure it deserved. The story did appear in the *Arkansas Gazette*, however, where it was read by Fulbright, who by this time was devoting much of his attention to uncovering the true story of Tonkin.

The AP account was followed in April, 1968, by an article in *Esquire* by David Wise, who also interviewed the crews and cast further doubt on the Administration's account. These two reports and another AP account by Donald May were the only real enterprise stories that turned up new information. But John Finney, the able *New York Times* reporter, raised further questions in *New Republic* early in 1968, as did John Galloway in *Commonweal*. (Galloway has just done a splendid source book, *The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution*.)

By this time Fulbright and Morse were generating much breaking news as they prepared for the Foreign Relations Committee hearings held in February, 1968. But even during those hearings the press failed to distinguish itself. When Morse, through the *Congressional Record*, released important segments of a top-secret study done by the Foreign Relations staff, based on cable traffic and new data from the Defense Department, it took the *Washington Post* two days to recognize the significance of his statements.

The final credit for tying together the whole thread of deception surrounding the incidents must go to Joseph Goulden, whose book appeared in early fall of 1969. While covering the 1968 Tonkin hearings for the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, Goulden had filed a story on the controversial testimony of Secretary McNamara, who appeared to contradict some aspects of his 1964 testimony. The *Inquirer* re-wrote the lead to make it read:

The United States did not provoke the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, previously secret naval communications indicated Saturday.

Goulden left the *Inquirer*, sought out crewmen and others involved in the incident, and wrote his detailed and insightful account.

This, then, is the record on the Tonkin affair. Given its lessons, one may hope that the media will not fail so grandly if similar incidents occur. The reporting on the *Pueblo* and the *Liberty* give reason for hope. But the Fourth Estate must establish a far more independent and critical stance on government actions if hope is to become reality.

THE MEDIA AND VIETNAM: COMMENT AND APPRAISAL

Columbia Journalism Review

In preparing the issue on Vietnam, *CJR* asked 12 news media observers and practitioners—"hawks" and "doves," conservatives and liberals, Americans and foreigners—to appraise U.S. news media performance on Vietnam.

On thirteen specific subjects, rated as "good" or "poor," newspapers, magazines, and radio-TV all were ranked "good" by most in presentation of the war's historical context, the nature and extent of U.S. antiwar sentiment, and analysis of "the many hopeful prognoses" by public officials. Radio-TV won slightly greater approval than rival media for coverage of Congressional debates over troop build-ups. All the media were rated predominantly "poor" in covering the Gulf of Tonkin incidents, the economic/social impact of the war on the South Vietnamese, U.S. involvement in Thailand and Cambodia, various peace "feelers" and the Paris negotiations, and the present Vietnamese economic/political situation. There was little consensus in other categories except for rating radio-TV "poor" in coverage of the Diem government, Americans' early involvement as "advisors," and the impact of heavy bombing of the North.

Overall, magazines and newspapers were rated highest in performance, with no one marking magazines as "poor." Most rated radio-TV "average" to "poor," and several marked it "excellent." Among comments:

George E. Reedy, Fellow, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; former press secretary to President Johnson: "My overall impression is that all of the media have done as well as they could in covering the Indochina War and, in view of economic realities, have devoted considerable resources to the project. . . . The problem is that the news media are primarily channels of information, and play—and can only play—a severely restricted role in the field of basic education. Those engaged in the production of newspapers, magazines, and radio-TV shows assume—and generally the assumption is correct—that the interested audience has a fund of background information which enables it to make some form of sense out of the facts presented. In the case of Indochina the assumption had no validity whatsoever. To most Americans the area did not even exist until a few years ago. Aside from a minute group of specialists, our citizens had no

Included in *Columbia Journalism Review's* special Vietnam issue of Winter 1970-71 was this summary of statements from news media observers and practitioners on how well the war was covered and what lessons were to be learned. Used with permission of *CJR*.

conceptions of the land or its people—not even the romantic misconceptions that we have of other areas of the world.

“Many newspapers and magazines recognized this problem and made a valiant effort to plug the gap with backgrounders. Some of them were superb. But even the best could not make up for the many decades of total indifference to Indochina on the part of our society. It was not a question of presentation, explanation, or background but of education, without which the foregoing are useless.

“Added to this was the unusual nature of the war—no front lines; no clear-cut objectives; and no easily recognizable distinction between friend and foe. And finally, the official explanations were less than candid, perhaps because officialdom was having almost as much trouble as the press in finding familiar patterns. . . .”

Barry Zorthian, president, Time-Life Broadcast, Inc.; former U.S. military information officer, Saigon: “Some combat coverage and coverage of problems of the U.S. and Vietnamese military were outstanding. Particularly poor to my mind was political and economic coverage of the period of political chaos in 1965-66, the general internal situations in 1967, and problems and perspectives of the Vietnamese. . . . I think the media’s continued skepticism about the official ‘line’ was healthy; was essential. The media should be skeptical about government. One of the beefs I have about press and government is that they spend too much time criticizing each other and too little in self-examination.

“If I had to make one criticism of the press, with all the drawbacks of generalization—and my reservations are very real—it has to do with reporters’ qualifications. There were some superbly qualified people in Vietnam, but an awful lot of people with major outlets just were not prepared to cover the war, and by the time they were qualified—had picked up experience—they were transferred. . . .”

Senator J.W. Fulbright, chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee: “The press has, I believe, performed very well throughout the war and has rendered a great public service in the process. Reporters have questioned government pronouncements and policy more thoroughly than has been the case on any other major issue since I have been in public office. The press has been an invaluable source of information to the Committee throughout the course of the war and has been, in my view, our prime source of information on what was really taking place in Southeast Asia. . . .”

Louis Heren, deputy editor, the Times of London: “Generally speaking, I think the U.S. media, with one or two outstanding exceptions, were slow to question official policy and, indeed, some of the old ideas of patriotism. The majority appear to have been inhibited by the old anti-Communist ideology. The slowness to appreciate the situation was the most serious weakness. . . . Finally, and this is a constant complaint of mine, too little attention was—and is—given to Congress. The *New York Times* has three or four men covering the Hill. The *London Times* has about twenty men in Parliament.

“Outstanding examples of coverage and/or interpretation? The *New York Times*, especially in the early days with David Halberstam, and the

report from North Vietnam on the bombing, by Harrison Salisbury. Also the Los Angeles *Times* series on the peace initiative 'Marigold.' Some TV and press photography also was excellent.

"Particularly poor or objectionable examples? Mainly the lack of interest in the consequences of the war for the South Vietnamese—especially the effect of the bombing and defoliants."

James J. Kilpatrick, syndicated columnist: "I think, on the whole, the press has given us almost more information about what was going on in Vietnam than could reasonably be absorbed. This war has gone on so long it's like the war in 1984—nobody can remember exactly when it started, or who is fighting whom. We see the movements of men and casualties, and one day tends to blur into another in coverage. . . . I think coverage has been competent and workmanlike and on the whole quite fair. . . ."

William Porter, chairman, Department of Journalism, University of Michigan: "This generally has been a good chapter in U.S. journalism. . . . Our worst reporting was in the earlier stages of deep involvement, and the real digging out of that story should have been done in Washington. That David Halberstam-Charles Mohr-Malcolm Browne had to turn on the light from 9,000 miles away, thanks primarily to finding some discontented officers, is more than anything else an indication of the lack of initiative in a lot of Washington bureaus. . . ."

Noam Chomsky, professor of linguistics, MIT: "In my opinion many war correspondents have done a very honest job of reporting what they themselves have seen. However, to learn something of the social and political context of events in Southeast Asia one must turn to the French press, particularly (though not exclusively) *Le Monde*. . . ."

"As to analysis of government propaganda, it is virtually nonexistent. Consider, for example, Laos. The scale and character of the air war in Laos have been known to American newsmen for some time, and they have sufficient information available to them to refute conclusively the official government pronouncements on this subject. They have not done so.

"To mention just one example of gross neglect, President Nixon announced in March that a North Vietnamese invasion had raised the North Vietnamese troop level to 67,000 men, obliging the U.S. to respond with heavy air strikes and so on. A few weeks later Evans and Novak raised it to 70,000, and Robert Shaplen to 75,000. In fact, every newsman in Vientiane, unaware of the 'invasion,' was giving out the figure of 50,000 troops, as for the preceding year. To my knowledge, this fact appeared only in a side remark by D.S. Greenway in *Life*. Furthermore, most correspondents were aware that these alleged 50,000 troops were largely support and supply units that consist, to a large measure, of women and old men. All knew that only about eighty North Vietnamese prisoners had been captured since 1964 (eight in the alleged 'invasion')."

"Similarly, when the Symington Committee hearings on Laos were released, with the Government claim that only military targets were being attacked in Northern Laos (April, 1970), the claim could have been refuted by any correspondent who has interviewed refugees, or any editor who has read such reports (say, those introduced by Kennedy into the *Congressional Record* in late April, 1970). The matter is of immense im-

portance. On this turns the whole question of the nature of the air war in Laos since 1964 (virtually unreported in the media).

“A Kennedy subcommittee staff report of September, 1970, merely reports what is common knowledge in Vientiane when it reveals that a primary purpose of this war has been to destroy the social and economic structures of the Pathet Lao. Apart from a column by T.D. Allman about a year ago, I have seen nothing in the American press—apart from small magazines—that clearly explains this, the dominant feature of the American war in Laos for the past several years. Similarly, Jacques Decornoy’s eyewitness account (June, 1968) received no notice, to my knowledge, in the American media. And so on and so on.”

Wayne Danielson, Dean, School of Communications, University of Texas; president, Association for Education in Journalism: “In large terms I want to emphasize what the media learned. . . . They learned something from Vietnam just as they learned something from the McCarthy era. Both lessons were hard. . . .”

Prof. Karl Deutsch, Harvard University; president, American Political Science Association: “I think what was missing was better reporting on the decision process. If you read the book by Townsend Hoopes, *The Limits of Intervention*, there was a lot of information there that the press had not caught. . . .”

“In television, even the best do not use the full force of the medium. TV should give you much more detail of the kind the Pentagon does with visual aids. Visual aids are hardly ever used to the maximum on TV. . . .”

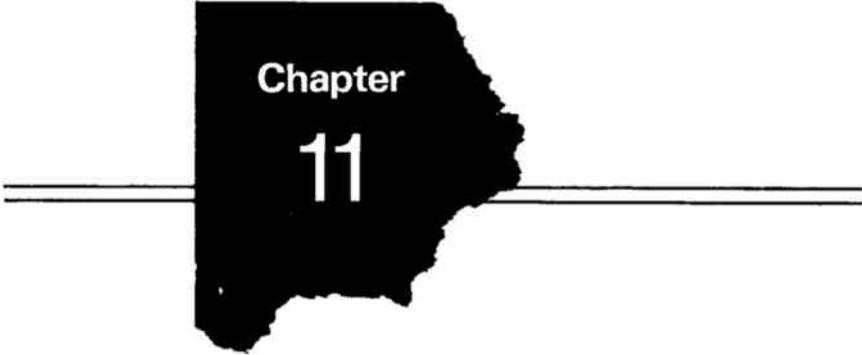
Clayton Kirkpatrick, editor, Chicago Tribune: “There were occasional lapses into superficial, naive reporting, but the level of reporting by all media was the best in our history of war reporting. . . .”

Ron Dorfman, editor, Chicago Journalism Review: “While researching a magazine article on the strategic hamlet program in 1962 I discovered that the only general-circulation publications in the U.S. that were paying consistent attention to the war were the *New York Times* and *New Republic*. The wire services apparently had men in Saigon fulltime, but hardly any papers were using their files—at least not with any regularity. It was only with the Buddhist uprising of 1963—the burning monks, the street demonstrations, and finally the assassination of Diem—that the media started paying attention. . . .”

“Meanwhile, the Washington coverage was absurd: Why should it have taken I.F. Stone to put the lie to so much of the propaganda from State, the Pentagon, and the White House? This was particularly evident in connection with the alleged ‘truce violations’ and the Gulf of Tonkin. . . .”

“Until very recently the press was also bamboozling us on the question of our brave boys in the boondocks. . . . The scope and nature of GI dissent, the dope-smoking on patrol, the racial divisions among GIs and between GIs and the ‘gooks’ went as unreported as the profiteering . . . and the history and causes of the conflict itself.”

Peter C. Newman, editor, Toronto Star: “It seems strange to me that the most memorable insights on Vietnam came out of a novel—David Halberstam’s *One Very Hot Day*. But perhaps it’s that kind of a war.”



Chapter

11

Television News and Objectivity

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THE SELECTION OF REALITY

Edward Jay Epstein

Each weekday evening, the three major television networks—the American Broadcasting Company, the Columbia Broadcasting System, and the National Broadcasting Company—feed filmed news stories over lines leased from the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. to the more than six hundred local stations affiliated with them, which, in turn, broadcast the stories over the public airwaves to a nationwide audience. The C.B.S. Evening News, which is broadcast by two hundred local stations, reaches some nineteen million viewers; the N.B.C. Nightly News, broadcast by two hundred and nine stations, some eighteen million viewers; and the A.B.C. Evening News, broadcast by a hundred and ninety-one stations, some fourteen million. News stories from these programs are recorded on videotape by most affiliates and used again, usually in truncated form, on local news programs late in the evening. Except for the news on the few unaffiliated stations and on the noncommercial stations, virtually all the filmed reports of national and world news seen on television are the product of the three network news organizations.

The process by which news is gathered, edited, and presented to the public is more or less similar at the three networks. A limited number of subjects—usually somewhere between twenty and thirty—are selected each day as possible film stories by news executives, producers, anchor men, and assignment editors, who base their choices principally on wire-service and newspaper reports. Camera crews are dispatched to capture these events on 16-mm. color film. The filming is supervised by either a field producer or a correspondent—or, in some cases, the cameraman himself. The film is then shipped to the network's headquarters in New York or to one of its major news bureaus—in Chicago, Los Angeles, or Washington—or, if time is an important consideration, processed and edited at the nearest available facilities and transmitted electronically to New York. Through editing and rearranging of the filmed scenes, a small fraction of the exposed film—usually less than ten per cent—is reconstructed

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into a story whose form is to some extent predetermined. Reuven Frank, until two months ago the president of N.B.C. News, has written:

Every news story should, without any sacrifice of probity or responsibility, display the attributes of fiction, of drama. It should have structure and conflict, problem and denouement, rising action and falling action, a beginning, a middle and an end.

After the addition of a sound track, recorded at the event, the story is explained and pulled together by a narration, written by the correspondent who covered the event or by a writer in the network news offices. Finally, the story is integrated into the news program by the anchor man.

Network news organizations select not only the events that will be shown as national and world news on television but the way in which those events will be depicted. This necessarily involves choosing symbols that will have general meaning for a national audience. "The picture is not a fact but a symbol," Reuven Frank once wrote. "The real child and its real crying become symbols of all children." In the same way, a particular black may be used to symbolize the aspirations of his race, a particular student may be used to symbolize the claims of his generation, and a particular policeman may be used to symbolize the concept of authority. Whether the black chosen is a Black Panther or an integrationist, whether the student is a militant activist or a Young Republican, whether the policeman is engaged in a brutal or a benevolent act obviously affects the impression of the event received by the audience. When the same symbols are consistently used on television to depict the behavior and aspirations of groups, they become stable images—what Walter Lippmann, in his classic study "Public Opinion," has called a "repertory of stereotypes." These images obviously have great power; public-opinion polls show that television is the most believed source of news for most of the population. The director of C.B.S. News in Washington, William Small, has written about television news:

When television covered its "first war" in Vietnam, it showed a terrible truth of war in a manner new to mass audiences. A case can be made, and certainly should be examined, that this was cardinal to the disillusionment of Americans with this war, the cynicism of many young people toward America, and the destruction of Lyndon Johnson's tenure of office. . . . When television examined a different kind of revolution, it was singularly effective in helping bring about the Black revolution.

And it would be difficult to dispute the claim of Reuven Frank that "there are events which exist in the American mind and recollection

primarily because they were reported on regular television news programs.”

How were those events selected to be shown on television, and who or what determined the way in which they were depicted? Vice-President Spiro Agnew believes the answer is that network news is shaped “by a handful of men responsible only to their corporate employers,” who have broad “powers of choice” and “wield a free hand in selecting, presenting, and interpreting the great issues in our nation.” Television executives and newsmen, on the other hand, often argue that television news is shaped not by men but by events—that news is news. Both of these analyses overlook the economic realities of network television, the effects of government regulation on broadcasting, and the organizational requirements of the network news operations, whose established routines and procedures tend to impose certain forms on television news stories.

David Brinkley, in an N.B.C. News special entitled “From Here to the Seventies,” reiterated a description of television news that is frequently offered by television newsmen:

What television did in the sixties was to show the American people to the American people. . . . It did show the people, places and things they had not seen before. Some they liked, and some they did not. It was not that television produced or created any of it.

In this view, television news does no more than mirror reality. Thus, Leonard Goldenson, the chairman of the board of A.B.C., testified before the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence that complaints of news distortion were brought about by the fact that “Americans are reluctant to accept the images reflected by the mirror we have held up to our society.” Robert D. Kasmire, a vice-president of N.B.C., told the commission, “There is no doubt that television is, to a large degree, a mirror of our society. It is also a mirror of public attitudes and preferences.” The president of N.B.C., Julian Goodman, told the commission, “In short, the medium is blamed for the message.” Dr. Frank Stanton, vice-chairman and former president of C.B.S., testifying before a House committee, said, “What the media do is to hold a mirror up to society and try to report it as faithfully as possible.” Elmer Lower, the president of A.B.C. News, has described television news as “the television mirror that reflects . . . across oceans and mountains,” and added, “Let us open the doors of the parliaments everywhere to the electronic mirrors.” The imagery has been picked up by critics of television, too. Jack Gould, formerly of the *Times*, wrote of television’s coverage of racial riots, “Congress, one would hope, would

not conduct an examination of a mirror because of the disquieting images that it beholds.”

The mirror analogy has considerable descriptive power, but it also leads to a number of serious misconceptions about the medium. The notion of a “mirror of society” implies that everything of significance that happens will be reflected on television news. Network news organizations, however, far from being ubiquitous and all-seeing, are limited newsgathering operations, which depend on camera crews based in only a few major cities for most of their national stories. Some network executives have advanced the idea that network news is the product of coverage by hundreds of affiliated stations, but the affiliates’ contribution to the network news programs actually is very small. Most network news stories are assigned in advance to network news crews and correspondents, and in many cases whether or not an event is covered depends on where it occurs and the availability of network crews.

The mirror analogy also suggests immediacy: events are reflected instantaneously, as in a mirror. This notion of immediate reporting is reinforced by the way people in television news depict the process to the public. News executives sometimes say that, given the immediacy of television, the network organization has little opportunity to intervene in news decisions. Reuven Frank once declared, on a television program about television, “News coverage generally happens too fast for anything like that to take place.” But does it? Though it is true that elements of certain events, such as space exploration and political conventions, are broadcast live, virtually all of the regular newscasts, except for the commentator’s “lead-ins” and “tags” to the news stories, are prerecorded on videotape or else on film, which must be transported, processed, edited, and projected before it can be seen. Some film stories are delayed from one day to two weeks, because of certain organizational needs and policies. Reuven Frank more or less outlined these policies on “prepared,” or delayed, news in a memorandum he wrote when he was executive producer of N.B.C.’s *Nightly News* program. “Except for those rare days when other material becomes available,” he wrote, “the gap will be filled by planned and prepared film stories, and we are assuming the availability of two each night.” These “longer pieces,” he continued, were to be “planned, executed over a longer period of time than spot news, usable and relevant any time within, say, two weeks rather than that day, receptive to the more sophisticated techniques of production and editing, but journalism withal.” The reason for delaying filmed stories, a network vice-

president has explained, is that "it gives the producer more control over his program." First, it gives the producer control of the budget, since shipping the film by plane, though it might mean a delay of a day or two, is considerably less expensive than transmitting the film electronically by satellite or A.T. & T. lines. Second, and perhaps more important, it gives the producer control over the content of the individual stories, since it affords him an opportunity to screen the film and, if necessary, reedit it. Eliminating the delay, the same vice-president suggested, could have the effect of reducing network news to a mere "chronicler of events" and forcing it "out of the business of making meaningful comment." Moreover, the delay provides a reserve of stories that can be used to give the program "variety" and "pacing."

In filming delayed stories, newsmen are expected to eliminate any elements of the unexpected, so as not to destroy the illusion of immediacy. This becomes especially important when it is likely that the unusual developments will be reported in other media and thus date the story. A case in point is an N.B.C. News story about the inauguration of a high-speed train service between Montreal and Toronto. While the N.B.C. crew was filming the turbotrains during its inaugural run to Toronto, it collided with—and "sliced in half," as one newspaper put it—a meat trailer-truck, and then suffered a complete mechanical breakdown on the return trip. Persistent "performance flaws" and subsequent breakdowns eventually led to a temporary suspension of the service. None of these accidents and aberrations were included in the filmed story broadcast two weeks later on the N.B.C. evening news. David Brinkley, keeping to the original story, written before the event, introduced the film by saying, "The only high-speed train now running in North America has just begun in Canada." Four and a half minutes of shots of the streamlined train followed, and the narration suggested that this foreshadowed the future of transportation, since Canada's "new turbo just might shake [American] lethargy" in developing such trains. (The announcement of the suspension of the service, almost two weeks later, was not carried on the program.) This practice of "preparing" stories also has affected the coverage of more serious subjects—for instance, many of the filmed stories about the Vietnam war were delayed for several days. It was possible to transmit war films to the United States in one day by using the satellite relay, but the cost was considerable at the height of the war—more than three thousand dollars for a ten-minute transmission, as opposed to twenty or thirty dollars for shipping the same film by plane. And, with the exception

of momentous battles, such as the Tet offensive, virtually all of the network film was sent by plane. To avoid the possibility of having the delayed footage dated by newspaper accounts, network correspondents were instructed to report on the routine and continuous aspects of the war rather than unexpected developments, according to a former N.B.C. Saigon bureau manager.

The mirror analogy, in addition, obscures the component of "will"—of initiative in producing feature stories and of decisions made in advance to cover or not to cover certain types of events. A mirror makes no decisions; it simply reflects what takes place in front of it. . . .

The search for news requires a reliable flow of information not only about events in the immediate past but about those scheduled for the near future. Advance information, though necessary to any news operation, is of critical importance to the networks. For, unlike newspapers and radio stations, which can put a news story together within minutes by means of telephone interviews or wire-service dispatches, a television network usually needs hours, if not days, of "lead time" to shoot, process, and edit a film story of even a minute's duration. The types of news stories best suited for television coverage are those specially planned, or induced, for the convenience of the news media—press conferences, briefings, interviews, and the like—which the historian Daniel J. Boorstin has called "pseudo-events," and which by definition are scheduled well in advance and are certain to be, if only in a self-fulfilling sense, "newsworthy." There are also other news events, such as congressional hearings, trials, and speeches, that, although they may not be induced for the sole purpose of creating news, can still be predicted far in advance. The networks have various procedures for gathering, screening, and evaluating information about future events, and these procedures to some degree systematically *influence* their coverage of news.

Most network news stories, rather than resulting from the initiative of reporters in the field, are located and assigned by an assignment editor in New York (or an editor under his supervision in Washington, Chicago, or Los Angeles). The assignment desk provides material not only for the evening news program but for documentaries, morning and afternoon programs, and a syndicated service for local stations. Instead of maintaining—as newspapers do—regular "beats," where reporters have contact with the same set of newsmakers over an extended period of time, network news organizations rely on ad-hoc coverage. In this system, correspondents are shunted from one story to another—on the basis of availability, logistical

convenience, and producers' preferences—after the assignment editor has selected the events to be covered. A correspondent may easily be assigned to three subjects in three different cities in a single week, each assignment lasting only as long as it takes to film the story. To be sure, there are a number of conventional beats in Washington, such as the White House, but these are the exception rather than the rule. Most of the correspondents are “generalists,” expected to cover all subjects with equal facility. And even in fields for which networks do employ specialist correspondents, such as sports or space exploration, better-known correspondents who are not experts in those fields may be called on to report major stories. The generalist is expected not to be a Jack-of-all-trades but simply to be capable of applying rules of fair inquiry to any subject. One reason network executives tend to prefer generalists is that they are less likely to “become involved in a story to the point of advocacy,” as one network vice-president has put it. It is feared that specialists, through their intimate knowledge of a situation, would be prone to champion what they believed was the correct side of a controversy. But perhaps the chief reason that generalists are preferred to specialists is that, being able to cover whatever story develops, they lend themselves to an efficient use of manpower. The use of ad-hoc coverage leads to the constant appearance “on camera” of a relatively small number of correspondents. One network assignment editor has suggested that it is “more for reasons of audience identification than economy” that a few correspondents are relied on for most of the stories. The result, he continued, is a “star system,” in which producers request that certain leading correspondents cover major stories, whatever the subject might be. Another consequence of having small, generalist reporting staffs is that the networks are able to do relatively little investigative reporting. . . .

What is seen on network news is not, except in rare instances, the event itself, unfolding live before the camera, or even a filmed record of the event in its entirety, but a story about the event which has been constructed on film from selected fragments of it. Presenting news events exactly as they occur does not meet the requirements of network news. For one thing, the camera often is not in a position to capture events while they are happening. Some news events are completely unexpected and occur before a camera crew can be dispatched to the scene. Others cannot be filmed either because of unfavorable weather or lighting conditions (especially if artificial lighting is unavailable or restricted) or because news crews are not permitted access to them. And when institutions, such as

political conventions, do permit television to record their formal proceedings, the significant decisions may still take place outside the purview of the camera. But even if coverage presents no insurmountable problems, it is not sufficient in most cases simply to record events in their natural sequence, with all the digressions, confusions, and inconsistencies that are an inescapable part of any reality, for a network news story is required to have a definite order, time span, and logic.

In producing most news stories, the first necessity is generating sufficient film about an event, so that the editor and the writer can be assured of finding the material they need for the final story. Perhaps the most commonly used device for producing this flow of film is the interview. The interview serves several important purposes for television news. First, it enables a news crew to obtain film footage about an event that it did not attend or was not permitted to film. By finding and interviewing people who either participated in the event or have at least an apparent connection with it, the correspondent can re-create it through their eyes.

Second, the interview assures that the subject will be filmed under favorable circumstances—an important technical consideration. In a memorandum to his news staff, Reuven Frank once gave this advice about interviewing:

By definition, an interview is at least somewhat controllable. It must be arranged; it must be agreed to. . . . Try not to interview in harsh sunlight. Try not to interview in so noisy a setting that words cannot be heard. Let subjects be lit. If lights bother your subject, talk to him, discuss the weather, gentle him, involve his interest and his emotions so that he forgets or ignores the lights. It takes longer, but speed is poor justification for a piece of scrapped film.

To make the subjects appear even more dignified and articulate, it is the customary practice to repeat the same question a number of times, allowing the respondent to “sharpen his answer,” as one correspondent has put it. At times, the person interviewed is permitted to compose his own questions for the interviewer or, at least, to rephrase them. Rehearsals are also quite common.

Third, interviews provide an easy means of presenting an abstract or difficult-to-film concept in human terms, as Reuven Frank has explained:

The best interviews are of people reacting—or people expounding. . . . No important story is without them. They can be recorded and transmitted tastefully. . . . nuclear disarmament, unemployment, flood, automation, name me a recent major story without its human involvement.

Although the networks have instituted strict policies against misleading “reenactments” and “staging,” film footage is sometimes generated by having someone demonstrate or enact aspects of a story for the camera. Bruce Cohn, a producer for A.B.C. News at the time, explained the practice last year to the House Special Subcommittee on Investigations during hearings on “news staging.” Describing the difference between hard news and feature stories, Cohn said, “Generally speaking, a feature story is only brought to the public’s attention because the journalist who conceived of doing such a report thinks it would be of interest or of importance. Therefore, a feature story must be ‘set up’ by a journalist if it is to be transformed into usable information. There is no reason why this ‘setting up’ cannot be done in an honest and responsible manner . . . people involved in feature stories are often asked to demonstrate how they do something . . . in fact, by its very nature, a feature story may be nothing but what the subcommittee negatively refers to as ‘staging. . . .’”

Since network television is in the business of attracting and maintaining large audiences, the news operation, which is, after all, part of the networks’ programming schedule, is also expected to maintain, if not attract, as large an audience as possible. But a network news program, unlike other news media, apparently can’t depend entirely on its content to attract and maintain an audience. To a great extent, the size of its audience is determined by three outside factors. The first is affiliate acceptance. If a program is not carried, or “cleared,” by the affiliates, then it simply is not available to the public. (A.B.C. has significantly increased the audience for its evening news program since 1969 by increasing the number of stations that clear it from a hundred and twenty to a hundred and ninety-one.) The second is scheduling. A program that is broadcast at 7 P.M., say, stands a good chance of drawing a larger audience than it would at six-thirty, since more people are usually watching television at the later hour. (The television audience increases all day and reaches a peak at about 9 P.M.) The third factor is what is called “audience flow.” Network executives and advertisers believe that a significant portion of the audience for any program is inherited, as they put it, from the preceding program. According to the theory of audience flow, an audience is like a river that continues in the same direction until it is somehow diverted. “The viewing habits of a large portion of the audience—at least, the audience that Nielsen measures—are governed more by the laws of inertia than by free choice,” a network vice-president responsible for audience studies has remarked. “Unless they have a very definite reason to switch, like a

ballgame, they continue to watch the programs on the channel they are tuned in to.”

Many network executives believe that network news is even more dependent on audience flow than are entertainment programs, or even local newscasts featuring reports on local sports and weather conditions. Richard Salant, the president of C.B.S. News, has said that “you’ll find a general correlation between the ratings of the network news broadcast and the local news broadcast—and probably the local news is the decisive thing.” But what of the selective viewer, who changes channels for network news? Network executives, relying on both audience studies and personal intuition, assume, first, that there is not a significant number of such viewers, and, second, that most of them choose particular news programs on the basis of the personalities of the commentators rather than the extent of the news coverage. Acting on these assumptions about audience behavior, the networks attempt to improve the ratings of their news shows by hiring “star” commentators and by investing in the programs that precede the network news. For example, in a memo to the president of N.B.C. several years ago, a vice-president responsible for audience analysis made this suggestion for increasing the ratings in Los Angeles of the network’s evening news program:

It seems to me the only surefire way to increase our audience at 3:30 P.M. (and actually win the time period) is with Mike Douglas [a syndicated talk show, which N.B.C. would have had to buy from Group W Productions, a subsidiary of the Westinghouse Broadcasting Company]. At 5-6 P.M. our news then should get at least what KABC is getting (let’s say a 7 rating).

Coming out of this increased lead-in—and a *news* lead-in, at that—I believe that [the evening news] at 6 P.M. will get a couple of rating points more. . . .

Similarly, a network can invest in the local news programs that precede or follow the network news on the five stations it owns. N.B.C. concluded from a detailed study that it commissioned of the Chicago audience that local news programs, unlike network news, which builds its audience through coverage of special events, can increase their ratings through improved coverage of weather, sports, and local events. The study recommended, for example, that the network-owned station in Chicago hire a more popular local weather-caster, since “almost as many viewers look forward to seeing the weather as the news itself.” The networks also assist the affiliated stations with their local news programs, by providing a news syndication service. This supplies subscribing stations with sports and news

stories through a half-hour feed, from which the stations can record stories for use on their own news programs.

Implicit in this approach to seeking higher ratings for network news programs is the idea that it doesn't make economic sense to spend large amounts on improving the editorial product. Hiring additional camera crews, reporters, and researchers presumably would not increase a news program's audience, and it definitely would be expensive. For instance, not only does each camera crew cost about a hundred thousand dollars a year to maintain, in equipment, salaries, and overtime, but it generates a prodigious amount of film—about twenty times as much as is used in the final stories—which has to be transported, processed, and edited. N.B.C. accountants use a rule-of-thumb gauge of more than twenty dollars in service cost for every foot of film in the final story, which comes to more than seven hundred and twenty dollars a minute. And it is the number of camera crews a network maintains that defines, in some ways, the scope of its newsgathering operation. "The news you present is actually the news you cover," a network news vice-president has said. "The question is: How wide do you fling your net?"

In 1968, when I had access to staff meetings and assignment sheets at the three networks, N.B.C. covered the nation each day with an average of ten camera crews, in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, and Cleveland, plus two staff crews in Texas and one staff cameraman (who could assemble camera crews) in Boston. (In comparison, C.B.S.'s local news operation in Los Angeles, according to its news director, uses nine camera crews to cover the news of that one city.) Today, N.B.C. says it has fifty domestic camera crews, but this figure includes sports, special events, and documentary crews, as well as local crews at the network's five stations. C.B.S. says it has twenty full-time network news crews, in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Washington, and A.B.C. says it has sixteen, in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, Atlanta, and Miami. Each of the networks also has camera crews in nine cities overseas. To be sure, when there is a momentous news event the networks can quickly mobilize additional crews—those regularly assigned to news documentaries, sports, and local news at network stations, or those of affiliated stations—but the net that is cast for national news on a day-to-day basis is essentially defined by the crews that are routinely available for network assignment, and their number is set by the economic logic of network television.

Another element in the economics of network news is the fact

that it costs a good deal more to transmit stories from some places than it does from other places. The lines that connect the networks with their affiliates across the country can normally be used to transmit programs in only one direction—from the network's headquarters in New York to the affiliates. Therefore, to transmit news reports electronically from any "remote" location—that is, anywhere except network facilities in a few cities—to the network for rebroadcast, a news program must order special "long lines" between the two points from the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. The charges for the "long line" are now fifty-five cents a mile for up to an hour's use and seven hundred and fifty dollars for a "loop," which is the package of electronic equipment that connects the transmission point (usually an affiliated station) with the telephone company's "long lines." It is even more expensive to order stories sent electronically by means of the satellite-relay system—eighteen hundred and fifty dollars for the first ten minutes of a story from London to New York and about twenty-four hundred dollars for the first ten minutes of a story from Tokyo to New York—and these costs are charged against the program's budget. The weekly budget for the N.B.C. Nightly News is in excess of two hundred thousand dollars, and that of the C.B.S. Evening News is almost a hundred thousand dollars, but more than half of each is committed in advance for the salaries and expenses of the producers, editors, writers, and other members of the "unit," and for the studio and other overhead costs that are automatically charged against the program's budget. (Differences in the billing of these charges account for most of the difference in the budgets of the N.B.C. and C.B.S. programs.) At C.B.S., about forty-nine thousand dollars a week, or eight thousand dollars a program, is left for "remotes." Since a news program needs from six to eight film stories a night, and some satellite charges can be as high as three thousand dollars apiece, the budget, in effect, limits the number of "remote" stories that can be transmitted in an average week.

Because of differences in transmission costs, producers have a strong incentive to take news stories from some areas rather than others, especially when their budgets are strained. The fact that networks base most of their camera crews and correspondents in New York, Washington, Chicago, and Los Angeles reinforces the advantage of using news stories from these areas, since they involve less overtime and travel expense. It is not surprising, then, that so many of the film stories shown on the national news programs originate in these areas. Although the geographical distribution of film stories

varies greatly from day to day, over any sustained period it is skewed in the direction of these few large cities. It is economically more efficient to consign news of small-town America and of remote cities to timeless features such as Charles Kuralt's "On the Road" segments on the C.B.S. Evening News. This suggests that if network news programs tend to focus on problems of a few large urban centers, it is less because, as former Vice-President Agnew argued, an "enclosed fraternity" of "commentators and producers live and work in the geographical and intellectual confines of Washington, D.C., or New York City . . . [and] draw their political and social views from the same sources" than because the networks' basic economic structure compels producers, willy-nilly, to select a large share of their filmed stories from a few locations.

The Fairness Doctrine requires broadcasters to provide a reasonable opportunity for the presentation of "contrasting viewpoints on controversial issues of public importance" in the course of their news and public-affairs programming. Unlike the "equal time" provisions of Section 315 of the Communications Act—which applies only to candidates running for a public office and requires that if a station grants time to one candidate it must grant equal time to other candidates, except on news programs—the Fairness Doctrine does not require that opposing arguments be given an equal number of minutes, be presented on the same program, or be presented within any specific period. It is left up to the licensee to decide what constitutes a "controversial issue of public importance," a "fair" reply, and a "reasonable time" in which the reply should be made. Moreover, broadcasters are apparently not expected to be equally "fair" on all issues of public importance; for example, the Commission states in its "Fairness Primer" that it is not "the Commission's intention to make time available to Communists or to the Communist viewpoints."

Although no television station has ever lost its license because of a violation of the Fairness Doctrine, the doctrine has affected the form and content of network news in a number of ways. Most notably, the Fairness Doctrine puts an obligation on affiliates to "balance" any network program that advances only one side of an issue by themselves providing, in the course of their own programming, the other side, and the affiliates, rather than risk having to fulfill such an obligation, which could be both costly and bothersome, insist, virtually as a condition of taking network news, that the networks incorporate the obligatory "contrasting viewpoints" in their own news reports. The networks, in turn, make it a policy to present

opposing views on any issue that could conceivably be construed as controversial.

This pro-and-con reporting is perfectly consistent with the usual notion of objectivity, if objectivity is defined, as it is by many correspondents, as "telling both sides of a story." It can, however, seriously conflict with the value that journalists place on what is now called investigative reporting, or simply any reporting the purpose of which is "getting to the bottom" of an issue, or "finding the truth," as correspondents often put it. A correspondent is required to present "contrasting points of view" even if he finds the views of one side to be valid and those of the other side to be false and misleading (in the Fairness Doctrine, truth is no defense), and therefore any attempt to resolve a controversial issue and "find the truth" is likely to be self-defeating. . . .

A frequent criticism of television news is that it is superficial—that it affords only scant coverage of news events, lacks depth or sufficient analysis of events, and engages in only a minimum of investigative reporting. The assumption of such criticism is that television newsmen lack journalistic credentials, that producers and executives are lax or indifferent toward their responsibilities, and that changing or educating the broadcasters would improve the news product. But the level of journalism in network news is more or less fixed by the time, money, and manpower that can be allocated to it, and these are determined by the structure of network television. Any substantial improvement in the level of network journalism, such as expanding coverage of events to a truly nationwide scale, would therefore require a structural change in network television that would effectively reorder its economic and political incentives, rather than merely a change of personnel.

Another common criticism is, again, that network news is politically biased in favor of liberal or left-wing causes and leaders, because a small clique of newsmen in New York and Washington shape the news to fit their own political beliefs. In this critique, network news is presumed to be highly politicized by the men who select and report it, and the remedy most often suggested is to employ conservative newsmen to balance the liberal viewpoints. Since, for economic reasons, much of the domestic news on the network programs does in fact come from a few big cities, and since in recent years many of the efforts to change the distribution of political values and services have been concentrated in the big cities, the networks perhaps have reported a disproportionately large share of these activities. The requirement that network news be "nationalized" further

adds to the impression that the networks are advancing radical causes, for in elevating local disputes to national proportions newscasters appear to be granting them uncalled-for importance.

Left-wing critics complain that network news neglects the inherent contradictions in the American system. Their critique runs as follows: Network news focusses not on substantive problems but on symbolic protests. By overstating the importance of protest actions, television news invites the audience to judge the conduct of the protesters rather than the content of the problem. This creates false issues. Popular support is generated against causes that, on television, appear to rely on violent protests, while underlying economic and social problems are systematically masked or ignored. Broadcasters can be expected to help perpetuate "the system," because they are an important part of it. Thus, one critic writes, "The media owners will do anything to maintain these myths. . . . They will do anything to keep the public from realizing that the Establishment dominates society through its direct and indirect control of the nation's communication system." In fact, however, the tendency to depict symbolic protests rather than substantive problems is closely related to the problem of audience maintenance. Protests can be universally comprehended, it is presumed, if they are presented in purely symbolic terms: one group, standing for one cause, challenging another group and cause. The sort of detail that would be necessary to clarify economic and social issues is not easily translated into visual terms, whereas the sort of dramatic images that can be found in violent protests have an immediate impact on an audience. Newsmen therefore avoid liberal or radical arguments not because they are politically committed to supporting "the system" but because such arguments do not satisfy the requisites of network news.

Finally, in what might best be called the social-science critique, network news is faulted for presenting a picture of society that does not accurately correspond to the empirical data. Spokesmen selected by television to represent groups in society tend to be statistically atypical of the groups for which they are supposedly speaking; for example, militant students may have appeared to be in the majority on college campuses in America during the nineteen-sixties because of the frequency with which they were selected to represent student views, when in fact data collected by social scientists showed that they constituted a small minority. It is generally argued that such discrepancies stem from a lack of readily usable data rather than any intent on the part of journalists to misrepresent situations. The implication in this critique is that if network news organizations had the

techniques of social scientists, or employed social scientists as consultants, they would produce a more realistic version of the claims and aspirations of different segments of society. However, the selection of spokesmen to appear on television is determined less by a lack of data than by the organizational needs of network news. In order to hold the attention of viewers to whom the subject of the controversy may be of no interest, television newsmen select spokesmen who are articulate, easily identifiable, and dramatic, and the "average" person in a group cannot be depended on to manifest these qualities. Moreover, the nationalization of news requires that spokesmen represent the major themes in society rather than what is statistically typical. Given the organizational need to illustrate news stories with spokesmen who are both dramatic and thematic, network news cannot be expected to present a picture that conforms to the views of social scientists, no matter how much data or how many technical skills the social scientists might supply.

As long as the requisites remain essentially the same, network news can be expected to define American society by the problems of a few urban areas rather than of the entire nation, by action rather than ideas, by dramatic protests rather than substantive contradictions, by "newsmakers" rather than economic and social structures, by atypical rather than typical views, and by synthetic national themes rather than disparate local events.

IS THERE A NETWORK NEWS BIAS?

Interview with Howard K. Smith

On Nov. 12, 1969, when the liberal media were angrily aboil over Vice President Agnew's blasts at the liberal left and its frequently violent crusades, a quiet voice on ABC-TV declared: "Political cartoonists have that in common with the lemmings, that once a line is set, most of them follow it, though it lead to perdition. The current cliché shared by them and many columnists is that Spiro Agnew is putting his foot in his mouth (and) making irredeemable errors. . . . Well, . . . I doubt that party line. . . . There is a possibility it is not Mr. Agnew who is making mistakes. It is the cartoonists."

Eric Sevareid, the dean of television news commentators, and Howard K. Smith, also for years one of the most popular of newsmen, disagreed about the objectivity of the former Vice-President. These interviews by Edith Efron and Neil Hickey are reprinted with the permission of *TV Guide*, copyright 1970, Triangle Publications, Inc. They also were reprinted in the June, 1970 *Seminar Quarterly*.

One week later, on Nov. 19, 1969, when the liberal media were even more violently aboil over the climactic Agnew speech blasting bias in network news, that same quiet voice on ABC-TV once again was heard: "I agree with some of what Mr. Agnew said. In fact, I said some of it before he did."

The speaker was Howard K. Smith, ABC's Washington-based anchor man, ex-CBS European correspondent, and winner of a constellation of awards for foreign and domestic reporting. Mr. Smith had, indeed, said some of what Mr. Agnew said before Mr. Agnew had said it. For several years, despite his respect for network news departments and their achievements, he has been criticizing his colleagues—on the air and off—for falsifying U.S. political realities by means of biased reporting.

Mr. Smith is by no means an unqualified supporter of Mr. Agnew, and he has reservations about *The Speech*. To name the two most important: "A tone of intimidation, I think, was in it, and that I can't accept. . . . Also a sense that we do things deliberately. I don't think we do them deliberately."

Mr. Smith, however, says: "I agree that we made the mistakes he says we made." And he himself levels charges at the network news departments.

In fact, according to Howard Smith, political bias in tv reporting is of such a magnitude that it fully justifies the explosion we have seen. Here is this insider's analysis of the problem.

His candor begins at the very base of the network news operation—namely, with the political composition of the staff. Networks, says Mr. Smith, are almost exclusively staffed by liberals. "It evolved from the time when liberalism was a good thing, and most intellectuals became highly liberal. Most reporters are in an intellectual occupation." Secondly, he declares that liberals, virtually by definition, have a "strong leftward bias": "Our tradition, since FDR, has been leftward."

This is not to say that Mr. Smith sees anything wrong with being a leftist—"I am left-of-center myself." But he sees everything wrong with the dissemination of an inflexible "party line"; and this, he charges, is what liberal newsmen are doing today: "Our liberal friends, today, have become dogmatic. They have a set of automatic reactions. They react the way political cartoonists do with oversimplification. Oversimplify. Be sure you please your fellows, because that's what's 'good.' They're conventional, they're conformists. They're pleasing Walter Lippmann, they're pleasing the *Washington Post*, they're pleasing the editors of *The New York Times*, and they're pleasing one another."

He says a series of cartoonlike positive and negative reflexes are determining much of the coverage.

He names a series of such negative reflexes—i.e., subjects which newsmen automatically cover by focusing on negatives. Herewith, excerpts from his comments: [As noted by Miss Efron.]

Race: “During the Johnson Administration, six million people were raised above the poverty level. . . . And there is a substantial and successful Negro middle class. But the newsmen are not interested in the Negro who succeeds—they’re interested in the one who fails and makes a loud noise. They have ignored the developments in the South. The South has an increasing number of integrated schools. A large part of the South has accepted integration. We’ve had a President’s Cabinet with a Negro in it, a Supreme Court with a Negro on it—but more important, we have 500 Negroes elected to local offices in the deep South! This is a tremendous achievement. But that achievement isn’t what we see on the screen.”

Conservatives: “If Agnew says something, it’s bad, regardless of what he says. If Ronald Reagan says something, it’s bad, regardless of what he says. Well, I’m unwilling to condemn an idea because a particular man said it. Most of my colleagues do just that.”

The Middle Class: “Newsmen are *proud* of the fact that the middle class is antagonistic to them. They’re proud of being out of contact with the middle class. Joseph Kraft did a column in which he said: Let’s face it, we reporters have very little to do with middle America. They’re not our kind of people. . . . Well, I resent that. *I’m from middle America!*”

The Vietnam War: “The networks have never given a complete picture of the war. For example: that terrible siege of Khe Sanh went on for five weeks before newsmen revealed that the South Vietnamese were fighting at our side, and that they had higher casualties. And the Viet Cong’s casualties were 100 times ours. But we never told *that*. We just showed pictures day after day of Americans getting the hell kicked out of them. That was enough to break America apart. That’s also what it did.”

The Presidency: “The negative attitude which destroyed Lyndon Johnson is now waiting to be applied to Richard Nixon. Johnson was actually politically assassinated. And some are trying to assassinate Nixon politically. They hate Richard Nixon irrationally.”

If this is a sampling of the liberal reporters’ negative reflexes, as seen by Howard Smith—what then are the positive reflexes? He provides an even more extensive set of examples—subjects on which, he says, his colleagues tend to have an affirmative bias and/or from which they screen out negatives. Again here are excerpts from his comments:

Russia: "Some have gone overboard in a wish to believe that our opponent has exclusively peaceful aims, and that there is no need for armaments and national security. The danger of Russian aggression is unreal to many of them, although some have begun to rethink since the invasion of Czechoslovakia. But there is a kind of basic bias in the left-wing soul that gives the Russians the benefit of the doubt."

Ho Chi Minh: "Many have described Ho Chi Minh as a nationalist leader comparable to George Washington. But his advent to power in Hanoi, in 1954, was marked by the murder of 50,000 of his people. His consistent method was terror. He was not his country's George Washington—he was more his country's Hitler or Stalin. . . . I heard an eminent tv commentator say: 'It's an awful thing when you can trust Ho Chi Minh more than you can trust your President.' At the time he said that, Ho Chi Minh was lying! He was presiding over atrocities! And yet an American tv commentator could say that!"

The Viet Cong: "The Viet Cong massacred 3,000 Vietnamese at Hue alone—a massacre that *dwarfs* all allegations about My Lai. This was never reported on."

Doves: "Mr Fulbright maneuvered the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution through—with a clause stating that Congress may revoke it. Ever since, he's been saying: 'This is a terribly immoral thing.' I asked him: 'If it's that bad, aren't *you* morally obligated to try to revoke it?' He runs away! And yet Mr. Fulbright—who incidentally has voted against *every* civil-rights act—is not criticized for his want of character. He is beloved by reporters, by everyone of my group, which is left-of-center. It's one of the mysteries of my time!"

Black Militants: "A few Negroes—scavengers on the edge of society—have discovered they're riding a good thing with violence and talk of violence. They can get on tv and become nationally famous."

The New Left: "The New Left challenges America. They're rewriting the history of the Cold War. Some carry around the Viet Cong flag. Some shout for Mao—people who'd be assassinated in China! They've become *irrational!* But they're not portrayed as irrational. Reporters describe them as 'our children.' Well, they're not *my* children. *My* children don't throw bags of excrement at policemen. . . . If right-wing students had done what left-wing students have done, everyone, including the reporters, would have called in the police and beaten their heads in. But we have a left-wing bias now, that has 30 years of momentum behind it."

What do Mr. Smith's examples of negative and positive biases add up to, politically? He says: "The emphasis is anti-American." In

fact, as he portrays the pattern, it is a dual emphasis: This coverage as described by Mr. Smith is *anti-American* in that it tends to omit the good about America and focus on the *bad*. And it is also biased in *favor* of attackers-of-America by tending to *omit* the bad about them and focusing on the *good*. Mr. Smith has actually reconstituted here a loose variant of the New Left line. And New Left attitudes are influencing newsmen, he says. "The New Left," says Smith, "has acquired a grave power over the liberal mind."

This is not a new charge—it is the essence of the public outcry against network news, and it's the essence of the long-standing conservative charges against the newsmen. Mr. Smith himself, although he's been described as a "conservative" because he supports the war, is, as he says, a Leftist—indeed, a semisocialist who shares many views with economist John Kenneth Galbraith. He has been one of tv's most ardent fighters for civil rights—too ardent, Smith says, for CBS's tastes, which is one reason why, he adds, he is at ABC today. He is generally in disagreement with political Conservatives on virtually everything. And, for that matter, he finds it psychologically easier to defend tv news departments than to criticize them. But on this issue of anti-American, pro-New-Left bias in the network news departments, his observations are identical to those coming from the right.

His explanation of the causes of this pattern, however, are quite different from those which emerge from the right. Where conservatives are often inclined to see this pattern as a deliberate, conscious and intellectually potent conspiracy, Mr. Smith sees it as the opposite—as a largely unconscious phenomenon, stemming from intellectual impotence, from such qualities as "conformism," "hypocrisy," "self-deception" and "stupidity."

One of the chief conformist patterns, he says, is the automatic obedience to a convention of negativism in journalism itself, often for self-serving reasons. "As reporters, we have always been falsifying issues by reporting on what goes wrong in a Nation where historically, most has gone right. That is how you get on page one, that is how you win a Pulitzer Prize. This gears the reporter's mind to the negative, even when it is not justified."

But how about the opposite form of bias—a chronic omission of negatives and the unremitting focus on the good in our country's enemies? Here Mr. Smith tackles the New Left influence head on. He attributes it to a mental vacuum in the liberal world:

"Many of my colleagues," he says, "have the depth of a saucer. They cling to the tag 'liberal' that grew popular in the time of Frank-

lin Roosevelt, even though they've forgotten its content. They've really forgotten it. They don't know what 'liberal' and 'conservative' mean any more! They're forgotten it because the liberal cause has triumphed. Once it was hard to be a liberal. Today it's 'in.' The ex-underdogs, the ex-outcasts, the ex-rebels are satisfied bourgeois today, who pay \$150 a plate at Americans for Democratic Action dinners. They don't know what they stand for any more, and they're hunting for a new voice to give them new bearings."

The search for a "new voice," he says, has catapulted such men into the arms of the New Left: "They want to cling to that thrill of the old days, of triumph, and hard fighting. So they cling to the label 'liberal,' and they cling to those who seem strong—namely, the New Left. The New Left shouts tirades, rather than offering reasoned arguments. People bow down to them, so they have come to *seem* strong, to *seem* sure of themselves. As a result, there's a gravitation to them by the liberals who are *not* sure of themselves. This has given the New Left grave power over the old Left."

It is this New Left "power" over many of the Nation's liberal reporters, he says, that underlies an anti-American and pro-radical bias in network coverage—and that underlies public anger.

What is the solution to this problem, as envisaged by Mr. Smith?

Let public protest rip, he says. He experiences a twinge of discomfort over the fact that his solution is identical to Mr. Agnew's: "There have been very unpleasant, even threatening, letters," he reports. "But, quite literally, what Mr. Agnew suggests is all right."

Public protest, he thinks, will knock these men back into contact with U.S. political realities.

"The networks have ignored this situation, despite years of protest, because they have power. And you know what Lord Acton says about power. It subtly corrupts. Power unaccountable has that effect on people. This situation should not continue. But I wouldn't do anything about it. I would let public opinion and the utterances of the alleged silent majority bring about a corrective. The corrective? Just a simple attempt to be fair—which many people have thrown aside over the last few years."

MR. SEVAREID AND MR. HICKEY

Interview with Eric Sevareid

Q. Do you detect a wide polarization among many sincere and well-meaning Americans these days?

A. I don't think there's a deep polarization in the country as a whole, no, I don't. Everybody said that in 1968—that we were coming apart, that there would be a whole new politics. Then you had the election, which is the only kind of test we get on a national basis, and this didn't really show up. You see, I don't believe fundamentally that most Americans are alienated from their country or its system or their generation. There's an awful lot of irritation with a lot of things. But how deep it goes is very questionable.

Q. Some say the Nixon-Agnew policy toward the press is enhancing what polarization does exist here.

A. Well, it was a little surprising, coming after what the President advised everyone not to do, which was not to raise their voices. I thought his effort would be to heal these divisions between the protesters and the critics in general. Well, he didn't do that. With Vice President Agnew, he took the opposite line. This is what shook everybody. What he did in the Agnew speech is just what President Johnson always said he'd never do. I can remember Mr. Johnson saying this privately more than once. He used to say to critical people like me that, look my friend, if I want to I can make this a patriotic issue and start calling a lot of names. I can drive you people right into a corner. I can arouse a great mass of people with a very simple kind of appeal. I can wrap the flag around this policy, and use patriotism as a club to silence the critics. But he said, I'm not going to do it. And he never did it. And I think this is what Agnew's been doing. What this Administration has been doing. And I must say, it shook me a great deal.

Q. Why did it shake you a great deal?

A. Because it adds to the exacerbation of the situation. It brings even a little more polarization. It has benumbed the opposition for a while and this is what he wanted. He won some time. But won it at what later might prove to be a very high price.

Q. There's a conviction around the country that most tv newsmen tend to be liberal and therefore more friendly to dissenters.

A. Yes, Mr. Agnew feels that obviously. I'm not quite so persuaded. I think news values and judgments are something different from personal bias. If television puts a lot of protesters on, I don't think it's necessarily because a lot of editors and producers and reporters are all for the protesters, in their private, political hearts. Some may be. I think myself we have fallen into at least some shallow ruts on this matter of what looks like news as it pours into

our offices, and there's this great struggle to sort it out every day. And I've raised my private views about this inside CBS more than once. But to assume that this process of what's happening in the country, or that it's done out of a radical bias by a few, I really don't believe that.

I don't know what the word liberal means, except a kind of open-mindedness, a basic humanitarian view of life and concern for people. I don't know how people generally think of me. The most pointed criticism I've had in the mail has come from the left. Youth groups, protester groups, radical groups, professors, saying that I'm much too conservative, that I'm really an old square, that I don't understand the youth. And now suddenly I'm clobbered by Mr. Agnew and the right wing. So I don't know.

Q. Why do you suppose so many people think they detect a large portion of bias in tv journalism?

A. A lot of people say a lot of things. A majority of the daily newspapers in this country supported Mr. Nixon. It seemed to me the networks were right down the middle, just as fair and impartial as they could be. I will defy anybody to go through my scripts during that campaign and come out with any feeling that I was trying to push for Humphrey or for Nixon or for Wallace. I don't think you can do it.

Q. In the last year or so the so-called Silent Majority has bubbled to the top like carrots in a stew. What do you make of it?

A. It exists all right. There is a frustration with a lot of things. What Agnew did, you see, he overstepped the line of a proper democratic dialogue. He resorted to demagoguery. He gave these people to believe that there is some sort of conspiracy, an unelected elite. Well, if he means the dozen or so people who have been mentioned, of whom I am one, we rarely ever see each other, to tell you the truth.

Q. You don't conspire together every night?

A. Oh, God, I haven't had a serious conversation with Howard K. Smith, I suppose, in 10 years. I haven't run into Huntley or Brinkley in two or three years. It's ridiculous. Howard and I deeply disagree about the Vietnam War, for one thing. But you see, what Mr. Agnew did is very easy to do. I say it's demagoguery when you do that. The conspiracy theory of history, the devil theory, always finds a ready response when a lot of people are frustrated, baffled by a complexity of things. I'm not impressed with claims that a great majority of the country thinks that the war protesters are wrong. Joe McCarthy had a majority of Americans convinced that this govern-

ment was crawling with Communists. It simply was not so. But a tremendous number of people believed it was, because it was an easy answer. They were disappointed and upset by many of the results of the war. The public mood of the moment is not necessarily right, nor is it necessarily going to last. A great majority believed in this Vietnam intervention, when people like me were in a minority. Mr. Agnew says we should all more closely reflect the majority feeling in the country. But majorities change. That's not *our* business. Suppose we *were* elected. You'd have an absolute shambles in communications. I think there should be some changes in the way we do various things. I've always wanted to have on the air regular programming of rebuttal—either by letters from viewers or having the people on themselves. There must be a way to do this. Well, suppose you'd had that system for the last few years on a regular basis, where all kinds of objections to what was said on television were voiced by ordinary people. Maybe a lot of this feeling would have been dissipated. That's one of our difficulties here. People are confronted by great big organizations and they can't answer back—whether it's the press, big government, big business. I think we should have found ways to get our audience's views on the air. I think we should do it now. There must be a way to do it in an attractive, listenable form.

Q. What do you think of the idea of spectrum commentary, that is, having analysts from all across the political spectrum employed on television?

A. Oh, we went through that in radio days. CBS came to the conclusion it was not a good way to do it. The emphasis has to be, in a job like mine, one of exploration, of elucidation, more than advocacy. You can't keep opinions out of it entirely. But that has to be the approach. People confuse objectivity and neutrality. You may go at something very objectively but come to a conclusion about it. If you come to a conclusion, then you hold an opinion. If you hold an opinion, then you're biased, according to various people.

Q. The Violence Commission, as other commissions have suggested in the past, would like to see a national board of review to survey the performance of the news media. What do you think of that?

A. I don't believe in that. Television is already the most heavily monitored, scrutinized, criticized medium of communication there's ever been. Everybody is an expert on tv. Let me ask you why, when nearly every daily paper in this country gets the great bulk of its nondomestic news from two wire services—the UPI and AP—there's no running critique of their performance.

Q. And you feel, obviously, that television news is entitled to precisely the same First Amendment guarantees as are afforded the print medium.

A. Absolutely. Absolutely. I can't see why there should be any difference. The issue has never been resolved nor faced properly because broadcasting is in this anomalous legal position. We've always lived on this thin ice. The stations have to get approval to operate every three years. I just do not believe that the power of the press and television has been vastly increased in recent years. This statement of Mr. Agnew's quoting some FCC Commissioner that the media in this country have a power equal to the local, state and Federal governments—it's a silly statement. It's the power of *government* in my adult life that has grown far more than the power of media or business or any other big entity.

Q. I've discovered in talking to people on the left that there's a broad streak of approval among many of them for a lot of the things Mr. Agnew said. They're hostile to tv news because they feel it doesn't come to grips with the real issues, while the right wing tends to feel that tv news disseminates far too much of this, mostly bad news.

A. That's right. It's just the opposite criticism. Look, FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson and all kinds of people on what I'd guess you'd call the left in this country, and many intellectual groups, have been hammering and hammering at television, for what? Because they say we just reflect Establishment, middle-class values. You know the litany on that. That we're not dealing enough with the poor, the blacks, the underprivileged. The Agnew criticism is the exact reverse of this. Now how do you satisfy this?

Q. The Violence Commission used the expression "crisis of confidence" between the media and the public, and said that some means should be found to make the media more responsive to the public.

A. More responsive to the public! What are they talking about? That's what Mr. Agnew says, in effect. I'm not about to adjust the work I do according to the waves of popular feeling that may come over the country. No responsible person can do that. They ought to be out of this business if they do.

Q. On the 60 Minutes program you said: "Nothing that the Communist enemy in North Vietnam could ever do to us could equal the damage we are doing to ourselves because of this war, and in my own view this damage has been increased by the Agnew speeches." What did you mean by that?

A. Well, the war has torn up a lot of things here. It's knocked the whole economy out of gear for one thing, played hell with the youth, made the draft something to be avoided. It's been a ghastly business because it's essentially a failure, that's one reason. The Agnew speech was absolutely unnecessary. This Administration was not doing that badly with the press. But this attack has exacerbated things, made lots of people angry. It's scapegoat politics.

Q. Many people seem to feel that television doesn't look on the bright side, that bad news drives out good.

A. I don't think this is necessarily political bias. The bad news is what's news because you assume normalcy. If you assumed nothing but upheaval, then only good news would be real news. But, nevertheless, there is some point to that criticism. I think we tend to get caught in these ruts, yes, I do. We argue about this all the time inside this company. But I don't think it's necessarily bias. That's one reason I say I wish we had an hour. Then you're not just trapped and engulfed every day by all kinds of fantastic events, many of them violent, happening all over the world, which you can't ignore.

Q. Is there anything to USIA director Frank Shakespeare's idea that the networks might wish to consider "a man's ideology" before hiring him as a newsman?

A. No, I don't think you can do that. Frank has nice neat divisions in his mind about what's conservative, what's middle of the road, and what's left, you see. I think in that sense he's rather primitive. You might as well argue that the business community in this country or the White House is too full of conservatives.

Q. It seems to some critics that tv newsmen haven't liked a President since Kennedy, and have trouble covering up that fact in their reports.

A. Oh, these generalizations about news people—I've been hearing these things for decades. I don't see it. That's another thing people do not understand about professional journalists: that even those who have very passionate private political views—when they come down to doing their job of reporting the news—they are professional enough to get on with the real matter, and leave the rest out of it. I've voted for lots of Republicans and lots of Democrats, yet all kinds of people are firmly convinced I'm a left-liberal in their terms, and to all kinds of others I'm a conservative square. Roosevelt and Kennedy were very upset about many things written about them. They would express virulent opinions about working newspaper people.

Q. But anyway, the opinion is abroad now that the Nixon Administration would like gentler treatment at the hands of the press.

A. I think they've had very decent treatment. Very decent. Good Lord, every time the President wants air time even for a minor ceremony, they give it to him. They give him too much, I think. That's been going on for years. Mr. Johnson abused it, I think, terribly. And I think we *let* him abuse us by taking too much air time. I don't think all three networks should have put Mr. Agnew on live, pre-empting their news shows and everything else. I don't think a President of the United States, unless he's declaring war, or some other terribly critical thing, ought to have all three networks at the same time. We've given too *much* time, and as a result anyone in power thinks of tv as an open conduit for his use.

Q. There are about a dozen men in this country, of whom you are one, who are considered to have disproportionate influence on the country's affairs because of their privileged position in the broadcast world. How do you feel about being one of these "unelected elite"?

A. I don't think they handle this power irresponsibly, these people you talk about, this dangerous dozen or whatever we're supposed to be. I don't think anybody regularly employed by a major network does use or would be *allowed* to use the invective and the epithets that Mr. Agnew used. I think we're more responsible than he is. Considerably so. I think his speech was an irresponsible utterance. Some say we're feared. I don't get that from people, and I get an awful lot of mail.

Q. So you detect no overt bias on the air waves?

A. You find some in the H.L. Hunt radio stuff which goes out from hundreds of radio stations. But Mr. Agnew had no objection to that, apparently. He had no objection to newspaper-tv monopoly situations where they are conservatives, and there are more of those than there are *Washington Posts* or *New York Times*. You see, all he was concerned about when he talked about bias or monopoly were those elements he feels in the press have been critical of his President. Every letter I've ever received in my life that accused me of bias was simply someone who disagreed with me. I have never had a letter yet from anybody who says, "I agree with you but you were not fair to the other side." Never. Never.

Q. It's not easy, is it, after a major Presidential address, to jump right in with a comprehensive analysis?

A. Well, one of the problems is you don't have enough time when you come on, and you have to do it in a very few minutes. That's difficult. But opposing points of view *have* to be presented, otherwise we're just a conduit for any government in power. That's what they really want television to be.

Q. In the future, are you still in favor of coming on after Presidential addresses and engaging in what Mr. Agnew calls "instant analysis"?

A. Well—I've had my doubts about it, where we have not had advance copies of the speech. In the Nov. 3 speech we did, as you know; we had a couple of hours. I would much rather that maybe an hour went by, or a half hour, so that you could do a real job. I think this way, not so much because we're apt to be unfair to a President, although that can happen certainly, but we're unfair to ourselves and unfair to the listeners. It's a practical problem.

MAKING A TELEVISION NEWS SHOW

Daniel St. Albin Greene

At 9:40 one dreary November 1969 morning, the only visible action in Room 508 of the RCA Building was on the screens of the mute television sets all over the place. As Ed Newman delivered a silent monolog in front of a model of the moon surface on one screen, Donna Reed was having a spat with her video hubby on another. But nobody was paying any attention to them. The five well-groomed men in the bright, wall-to-wall-carpeted office were quietly reading the morning papers and reams of news-service copy to find out what was happening in the world. Soon they would begin the long process of deciding what, and how, to inform more than 20,000,000 people about those events on *The Huntley-Brinkley Report*.

Ostensibly, it was the start of a typical week at NBC News. But things were not the same, and every newsman at the three giant television networks knew it. For they were not only covering the news of the previous week—they had been part of it. And many of them were deeply worried about the possible consequences of the contro-

Daniel St. Albin Greene's *National Observer* article on how difficult it actually is to put together a television show was later reprinted in the March, 1970 *Seminar Quarterly*. It is published here with the permission of *National Observer*.

versy that had suddenly engulfed them following an indictment of tv news coverage by the Vice President of the United States.

As Karlton "Jerry" Rosholt, a veteran field producer for *The Huntley-Brinkley Report*, put it: "None of us is the same man he was two weeks ago. Some will be more cowed from now on, some will be more antagonistic. But we all have to wonder if what we're doing is going to hasten Government censorship."

Censorship? In Spiro T. Agnew's now-famous Des Moines speech, he made it clear he was not advocating Federal censorship. But what he did say sent shivers through the television industry just the same.

An "elite" and like-minded group, Mr. Agnew declared, "numbering perhaps no more than a dozen anchormen, commentators, and executive producers, settle upon the 20 minutes or so of film and commentary that's to reach the public. . . . They decide what 40,000,000 to 50,000,000 Americans will learn of the day's events in the nation and in the world. We cannot measure this power and influence by the traditional democratic standards, for these men can create national issues overnight. They can make or break, by their coverage and commentary, a moratorium on the war. They can elevate men from obscurity to national prominence within a week. They can reward some politicians with national exposure and ignore others."

By the Vice President's description, the tv-news bigwigs are a few stars, backed up by several shadowy figures behind the scenes, who live and work within "the geographical and intellectual confines of Washington, D.C., and New York City," spend a lot of time together, read the same newspapers, and share the same social and political viewpoints.

Mr. Agnew did not say so, but members of the Nixon Administration privately admit that they like NBC News least of all. So with the Agnew depiction of tv-news personages graphically outlined in my mind, I showed up at the Manhattan headquarters of *The Huntley-Brinkley Report* during a Monday morning rerun of *The Donna Reed Show* on CBS and an Apollo special on NBC. My assignment: to observe how "a tiny, enclosed fraternity of privileged men"—to borrow Mr. Agnew's words—decides what to show and tell the tv audience about the day's news, and then filters it "through a handful of commentators who admit to their own set of biases."

If any members of the Huntley-Brinkley staff were plotting to make or break anybody or anything that day, it was not apparent. In fact, there was a lot of morning conversation about why the net-



David Brinkley (top, talking to student editors) worked with Chet Huntley for 14 years on NBC. Following Huntley's retirement Brinkley moved into a "roaming commentator" position, while John Chancellor (middle left) became solo anchorman and Frank McGee (middle right) replaced Hugh Downs on the morning news-talk "Today" show. At ABC, Howard K. Smith and Harry Reasoner (bottom left) shared the evening news assignment and the popular Frank Reynolds provided on-the-spot coverage (used with permission of NBC and ABC).





Walter Cronkite, considered the "dean" of television newscasters, thinks of himself as a "managing editor" and disputes the contention that television has a "star system." But like it or not "Uncle Walter" is the star of CBS. Shown here with the nightly war coverage, and preparing copy at his busy desk, Cronkite teams with another "dean," commentator Eric Sevareid (bottom left) and reporters like White House correspondent Dan Rather (bottom right—photos used with permission of CBS).



works had decided to limit their coverage of the previous weekend's antiwar demonstration to their regular news programs.

The decisions not to provide live coverage of what turned out to be the biggest demonstration of its kind in U.S. history had been made sometime before Mr. Agnew's speech, which was delivered the evening that the demonstration began. For the October moratorium, notes Reuven Frank, president of NBC News, the network did a 90-minute special program, covering all sides of the issue, as well as devoting half of a *Huntley-Brinkley Report* to the protest. "This time it was no longer unique," says Mr. Frank. "There was no purpose to be served. We covered it as a news event, which it was."

But to many people, including some newspaper columnists, the conspicuous dearth of tv cameras during the November demonstration suggested retreat by an intimidated medium. "How many marches and demonstrations would we have," Mr. Agnew had asked, "if the marchers did not know that the ever-faithful tv cameras would be there to record their antics for the next news show?"

Some of the Huntley-Brinkley staff, including executive producer Wallace Westfeldt, conceded that the networks' limited coverage looked suspicious. "Suppose 200,000 hawks demonstrated now," postulated Jerry Rosholt. "By the same logic, we couldn't cover that live either."

But producer Lester M. Crystal, Mr. Westfeldt's second in command, was concerned with more immediate matters. He was reading wires from correspondents describing film packages that were en route to New York from various parts of the world. By 10 o'clock he had a seven-page list of story possibilities for that day and assignments for stories to be used on later shows.

Film reports that had already arrived or were on the way included the student riots in Tokyo ignited by Premier Eisaku Sato's departure for Washington; the sabotage of an Israeli ship by Arabs; an interview with Ian Smart of the Institute for Strategic Studies in London; and a Vietnam report. Other stories that NBC correspondents would be covering this day: Premier Sato's arrival in Washington; Joseph Kennedy's imminent death; Klan leader Robert Shelton's release from prison; congressional debate over the appointment of Clement Haynsworth to the Supreme Court; the opening of strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) in Helsinki, which would be reported by satellite transmission; reaction to the Mobilization; the Chicago conspiracy trial; and the Apollo flight.

Some of these stories would be covered by news teams directed by people assigned full-time to *The Huntley-Brinkley Report*, which has a staff of 35 producers, writers, news editors, and film editors.

But this small unit is supported by the largest broadcast-news organization in the world, numbering more than 1,000 people in and outside of the United States. More than half of NBC News personnel are based in New York City, and 104 are in Washington.

The hub of it all is on the fifth floor of the RCA Building, far below the lofty executive suites of the men who run the Radio Corporation of America, which owns the National Broadcasting Co. And since *The Huntley-Brinkley Report* is the network's prime daily-news showcase, the hub of the vast news-gathering system most days is, more precisely, right here in Room 508.

This is a news room furnished with 23 identical gray metal desks with simulated wood tops. Six of them are arranged in a "T" at the far end of the room. One of the four executive offices opening into the news room belongs to Les Crystal, but he spends most of the day at a desk in this cluster in order to be at the center of things. Wally Westfeldt works out of his private office, though he is seldom alone there. David Brinkley, who is based in Washington, occupies the middle office when he is in town. And the office closest to the main door belongs to Chet Huntley.

Outside of the executive offices, the walls are devoid of pictures except one of the two stars. But decorating one wall is a poster that reads, "The Vietnam War Continues," and lists the casualty figures as of September.

A little after 10, Les Crystal took a call from Henry Griggs, his associate producer in the Washington bureau, and handed me an extension phone. Mr. Griggs reported that no big news was expected out of the Haynsworth debate, but he was assigning an artist to cover it anyway. He and Les agreed to dispatch film crews to get an interview with the former GI who prompted an investigation of a mass killing reported in Vietnam; to try to locate people charged in that case; and to cover a press conference by moratorium leaders and a congressional hearing on black-market operations in Vietnam.

10:20. Chet Huntley, a tall man with a sagging, leathern face and graying brown hair, arrived and went in for a chat with Wally Westfeldt.

On high shelves attached to the walls at either end of the news room, twin tv sets played constantly, though usually without sound. At 10:30 the volume was turned up on one of the sets carrying NBC programing; each morning at this time, the last *Huntley-Brinkley Report* is reshown on closed-circuit television for those who missed it. Beside each of the screens showing Huntley-Brinkley, the *Beverly Hillbillies* made silent foolishness in a CBS rerun.

Shortly before 11, Mr. Crystal got a call from Garrick Utley in

London. They discussed a story in the works about the financial plight of the royal family, which would include filmed interviews with people in a pub and some footage of Prince Philip playing polo.

11:15. Mr. Crystal, four other staff members, and I gathered in Mr. Westfeldt's small office for the daily editorial meeting. While *Sale of the Century* played on his floor-model color set, the executive producer briefly went over the list of stories that would probably make up the evening newscast; then they discussed a few ideas for future stories.

Before winding up the meeting, Mr. Westfeldt revealed that the Washington bureau was trying to run down a report that Presidential aides, not the Vice President's regular speechwriter, had authored Mr. Agnew's blast against the networks.

The Vice President's criticism of tv news coverage in general, and of the caustic way the network commentators reviewed President Nixon's Vietnam speech in particular, had prompted Chet Huntley to dig up a letter Mr. Nixon sent him last January. Wally Westfeldt had been cheering up some of his troops by reading it to them, and after the meeting it was shown to me.

In the letter, Mr. Nixon expressed his gratitude for the way NBC covered the election campaign, and suggested that "the balanced coverage I received from the electronics media" probably "tipped the scales in my favor." Then he took a realistic look into the future:

"In the years ahead, I realize there will be occasions when you may not agree with the policies of the new administration. I want you to know that I will appreciate receiving the benefit of your criticism as well as your praise. . . . Above all, I want ours to be an open administration—open to new ideas—listening and respecting those who disagree with us as well as those who agree with us."

Messrs. Westfeldt, Crystal, and Rosholt were on their way upstairs to look at a color film taken of bomb-scarred villages in rural North Vietnam, and I tagged along. NBC had bought the film from the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. for possible showing, in installments, on *The Huntley-Brinkley Report*. Impressed by the quality of the film, they decided to use it with minor editing of the sound track.

On the way back to 508, Jerry predicted resignedly: "We'll get a lot of calls on this one from people who want to know why NBC insists on showing propaganda from Hanoi."

Noon. Associate producers in Washington, Chicago, Burbank, and Cleveland were on the line for the daily bureau conference call.

Henry Griggs in Washington said he was trying to get a follow-up on Attorney General John Mitchell's condemnation of the Mobilization leaders for not preventing the militant 'Crazies' attack on the Justice Department.

"Do we have any film of the violence left?" Mr. Crystal asked. "Would there be any point in running it now?"

"Using it now would in effect support what Mitchell says," Mr. Griggs replied.

Les Crystal agreed: "It would probably just exaggerate the situation."

A news team in California had filmed an interview with the young man who had blown the whistle on the soldiers allegedly involved in the killing of the Vietnamese civilians. Mr. Crystal suggested that somebody go after the accused men's lawyers.

Chicago reported that Robert Shelton's release had been filmed, but there was no sound. The other bureaus had nothing to offer.

Henrik Krogius, who was concentrating on the Apollo mission, invited me to accompany him to the videotape room to see the pictures that had been transmitted from the command module. Mr. Krogius, a tall, handsome man with a dashing brown beard but little hair on the top of his head, was born in Finland 40 years ago. He studied architecture at Harvard, specialized in psychological warfare in the Air Force, took a master's degree in journalism at Columbia University, and joined NBC News eight years ago. Married and the father of two boys, he pleads "guilty to being an Eastern liberal" and a Democrat. But he assured me that his political sentiments would not influence his choice of which parts of the Apollo tape to show on the air that evening.

Vice President Agnew had asked: "What do Americans know of the men who wield this power? Of the men who produce and direct the network news, the nation knows practically nothing."

Perhaps so, but during lunch downstairs at Charley O's, the two most important members of the decision-making "elite" behind *The Huntley-Brinkley Report* were as willing to talk about themselves as any of their famous on-camera colleagues would be.

Wallace Westfeldt, who has been executive producer of NBC's evening newscast since last January, is a strapping, 6-foot-4 man with wavy brown hair and rugged good looks. A native of New Orleans, he served in the Marine Corps in World War II and the Korean War, finally getting out as a major; was graduated from the University of the South in Sewanee, Tenn.; and roamed the South for eight years as a civil-rights reporter for the Nashville Tennessean, before joining

NBC News in 1961. At 46, he is a Democrat, a "backslid" Episcopalian, married and the father of an 11-year-old daughter, an omnivorous reader, and a journalist "obsessed" with his work.

Mr. Westfeldt scoffs at Spiro Agnew's intimation that network news brass are a tightly knit circle. "We're competitors, not friends," he says. "I wouldn't know Les Midgley (his counterpart on CBS' Walter Cronkite show) if I saw him."

Les Crystal, who co-ordinates things for Mr. Westfeldt, is a slender, 35-year-old transplanted Minnesotan who still considers himself a Midwesterner. After taking a master's degree at Northwestern University, he worked as a tv newsman in Chicago, Altoona, Pa., and Philadelphia before becoming a member of the New York Huntley-Brinkley staff in 1967. He describes himself as a "mildly observant Jew." Mr. Crystal and his wife Toby have three young children.

Both producers acknowledge being liberals, though not in a strict ideological sense. "People in this business tend to have a pre-occupation with social problems," Mr. Crystal explains. "We get around and see the results of these problems firsthand. It would be hard for anybody to see these things and not get emotionally involved."

Yet the conscientious tv journalist tries harder than most people to control his emotions and prejudices, Mr. Westfeldt adds: "All of us have spent years trying to suppress our feelings. There is not a man on my staff who could not go out and do an honest reporting job on an issue that he was personally opposed to."

By the time we got back, soap operas were unfolding on every video screen, and several typewriters were clattering away. While Les and Wally talked on the phone to correspondents, I occupied myself reading the bulletin board. Two items related to Chet Huntley. One was a newspaper article about a speech he gave in Memphis: The United States entered the Vietnam War with the "purest of motives," he was quoted as saying. "Our mistake was to send more troops than necessary, and to leave them there too long." The other was an interdepartmental memo from Reuven Frank verifying that Mr. Huntley, who is 57, would probably leave NBC in 1971 to go into the resort business in his home state of Montana.

Mr. Huntley invited me to his office for a chat. The Old West look of his haven, with its vintage furniture and spittoons, was a refreshing contrast to the functional modernity of the other offices. He sat at a heavy, roll-front oak desk that his father had used for a half-century on the Northern Pacific Railroad. A moment before, he had been banging away on the oldest typewriter in the vicinity.

Mr. Huntley admitted that his first reaction to Mr. Agnew's speech was "semi-shock at the acute sensitivities of this administration." Now, however, his mood was reflective: "Maybe we have been remiss in not finding enough positive things to report. But news, by its very nature, is usually not a happy thing. It deals with social and political irregularities. It is the exciting, the violent, the flagrant, the unusual that is news."

There is no doubt that Chet Huntley was one of those he had in mind when the Vice President posed his rhetorical question: "When a single commentator or producer, night after night, determines for millions of people how much of each side of a great issue they are going to see and hear, should he not first disclose his personal views on the issue as well?"

Mr. Huntley drew thoughtfully on his pipe. "It would be a miracle if my views didn't creep into what I said on the air occasionally," he acknowledged. "But it would be so subtle that it couldn't change anybody's mind. I rarely see any of the film before it is shown on the air. And the only copy I usually read before the show is what I've written." He took another puff. "The average American," he concluded, "is a hell of a lot more intelligent than Agnew thinks he is."

3:20. Les Crystal and Wally Westfeldt were in the executive producer's office plotting out the lineup of stories for the newscast. Beside each story listed on a yellow pad, Wally jotted the number of minutes and seconds he had allotted it. Shortly before 4 o'clock, he dictated the schedule to Pat O'Keefe, a shapely production assistant, who then added up the allotted time: 22 minutes.

"Will this program upset folks?" I wondered out loud.

"Well, anything we say about the moratorium is going to make somebody mad," Mr. Westfeldt replied. "And I'm sure we'll get criticized for even reporting the Vietnam killings. But we've got to report the news; what are we here for?"

After this, the office tempo quickened. News editor Gil Millstein, a stocky 54-year-old native New Yorker who used to write for magazines, was busy turning out copy for Chet Huntley to read on the air. Mr. Huntley was in his office finishing up a couple of pages he had written himself. David Brinkley, regarded by many as the best news writer in television, writes his own material.

Up on the ninth floor, news editor Tom MacCabe, who has the mien of a high-school principal, was still in a screening room editing film to fit designated time slots. In the Broadcast Operations Control room, Jerry Rosholt and Bob Lissit were waiting for NBC's turn to

transmit its Helsinki report via communications satellite. When John Chancellor's report finally came through, it was simultaneously taped for later showing.

6 o'clock. The "remotes"—filmed and live studio reports electronically transmitted by NBC bureaus—were being shown on closed-circuit tv in the news room. As an artist's sketches of the "Chicago Eight" trial filled the screen, the correspondent quoted a defense attorney as saying, "It is impossible to prepare our case not knowing who in our office to trust," and later observed that a witness "didn't seem quite so sure about whom was attending which meetings."

Gil Millstein, the resident grammarian, yelled, "He's got his 'who' and 'whom' mixed up!"

Mr. Crystal, on the telephone to Chicago, pointed out the mistakes. Eventually, on the third try, the reporter got through his narration without a grammatical slip.

6:27. Charles Coates, a 39-year-old New Jersey native who used to work with Mr. Westfeldt on the *Nashville Tennessean*, was still batting out "pad"—news shorts that can be read to use up whatever time remains at the end of scheduled reports—as we rushed for the elevator. We got to the eighth-floor control room, adjoining the studio where Mr. Huntley sat in front of a battery of cameras and lights, just in time to hear: "Chet Huntley, NBC News, New York." "And David Brinkley, NBC News, Washington."

For the next 28 minutes, Mr. Huntley and his wry partner in Washington read copy and introduced picture reports that represented countless independent decisions by scores of producers, writers, correspondents, cameramen, and editors in far-flung parts of the world. Somehow, it all came together, piece by piece, in a miracle of timing and precision that no one had seen in its entirety before everyone saw it.

Some of these decisions and efforts paid off handsomely. Viewers were shown interviews with a moratorium leader in Washington and the Vietnam vet in California; film on the Tokyo riots and the Sato trip; the Arab sabotage film; Apollo pictures; the illustrated progress report on the conspiracy trial; and John Chancellor's satellite report from Helsinki. But other hoped-for contributions, such as interviews with the accused soldiers' lawyers, never came through.

As a videotape of the newscast was being transmitted to the 56 NBC affiliates that don't carry the live telecast, we rushed back downstairs to catch the 7 p.m. broadcast of the Cronkite show. Most of the major stories were covered by both networks. But CBS had a

few things that NBC lacked or had chosen not to use: an interview with Robert Shelton; Hubert Humphrey excoriating Spiro Agnew for excoriating the media—and an interview with the lawyer of the captain involved in the Vietnam killings.

No sooner had Les Crystal seen this than he was on the phone trying to find out why NBC hadn't been able to get to a lawyer that CBS had. It was 7:45 before he learned the sad news: The NBC affiliate in Salt Lake City had an interview with the lawyer, recorded the week before, but NBC didn't know it.

As I left Room 508 at the end of the long day, calls were still coming in from people who didn't like what they had seen on the week's first *Huntley-Brinkley Report*. Somebody in the office was saying, "Well, thanks for calling anyway, and I'm sure Mr. Agnew will be glad to hear from you."

STERN ADVICE TO LOCAL BROADCASTERS

Clay Whitehead

Congress is being urged to grant longer license terms and renewal protection to broadcasters. Before voting it up, down or around, Congress will have to judge the broadcasters' record of performance.

The Press isn't guaranteed First Amendment protection because it's guaranteed to be balanced and objective—to the contrary, the Constitution recognizes that balance and objectivity exist only in the eye of the beholder. The press is protected because a free flow of information and giving each "beholder" the opportunity to inform himself is central to our system of government.

This brings me to an important first step the Administration is taking to increase freedom and responsibility in broadcasting.

The Office of Telecommunications Policy has submitted a license renewal bill for clearance through the executive branch, so the bill can be introduced in the Congress. It establishes two criteria the station must meet before the FCC will grant renewal.

First, the broadcaster must demonstrate he has been substantially attuned to the needs and interests of the communities he serves. He must also make a good-faith effort to respond to those

President Nixon's telecommunications adviser, Clay T. Whitehead, made his controversial speech to the Indianapolis chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi. Excerpts of that speech are reprinted here.

needs and interests in all his programs, irrespective of whether those programs are created by the station, purchased from program suppliers or obtained from a network. The idea is to have the broadcaster's performance evaluated from the perspective of the people in his community and not the bureaucrat in Washington.

Second, the broadcaster must show that he has afforded reasonable, realistic and practical opportunities for the presentation and discussion of conflicting views on controversial issues.

Since broadcasters' success in meeting their responsibility will be measured at license renewal time, they must demonstrate it across the board. They can no longer accept network standards of taste, violence and decency in programming. If the programs or commercials glorify the use of drugs, if the programs are violent or sadistic, if the commercials are false or misleading, or simply intrusive and obnoxious, the stations must jump on the networks rather than wince as the Congress and the FCC are forced to do so.

Just as publishers and editors have professional responsibility for the news they print, station licensees have final responsibility for news balance—whether the information comes from their own newsroom or from a distant network. The old refrain that, "We had nothing to do with that report, and could do nothing about it," is an evasion of responsibility and unacceptable as a defense.

The First Amendment's guarantee of a free press was not supposed to create a privileged class of men called journalists, who are immune from criticism by government or restraint by publishers and editors. To the contrary, the working journalist, if he follows a professional code of ethics, gives up the right to present his personal point of view when he is on the job. He takes on a higher responsibility to the institution of a free press, and he cannot be insulated from the management of that institution.

The truly professional journalist recognizes his responsibility to the institution of a free press. He realizes that he has no monopoly on the truth, that a pet view of reality can't be insinuated into the news. Who else but management, however, can assure that the audience is being served by journalists dedicated to the highest professional standards? Who else but management can or should correct so-called professionals who confuse sensationalism with sense and who dispense elitist gossip in the guise of news analysis?

Where there are only a few sources of national news on television, as we now have, editorial responsibility must be exercised more effectively by local broadcasters and by network management. If they do not provide the checks and balances in the system, who will?

Station managers and network officials who fail to act to correct imbalance or consistent bias from the networks—or who acquiesce by silence—can only be considered willing participants, to be held fully accountable by the broadcaster's community at license renewal time.

LET TELEVISION NEWS ALONE

Reuven Frank

There is too much detailed discussion these days about the regulations which govern television reporting, and not enough general discussion about the principles which underline them.

Thus we wonder how the Fairness Doctrine applies to letting this candidate speak so many times, and that one not so many. To which news programs does the legislated requirement of equal time apply, and how does a journalist on deadline pick his way among the distinctions? What is the proper role of the legislature in protecting the audience from news presentation which is not totally factual? How much must an audience be told about what went into a piece of news before it was put together, and about how it was put together?

These are all specific recent considerations governing the details of laws affecting how news is presented on television and how those laws are administered, and whether there are too many such laws or too few. The number of such areas of involvement in television reporting is approaching the dozens, and the individual instances of suggestions for new regulations is into the hundreds. And rising.

The least of these, were it applied to a newspaper, would be thrown out of any American court as a violation of the Constitution, as a direct contravention of the Bill of Rights.

I submit that as a simple fact.

Whether Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act—equal time—is being applied the way those who wrote it intended, whether the doctrine called Fairness requires presenting views no one seems to want to hear: No one even discusses such matters with respect to a newspaper. It is widely understood that the First Amendment forbids legislating changes, even improvements, in newspapers and how they do what they do.

The President of NBC News, Reuven Frank, delivered these remarks at the Conference on Electronic Journalism, Warrenton, Va., June 22, 1972. They are reprinted with his permission.

The two media are governed differently because of the physical differences between them. That is the accepted wisdom. It is honestly believed by most people who concern themselves with such matters that the physical properties and conditions of broadcasting make regulation of them inescapable.

There is no reference in such discussion to what the First Amendment was intended to achieve. It is my understanding that the purpose of the First Amendment was not to achieve freedom to print; that was its method. Its purpose was to keep all government out of all news.

If I am right, then the purpose of the First Amendment, the first clause of the American Bill of Rights, is being violated thousands of times a day, including today. We who are employed in television justify and defend and explain what we do to people who either have no right to ask or ought to have no right to ask.

Matters have come so far that this simple position sounds like an extreme position. But is it?

Not very often, but sometimes, newspaper people are asked the sort of question we are asked. The essence of their answer tends to be "none of your business." Their language may be politer than that, but that is what they mean. And it is indeed none of your business, if you are a judge, or an elected legislator, or an appointed official. The First Amendment says it is none of your business whether a newspaper is fair, or presents candidates equally, or displays bias. Nor does anyone assume that when a newspaperman tells a legislator or a judge these actions of his are none of their business that he is tacitly admitting unfairness or bias or inequity.

On the contrary, he is seen as exercising his right, indeed his duty, under the First Amendment. As I put the proposition it sounds harsh because the First Amendment freedoms of newspapers are so widely taken for granted that I venture no one in this room has thought about them in this sense for years.

Ask yourself: When is the last time you read a newspaper report you thought unfair? Or an incident of which you had personal knowledge was described in a way you considered incomplete? Or biased? There must have been some such recent occasion. You may have written sharply to the editor, or thought about it for a moment or two. And given up the thought, because what's the use?

But, even for an instant, did it occur to you there ought to be a law? Or a hearing by a committee of Congress? After eighteen decades of life under the Constitution, the impulses and brain paths for such thoughts do not exist in the American mind. We do not chal-

lenge the rights of newspapers to be newspapers, even those newspapers we dislike or hold in contempt. Any such thoughts are unthinkable thoughts.

Think them. The Constitution is, after all, not an immutable document. It has changed. It will change. You can change it. Wouldn't you like to change the First Amendment? Shouldn't newspapers be obliged to be fair? Shouldn't wise and impartial men, the public weal uppermost in their minds, set standards for such fairness? Standards we may all refer to, publishers and readers alike? Doesn't the American public deserve the fairest and best? Is there a lawyer in the house? Is there a Constitutional lawyer in the house? Is George III in the house?

I put it to you that you think I am making my point by reducing it to an absurdity, that your thought processes are so conditioned that a Constitutional amendment to allow regulating newspapers strikes you as absurd.

What makes it absurd?

It is not considered absurd in most of the countries of the world. It has not been thought absurd in the United States, if it is news we are talking about rather than newspapers. At that time of our history when all news was printed news, all news was free of Government control, regulation and intrusion. Now that only a part of news is printed news, most news is subject to Government control, regulation and intrusion.

We discuss the doctrine of legislated fairness which is applied to television and whether it goes too far or not far enough. We do not discuss whether it is a violation of the purposes of the Bill of Rights and the almost religious belief of most Americans in those purposes that such a doctrine should exist at all.

There are, it is true, current discussions of the First Amendment as it applies to newspapers. It has over the year been extended far beyond keeping the Government out of publishing the news to keeping it out of the process of gathering the news. Now the Supreme Court is considering whether making a reporter enter a grand jury room violates the First Amendment. But I am not talking about these expansions of First Amendment rights. I am talking about its simplest, smallest, original frame.

If the First Amendment does not apply to news on television in the same way that it applies to news in print this year in this country it does not apply to most news. That is a fact. It can be expressed in statistics. If you do not believe it ought to apply to news on television, you do not believe that it is an absolute need that news be

free of Government regulation and intrusion. You merely think you do. You believe there is nothing wrong with Government intrusion if the news is not printed. That is not the way you express your belief, but that is what you believe.

This belief, to go back, is said to be based on the physical difference between print and broadcasting, between wood pulp and radio waves, not between what they carry. The rationalizations supporting this are a Tower of Babel ascending to the sky. But the First Amendment applies only to the products of pine trees. It is not a belief about free human beings at all. The airwaves belong to somebody up in Canada.

First of all, the branches of Government cannot make people listen equally, and eyes and ears are as important to access and the spread of ideas as are the various media. Second, there was never a time when some media did not have more impact than others, some organs did not reach more people than others. The same reasoning which denies the full meaning of the First Amendment to television could have been used in that recently past time—when there were only newspapers—to deny it to all newspapers with more than 50,000 circulation.

So I am not convinced by the argument about the difference between media. I cannot see how anyone can be convinced by it. The biggest difference between newspapers and television which I can see is that newspapers existed at a time when adventurous men with faith in their fellow-citizens laid down principles for a new society to live by. Television exists in a frightened time when this faith is honored either by lip-service or by a frantic determination that freedom must be considered enforced. I think if Benjamin Franklin had invented television its informing functions would have been included in the First Amendment.

Too often I am oppressed by the feeling that there are those among us who regret that there were foolish men in the Eighteenth Century who forbade well-meaning officers from imposing rules of constructive and ethical behavior on publishers. And they dread lest the same mistake be made about television.

So far they have succeeded. Television news has been held not to fall within the protections of the First Amendment. If this were not so, we should not be here today; there would be nothing for us to talk about. There could be no Fairness Doctrine within the First Amendment. As it is, representatives of all three branches of Government intrude into the news most Americans get, television news.

Congress shall make no law prohibiting the free exercise of

some religions; or abridging the freedom of some speech, or of some of the press; or the right of some of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of some grievances. Do we dare admit that is what we really believe?

I consider it so self-evident that the First Amendment deals with the Constitution and not with the Government and one news medium that I hesitate to support my position with reciting specific events. A principle is a principle. But one event so recent and so well-publicized that everyone in this room has heard about it can serve as a strong and useful illustration of what happens because television news is not free of Government intrusion. You may consider this in the light of simple, general principles of our law and what can happen if one of them is abandoned. Or, if you prefer, you might think of this incident in terms of your own private views of what the public wants and needs, in this case the voting public of one state and of the entire country.

In the middle of May, in the presence of television newsfilm cameras, Senator Humphrey challenged Senator McGovern to meet him on television to debate. At that time whatever information was available, and there was a lot—polls, the observations of reporters, and the off-the-record judgments of the staff members of these and other candidates—indicated that only these two men had a reasonable chance of winning the Democratic Party's presidential primary in California.

Now there is a lot of law about candidates appearing on television. Most of it hinges on Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act which used to mean that if a station sold or gave time for a political message to a candidate for elective office it might not refuse his opponent the same opportunity. It has since been interpreted and amended and it now means a great deal more than that. Among other things it means that no television station may present a debate between two candidates if it does not do about as much for other candidates running in the same election. In practical fact it means there can be no television debates.

As in most such nice legal situations, one could postulate conditions where there might be debates, but for most of them one could not postulate why anyone should listen. People watch what they care about. If we had proved that the voters of California cared only about Humphrey and McGovern, it would have been absolutely beside the point. This would have been what is called in my business a news judgment and there are no news judgments without a First Amendment.

But the original Section 315 has been amended, to exempt regular news programs and regular interview programs. Each major network has such a regular interview program. So the three major networks invited Humphrey and McGovern to be interviewed on these programs, CBS nine days before the California primary election day, NBC seven days before, and ABC the preceding Sunday, June 4, two days before election day. I speak now only for NBC; our arrangements were made after the other two were announced; we dealt only with the candidates and their representatives; we did not deviate one iota from the established format of "Meet the Press." The candidates had no say in the question, the format, or the participants.

A true debate on that date would have made us vulnerable under the law. This law applied to newspapers would be unconstitutional. Those who hold the First Amendment does not cover television say among other things that they are promoting more political discussion for the benefit of more citizens. On at least that day, May 30, they did the opposite.

On the first of these pseudo-debates, the CBS one, May 28, the two men were allowed to contradict each other a little bit, which was a little different from the usual practice of that program—although I don't know how you make a United States Senator speak only when spoken to while on live television. But that may have triggered the ludicrous sequence which was to follow.

Two other candidates, Congresswoman [Shirley] Chisholm and Mayor [Sam] Yorty, petitioned the Federal Communications Commission for equal access to the networks before the California primary June 6. The polls were showing Mrs. Chisholm at two per cent of the vote, and at that she was ahead of Mayor Yorty. Both had already been on television often and neither seriously claimed to be able to win. But that is the way a newspaper is allowed to think; not a television network. The FCC told the two petitioners the networks were acting legally under the amended Section 315. So Mrs. Chisholm went to Federal Court.

In an "interim" judgment, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ordered ABC to include her in its program and CBS to give her time to make up for her absence from its program. (She did not move against NBC because we had already scheduled her for Monday morning.) The court's decision came Friday evening, two days before the ABC program, four days before the primary election. The court ordered action by Monday.

On Sunday, the ABC program was hastily changed so three reporters could interview four candidates—Humphrey, McGovern,

Chisholm and Yorty—and a representative of Governor [George] Wallace, five people. CBS gave Mrs. Chisholm a half-hour to fill however she pleased, and she recruited three reporters to interview her. NBC presented Mrs. Chisholm speaking into the camera for 15 minutes. (We were not under court order, but we thought we might prevent one.) Mrs. Chisholm and Yorty also appeared, separately, on the “Today” program Monday morning. Minutes after the “Today” program was shown in California, Yorty announced he was withdrawing from the race and asked his supporters to vote for Humphrey. Mrs. Chisholm got twice as many votes as the polls said she would, four per cent.

This has nothing to do with what I or anyone else in television thinks of the ideas or candidacy of any of the protagonists. Nor do I mean to imply criticism of Mrs. Chisholm in going to court. Anyone who fails to take advantage of a foolish law is himself foolish. But, after all, what was accomplished? Was the American voter, for whose benefit this charade was supposed to be taking place, enlightened? Is it hard to help them decide between Humphrey and McGovern? Were they not in fact coerced into watching people they didn't care about?

Whenever we leave the Bill of Rights, for even the noblest of motives, we embark upon the lexicography of coercion. On that very ABC program one of the reporters asked the two main candidates what they thought of this arrangement whereby five appeared where they had expected two. And Senator Humphrey spoke those words I have learned to dread, words I caution you against. Mrs. Chisholm, he said, had a right to be heard. There is no right to be heard. There is only a right to speak. If there is a right to be heard, it must by definition be a right to force someone to listen. But we say things like “right to be heard” because they sound as though they ought to mean something. They have that ring to them.

There is the argument that without the court-ordered arrangements of June 4 minority candidates would be stifled. I think I have answered that, but if my answer has been insufficient or too abstract, I beg leave to point out that Senator McGovern and his staff were making the same argument less than a year ago. The media were ignoring him and thereby ignoring their law-specified responsibilities. We heard a lot of that.

The media were in fact reporting what our best though fallible judgments told us interested people. A few weeks before the New Hampshire primary our reporters said the McGovern campaign was more interesting to the voters than it had been—not more interesting

than we had said it had been; more interesting than it had been. So we reported it more. Now there are those who say McGovern profited from that original lack of attention. There may even be somebody out there preparing to accuse us of ignoring him so he might succeed. All we do, in our single-minded way, is to try to proceed according to our news judgment, the judgment which needs protection by the First Amendment.

I am not a lawyer. Long ago I decided not to be a lawyer. I have never regretted that decision. To me the Fairness Doctrine, and equal time, and the right of reply, and the Commissioners and judges, the good ones and hostile ones, the conservative ones and the liberal ones, the Congressmen and their new bills, the executive assistants and their new schemes, are all one lump. They are the Government in news, the Government in my business. I began on a newspaper. There I learned the Government had no business in my business. I am still in the same business, but now it's O.K. for the Government to interfere. It is not easy to understand or to follow.

If the Government should not be in news, it should not be in television news. If for one reason or another now is a tactless time to bring this up, this is the best time to bring it up.

THE STATE OF THE PRESS

Walter Cronkite

A friend said the other day: "You must be very pleased with the developments in Washington."

It was an unfortunate statement. It suggested that the view held by us in the press of the administration was as distorted, biased and prejudiced as the administration's view of us. That, I think, is insulting to an intelligent man—and I told my friend that.

I am *not* pleased by the Watergate developments, and I do not think most of my colleagues of the press are either. I am shocked and frightened to learn of the heights to which corruption has reached.

Any normally human reaction to exult in the downfall of an adversary is more than counter-balanced by concern over the debasement of our democratic system and worry over the stagnation of government while this scandal plays itself out.

Walter Cronkite, a longtime fighter for reporters' rights, told a 1973 gathering of broadcast executives of his concerns about the state of the news business. The bulk of his comments are used with permission of *The Quill*, publication of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, June 1973.

There are some who write letters to newspapers and radio and television stations complaining of the attention we are giving the unfolding story—they ask what is so wrong about what the Republicans did. “They didn’t kill anybody or rape anybody or steal anything,” the letters go. “Politicians always have been crooked. What’s the big fuss?” And the letters conclude with something like: “You news people are just blowing up the story because you never have liked Nixon.”

I hardly think it is necessary to deny that accusation, and while we were getting some letters of that ilk in late April, they do seem to be dropping off with each succeeding revelation from Washington.

While the writers of such letters, the polls indicate, are in the minority, I do wonder if we in the press have succeeded in getting over the real horror of Watergate—if a lot of the public still doesn’t believe that this is just a slightly gamier version of politics as usual.

We tried to point out on the Evening News the difference between the bugging of Democratic headquarters and the corruption that touched the White House in earlier administrations.

Almost all of those cases of earlier notoriety—in the Grant administration, the Teapot Dome of the Harding administration, the five percenters of the Truman administration and the vicuna coats of the Eisenhower years—all of those involved the use of power to procure profits, usually for friends and, with the exception of Teapot Dome, with minimal payoff for the culpable in the White House.

Teapot Dome did involve the theft of the people’s inheritance, the nation’s natural resources, and the evil was the greater therefore.

But none of these previous cases was so potentially far-reaching as the one now being exposed. For the Watergate bugging was an attempt to steal a birthright far more precious than money, the citizen’s privilege to choose his president, fair and square.

The stealing of votes, fraud at the polls, is not exactly unknown in our country, but this case goes further than that. It was an attempt, on the national level, to subvert the two-party system, which is right at the roots of our system. It was a naked attempt to use power for the perpetuation of power, and down that road dictatorship thrives and democracy cannot survive.

It was a naked attempt to circumvent the democratic system of law that its perpetrators had sworn to uphold.

But far from casting doubt on the efficacy of the system, it seems to me that the unmasking of the plot proves that our system of checks and balances works.

It was a federal judge—appointed by the Republican administration, by the way, but under our system now sitting for life and

untouchable by political considerations—who refused to accept the cover-up; it was a congressional committee that kept the pressure on; and it was the free press that would not let the matter die when others would have interred it.

If there is any silver lining in all this it may be that administration spokesmen—those who remain—will be a little less hasty in charging the press with ideological venality.

It may even be that, in the light of the Watergate revelations, that segment of the public which had bought the administration line will reconsider the value of a free press.

It may well be that President Nixon might have avoided this disgrace to his administration if *he* had put a little more faith in the press. If we assume he did not know about Watergate and its ramifications until March 21, as he reported to us, then we can assume that he was not reading the newspapers or watching television and that his daily news digest, as written by Pat Buchanan, didn't include mention of Watergate.

We might also assume that it was the success of his administration's campaign against the credibility of the press that neutralized the public's reaction to the newspaper and television stories about Watergate last fall. The Republican leaders told them not to believe the press, so they didn't believe, and the President was able to ignore Watergate as a campaign issue. If he had been forced to face the question then, perhaps the White House would not now be tainted with the additional scandal of the cover-up.

It is an interesting but seldom proffered argument as to the advantages of a free press that it has a major function in keeping the government itself informed as to what the government is doing.

The information that must flow freely from government to the people, also eddies *around* the government itself. Good newspapers and broadcasters, through their diligence, can provide information about one branch of government to officials of another branch that it would take them far too long to get—if, indeed, they ever got—through secret communications and inter-office memos. This is a source of information that is denied to the leaders of dictatorships, and they are far the weaker for that.

This is a fact which must be coming home rather belatedly to some in Washington who have disparaged the attempts of the press to tell the whole story, the bad with the good.

While it would take extraordinary gall for the administration to resume its attacks on the press now, the atmosphere it has created will take some time to dissipate, and it has set in motion a train of

events that still present a serious danger to our freedoms of speech and press. . . .

This Washington atmosphere so repressive to the free press is now further poisoned with the attempt to bring the network news programs to heel by making them responsive to the local stations, where the government has licensing power and thus can bring political and financial pressures to bear.

It would be another serious blow to the free flow of information if the network news broadcasts were emasculated, for, far from being a monopoly as charged, they are the alternative to the provincial approach of the local stations.

Most of us deny that the network news is shot through with bias and prejudice. We acknowledge that all men, not excluding journalists, harbor bias and prejudice, but it is the mark of the professional newsman that he recognize these in himself and guard against their intrusion into his reporting.

But let's assume that there is some justice in the administration's charges. Still there is a serious flaw in its claim to seek only balance in the news by curbing the network broadcasts.

For there *is* balance now in the daily fare offered the nation's viewers. They get not only the network news but their local news, and if the rest of the country is presumed to be more conservative than us eastern establishment elitists, then presumably the local news reflects this conservative influence.

Thus, since the network news already has been balanced by the local presentation, the only excuse for trying to control the network offering would be to unbalance the total news available, presumably to the administration's advantage.

It is strange that the administration cannot see that the power with which it would invest itself today it might have to pass on to another political party tomorrow. Or, perhaps, does it believe that with such power over a cowed and intimidated press that is not a serious possibility? The arrogance of Watergate might lead us to accept that diabolical theory.

Our concern, that of the press, in recent years of course has been concentrated on the attacks from this administration. We are not immune, and have not been in the past, from other administrations and other parties.

Who can forget, particularly in Chicago, that it was the Democrats who were down on us for daring to report that 1968 convention as we saw it?

Our power, the power of this high-impact new means of

communication, is feared, and the frightened and the jealous will not cease in their efforts to bridle us.

The establishment—I'm afraid there is no better word—of whatever age, whatever year, has been chary of its critics. In times of stress it has sought to muzzle them.

Since John Milton first pleaded for the freedom to print and America's founding fathers codified it, attempts to reverse this historical progress, although occasionally attempted, have for the most part failed and the written press would appear to be beyond the reach of the politicians.

Scarcely anyone would doubt that television news has expanded to an immeasurable degree the knowledge of a great portion of our peoples who either cannot or do not read.

We have expanded the interests of another, also sizable portion, whose newspaper reading has been confined to the headlines, the sports results and the comics.

We are going into homes of the untutored, underprivileged and disadvantaged—homes that have never known a book. We are exposing them to a world they scarcely knew existed, and while the advertisements and the entertainment programming whet their thirst for a way of life they believed beyond them, we show them that there are people and movements, inside and outside the establishment, that are trying to put these good things of life within their reach.

Without any intent to foster revolution, by simply doing our job as journalists, with ordinary diligence and an extraordinary new medium, we have awakened a sleeping giant. No wonder we have simultaneously aroused the ire of those who are comfortable with the status quo.

The other side of the coin is no brighter as far as our popularity goes. Those citizens who are happily smothered in their easy chairs under picture windows that frame leafy boughs and flowering bushes and green grass might have reason to resent our parading through their neat living rooms the black and bearded, the hungry and unwashed, to remind them that there is another side of our country that demands their attention.

Are these not precisely the same reasons that the press was looked upon with so much alarm and suspicion a couple of centuries ago? And, as it turned out, for the establishment of that era, with good cause. For it was the free press that in large measure exposed the failings of older systems, that brought about reform, that became

the people's surrogate in observing the performance of their servants in government—a vital service without which democracy would have been a hollow word.

It is nothing less than a crime against the people that the heavy hand of government should be laid now on the newest communication medium to prevent it from serving this same function in the future.

This nation—the cause of a free press—can be grateful for the farsighted men who founded the networks, coming to the business without journalistic backgrounds. And those who are following in their footsteps are men in the executive suites who have left the news judgment to the professional journalists and have created in our country what I guarantee is, from the internal standpoint, the freest medium of them all. They have strengthened that cornerstone that is our free press.

What we have asked of them has not been easy.

For 13 1/2 hours out of the 15-hour network day, their job is to win friends and audience. They and we live on how successfully they do this difficult job.

But then we ask them to turn a deaf ear to the complaints of those dissatisfied with what we present in the remaining minutes of the day.

We newsmen are not jugglers, dancers, ventriloquists, singers or actors seeking applause. We are not in the business of winning popularity contests. It is not our job to entertain, nor, indeed, to please anyone except Diogenes.

Unfortunately, we have seen lately the growth of “happy news time” on some stations, promoted by managements willing to sell their journalistic responsibility for a few fickle Nielsen points. They are the dupes of those who urge more “good news” in the hope, subconscious or Machiavelian, that it will blot out the bad news—in other words, suppress the news of aberrant behavior and dissent from establishment norms.

To seek the public's favor by presenting the news it wants to hear, is to fail to understand the function of broadcast news in a democracy.

Radio and television journalists and enlightened executives have spent 35 years convincing the public that broadcast news is not a part of the entertainment industry. It is a shame that some would endanger that reputation now.

More responsible managements have not yielded to this pressure, and we all can be grateful for their strength.

The battle is not over—not by far—and there will be more to come. The First Amendment rights of broadcast news are yet to be won and thus the fullest measure of our freedoms of speech and press are yet to be realized.

PART III

QUESTIONS FOR READING AND DISCUSSION

1. The Watergate story continued as we went to press, but Aaron Latham's article on how the *Washington Post* picked up and pursued the story indicates that competent reporters and editors have certain attributes or characteristics. What were the characteristics of Bernstein and Woodward that helped them to get the story when other reporters failed?
2. While the press was congratulating itself for uncovering the Watergate story, Haynes Johnson suggests that perhaps the credit is ill deserved. Why? What were the accomplishments of television in uncovering the Watergate story?
3. One of the perplexing problems of the past several decades is the relationship of the presidency to the electronic media, particularly television. How have recent presidents used television, according to David Wise? What has been their attitude toward the medium?
4. What does Joseph Lyford mean by "pacification of the press"? Do you agree?
5. What is Edward Jay Epstein's conclusion in regard to the "mirror" image that network news executives frequently say they project? What are the important network practices that seem to distort the image?
6. The three articles on classified information, the Tonkin Gulf incident, and Vietnam war coverage raise the fundamental issue of what role the press can perform in covering certain stories when the government holds the power to restrict coverage of documents and action. Do you feel the press is too restricted? Do you feel that it has used its resources well?
7. In what ways does the government intervene in broadcast news? Do you feel that First Amendment protections should also be applied to broadcast news? Why?

PROJECTS OR REPORTS

Television News. Prepare a concise essay discussing the "mirror image" concept as explained by Epstein and as given in the opinions of Smith and Severeid. How do the practices outlined by Greene support or contradict the Epstein analysis?

A related research project might be done by analyzing the network or local news programs of a local station for one week (five evenings). Identify the number of news items used, the source of those items (local, state, national or international), the use of film, and the time of the item (that is, did it appear the same day the incident occurred?). Prepare a report for class.

Prepare a research report dealing with the issue of government regulation of broadcast news. Compare the situation in the broadcast field with that of the newspaper.

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THE ANTI-MEDIA SPEECHES OF SPIRO T. AGNEW

THE DES MOINES SPEECH*

Tonight I want to discuss the importance of the television news medium to the American people. No nation depends more on the intelligent judgment of its citizens. No medium has a more profound influence over public opinion. Nowhere in our system are there fewer checks on vast power. So, nowhere should there be more conscientious responsibility exercised than by the news media. The question is, Are we demanding enough of our television news presentations? And are the men of this medium demanding enough of themselves?

Monday night a week ago, President Nixon delivered the most important address of his Administration, one of the most important of our decade. His subject was Vietnam. His hope was to rally the American people to see the conflict through to a lasting and just peace in the Pacific. For thirty-two minutes, he reasoned with a nation that has suffered almost a third of a million casualties in the longest war in its history.

When the President completed his address—an address, incidentally, that he spent weeks in the preparation of—his words and policies were subjected to instant analysis and querulous criticism. The audience of seventy million Americans gathered to hear the President of the United States was inherited by a small band of network commentators and self-appointed analysts, the majority of whom expressed, in one way or another, their hostility to what he had to say.

It was obvious that their minds were made up in advance. Those who recall the fumbling and groping that followed President Johnson's dramatic disclosure of his intention not to seek another term have seen these men in a genuine state of non-preparedness. This was not it.

One commentator twice contradicted the President's statement about the exchange of correspondence with Ho Chi Minh. Another challenged the President's abilities as a politician. A third asserted that the President was "following a Pentagon line." Others, by the

*The most discussed activities of Spiro T. Agnew, former vice-president of the United States, have been in relation to the performance of the mass media, particularly the work of television news reporters, commentators and documentary writers and producers. This speech of November 13, 1969 was made to a group of Iowa Republicans. It and the Montgomery speech are reprinted because the substance of Agnew's charges will continue to be repeated by others.

expression on their faces, the tone of their questions and the sarcasm of their responses, made clear their sharp disapproval.

To guarantee in advance that the President's plea for national unity would be challenged, one network trotted out Averell Harriman for the occasion. Throughout the President's message, he waited in the wings. When the President concluded, Mr. Harriman recited perfectly. He attacked the Thieu Government as unrepresentative; he criticized the President's speech for various deficiencies; he twice issued a call to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to debate Vietnam once again; he stated his belief that the Vietcong or North Vietnamese did not really want a military takeover of South Vietnam; and he told a little anecdote about a "very, very responsible" fellow he had met in the North Vietnamese delegation.

All in all, Mr. Harriman offered a broad range of gratuitous advice, challenging and contradicting the policies outlined by the President of the United States. Where the President had issued a call for unity, Mr. Harriman was encouraging the country not to listen to him.

A word about Mr. Harriman. For ten months he was America's chief negotiator at the Paris peace talks—a period in which the United States swapped some of the greatest military concessions in the history of warfare for an enemy agreement on the shape of the bargaining table. Like Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, Mr. Harriman seems to be under some heavy compulsion to justify his failure to anyone who will listen. And the networks have shown themselves willing to give him all the air time he desires.

Now every American has a right to disagree with the President of the United States, and to express publicly that disagreement. But the President of the United States has a right to communicate directly with the people who elected him, and the people of this country have the right to make up their own minds and form their own opinions about a Presidential address without having a President's words and thoughts characterized through the prejudices of hostile critics before they can even be digested.

When Winston Churchill rallied public opinion to stay the course against Hitler's Germany, he didn't have to contend with a gaggle of commentators raising doubts about whether he was reading public opinion right, or whether Britain had the stamina to see the war through.

When President Kennedy rallied the nation in the Cuban missile crisis, his address to the people was not chewed over by a roundtable of critics who disparaged the course of action he'd asked Americans to follow.

The purpose of my remarks tonight is to focus your attention on this little group of men who not only enjoy a right of instant rebuttal to every Presidential address, but, more importantly, wield a free hand in selecting, presenting and interpreting the great issues in our nation.

First, let's define that power. At least forty million Americans every night, it's estimated, watch the network news. Seven million of them view ABC, the remainder being divided between NBC and CBS. [Editor's Note: Many of these millions plus about 25-million other Americans also have the benefit of receiving world and national news from their local stations, which are not bound to give the same emphasis as the networks; indeed, some local newscasters give their own very conservative twists to "big" news through film and commentary.]

According to Harris polls and other studies, for millions of Americans the networks are the sole source of national and world news. In Will Roger's observation, what you knew was what you read in the newspaper. Today for growing millions of Americans, it's what they see and hear on their television sets.

Now how is this network news determined? A small group of men, numbering perhaps no more than a dozen anchormen, commentators and executive producers, settle upon the 20 minutes or so of film and commentary that's to reach the public. This selection is made from the 90 to 180 minutes that may be available. Their powers of choice are broad.

They decide what 40 to 50 million Americans will learn of the day's events in the nation and the world.

We cannot measure this power and influence by the traditional democratic standards, for these men can create national issues overnight.

They can make or break by their coverage and commentary, a Moratorium on the war.

They can elevate men from obscurity to national prominence within a week. They can reward some politicians with national exposure and ignore others.

For millions of Americans the network reporter who covers a continuing issue—like the ABM or civil rights—becomes, in effect, the presiding judge in a national trial by jury.

It must be recognized that the networks have made important contributions to the national knowledge—through news, documentaries and specials they have often used their power constructively and creatively to awaken the public conscience to critical problems. The networks made "hunger" and "black lung disease" national



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'A small elite group of men decided what you would or would not see on television. . .'

issues overnight. The TV networks have done what no other medium could have done in terms of dramatizing the horrors of war. The networks have tackled our most difficult social problems with a directness and an immediacy that's the gift of their medium. They focus the nation's attention on its environment abuses—on pollution in the Great Lakes and the threatened ecology of the Everglades.

But it was also the networks that elevated Stokely Carmichael and George Lincoln Rockwell from obscurity to national prominence.

Nor is their power confined to the substantive. A raised eyebrow, an inflection of the voice, a caustic remark dropped in the middle of a broadcast can raise doubts in a million minds about the veracity of a public official or the wisdom of a government policy.

One Federal Communications Commissioner considers the powers of the networks equal to that of local, state, and federal governments all combined. Certainly it represents a concentration of power over American public opinion unknown in history.

Now what do Americans know of the men who wield this power? Of the men who produce and direct the network news, the nation knows practically nothing. Of the commentators, most Americans know little other than that they reflect an urbane and assured presence, seemingly well-informed on every important matter.

We do know that to a man these commentators and producers live and work in the geographical and intellectual confines of Washington, D.C., or New York City, the latter of which James Reston terms the "most unrepresentative community in the entire United States."

Both communities bask in their own provincialism, their own parochialism.

We can deduce that these men read the same newspapers. They draw their political and social views from the same sources. Worse, they talk constantly to one another, thereby providing artificial reinforcement to their shared viewpoints.

Do they allow their biases to influence the selection and presentation of the news? David Brinkley states "objectivity is impossible to normal human behavior." Rather, he says, we should strive for "fairness."

Another anchorman on a network news show contends, and I quote: "You can't expunge all your private convictions just because you sit in a seat like this and a camera starts to stare at you. I think your program has to reflect what your basic feelings are. I'll plead guilty to that."

Less than a week before the 1968 election, this same commentator charged that President Nixon's campaign commitments were no more durable than campaign balloons. He claimed that, were it not for the fear of hostile reactions, Richard Nixon would be giving into, and I quote him exactly, "his natural instinct to smash the enemy with a club or go after him with a meat axe."

Had this slander been made by one political candidate about another, it would have been dismissed by most commentators as a partisan attack. But this attack emanated from the privileged sanctuary of a network studio and therefore had the apparent dignity of an objective statement.

The American people would rightly not tolerate this concentration of power in government.

Is it not fair and relevant to question its concentration in the hands of a tiny, enclosed fraternity of privileged men elected by no one and enjoying a monopoly sanctioned and licensed by government?

The views of the majority of this fraternity do not—and I repeat, not—represent the views of America.

That is why such a great gulf existed between how the nation received the President's address and how the networks reviewed it.

Not only did the country receive the President's address more warmly than the networks, but so also did the Congress of the United States.

Yesterday, the President was notified that 300 individual Congressmen and 50 Senators of both parties had endorsed his efforts for peace.

As with other American institutions, perhaps it is time that the networks were made more responsive to the views of the nation and more responsible to the people they serve.

Now I want to make myself perfectly clear. I'm not asking for government censorship or any other kind of censorship. I'm asking whether a form of censorship already exists when the news that 40 million Americans receive each night is determined by a handful of men responsible only to their corporate employers and is filtered through a handful of commentators who admit to their own set of biases.

The questions I'm raising here tonight should have been raised by others long ago. They should have been raised by those Americans who have traditionally considered the preservation of freedom of speech and freedom of the press their special provinces of responsibility.

They should have been raised by those Americans who share the view of the late Justice Learned Hand that "right conclusions are more likely to be gathered out of a multitude of tongues than through any kind of authoritative selection."

Advocates for the networks have claimed a First Amendment right to the same unlimited freedoms held by the great newspapers of America.

But the situations are not identical. Where the *New York Times* reaches 800,000 people, NBC reaches 20 times that number on its evening news. Nor can the tremendous impact of seeing television film and hearing commentary be compared with reading the printed page.

A decade ago, before the network news acquired such dominance over public opinion, Walter Lippmann spoke to the issue. He said: "there's an essential and radical difference between television and printing. The three or four competing television stations control virtually all that can be received over the air by ordinary television sets. But besides the mass circulation dailies, there are weeklies, monthlies, out-of-town newspapers and books. If a man doesn't like his newspaper, he can read another from out of town, or wait for a weekly news magazine. It is not ideal, but it is infinitely better than the situation in television. There, if a man does not like what the networks offer him, all he can do is turn them off, and listen to a phonograph." "Networks," he stated, "which are few in number, have a virtual monopoly of a whole medium of communication." The newspapers of mass circulation have no monopoly on the medium of print.

Now a "virtual monopoly of a whole medium of communication" is not something that a democratic people should blindly ignore. And we are not going to cut off our television sets and listen to the phonograph just because the airwaves belong to the networks. They don't. They belong to the people.

As Justice Byron White wrote in his landmark opinion six months ago, "it's the right of the viewers and listeners, not the right of the broadcasters, which is paramount."

Now it's argued that this power presents no danger in the hands of those who have used it responsibly. But, as to whether or not the networks have abused the power they enjoy, let us call as our first witness former Vice President Humphrey and the city of Chicago. According to Theodore White, television's intercutting of the film from the streets of Chicago with the "current proceedings on the floor of the convention created the most striking and false political picture of 1968—the nomination of a man for the American Presidency by the brutality and violence of merciless police." [Editor's Note: It must be noted that the only reason Americans did not see the street demonstrations when they occurred, but instead saw film which had to be quickly edited at the convention site, was that a telephone strike had made it impossible to telecast live from downtown Chicago. Johnson-Humphrey Democrats agreed with these decisions. White's book also tells of the continual harassment of TV men by Mayor Daley and police, including threats to men delivering film to the main convention hall.]

If we are to believe a recent report of the House of Representatives Commerce Committee, then television's presentation of the violence in the streets worked an injustice on the reputation of the

Chicago police. According to the committee findings, one network in particular presented, and I quote, "a one-sided picture which in large measure exonerates the demonstrators and protesters." Film of provocations of police that was available never saw the light of day, while the film of a police response which the protesters provoked was shown to millions.

Another network showed virtually the same scene of violence from three separate angles without making clear it was the same scene. And, while the full report is reticent in drawing conclusions, it is not a document to inspire confidence in the fairness of the network news.

Our knowledge of the impact of network news on the national mind is far from complete, but some early returns are available. Again, we have enough information to raise serious questions about its effect on a democratic society. Several years ago Fred Friendly, one of the pioneers of network news, wrote that its missing ingredients were "conviction, controversy and a point of view." The networks have compensated with a vengeance.

And in the networks' endless pursuit of controversy, we should ask: What is the end value—to enlighten or to profit? What is the end result—to inform or to confuse? How does the ongoing exploration for more action, more excitement, more drama serve our national search for internal peace and stability?

Gresham's Law seems to be operating in the network news. Bad news drives out good news. The irrational is more controversial than the rational. Concurrency can no longer compete with dissent.

One minute of Eldridge Cleaver is worth ten minutes of Roy Wilkins. The labor crisis settled at the negotiating table is nothing compared to the confrontation that results in a strike—or better yet, violence along the picket lines. Normality has become the nemesis of the network news.

Now the upshot of all this controversy is that a narrow and distorted picture of America often emerges from the televised news. A single, dramatic piece of the mosaic becomes, in the minds of millions, the entire picture. And the American who relies upon television for his news might conclude that the majority of American students are embittered radicals. That the majority of black Americans feel no regard for their country. That violence and lawlessness are the rule rather than the exception on the American campus. We know that none of these conclusions is true.

Perhaps the place to start looking for a credibility gap is not in the offices of the government in Washington but in the studios of the networks in New York.

Television may have destroyed the old stereotypes, but has it not created new ones in their places?

What has this passionate pursuit of “controversy” done to the politics of progress through local compromise essential to the functioning of a democratic society?

The members of Congress or the Senate who follow their principles and philosophy quietly in a spirit of compromise are unknown to many Americans, while the loudest and most extreme dissenters on every issue are known to every man in the street.

How many marches and demonstrations would we have if the marchers did not know that the ever-faithful TV cameras would be there to record their antics for the next news show?

We’ve heard demands that Senators and Congressmen and judges make known all their financial connections so that the public will know who and what influences their decisions and their votes. Strong arguments can be made for that view.

But when a single commentator or producer, night after night, determines for millions of people how much of each side of a great issue they are going to see and hear, should he not first disclose his personal views on the issues as well?

In this search for excitement and controversy, has more than equal time gone to the minority of Americans who specialize in attacking the United States—its institutions and its citizens?

Tonight I’ve raised questions. I’ve made no attempt to suggest the answers. The answers must come from the media men. They are challenged to turn their critical powers on themselves, to direct their energy, their talent and their conviction toward improving the quality and objectivity of news presentation.

They are challenged to structure their own civic ethics to relate their great freedom to the great responsibilities they hold.

And the people of America are challenged, too, challenged to press for responsible news presentations. The people can let the networks know that they want their news straight and objective. The people can register their complaints on bias through mail to the networks and phone calls to local stations. This is one case where the people must defend themselves; where the citizen, not the government, must be the reformer; where the consumer can be the most effective crusader.

By way of conclusion, let me say that every elected leader in the United States depends on these men of the media. Whether what I’ve said to you tonight will be heard and seen at all by the nation is not my decision, it’s not your decision, it’s their decision.

In tomorrow’s edition of the Des Moines *Register*, you’ll be able

to read a news story detailing what I've said tonight. Editorial comment will be reserved for the editorial page, where it belongs.

Should not the same wall of separation exist between news and comment on the nation's networks?

Now, my friends, we'd never trust such power, as I've described, over public opinion in the hands of an elected government. It's time we questioned it in the hands of a small and unelected elite.

The great networks have dominated America's airways for decades. The people are entitled to a full accounting of their stewardship.

THE MONTGOMERY SPEECH*

Spiro T. Agnew

One week ago tonight I flew out to Des Moines, Iowa, and exercised my right to dissent.

This is a great country—in this country every man is allowed freedom of speech, even the Vice President.

Of course, there's been some criticism of what I said out there in Des Moines. Let me give you a sampling.

One Congressman charged me with, and I quote, "a creeping socialistic scheme against the free enterprise broadcast industry." Now this is the first time in my memory that anyone ever accused Ted Agnew of having socialist ideas.

On Monday, largely because of that address, Mr. Humphrey charged the Nixon Administration with a "calculated attack" on the right of dissent and on the media today. Yet it's widely known that Mr. Humphrey himself believes deeply that the unfair coverage of the Democratic convention in Chicago, by the same media, contributed to his defeat in November.

Now his wounds are apparently healed, and he's casting his lot with those who were questioning his own political courage a year ago. But let's leave Mr. Humphrey to his own conscience. America already has too many politicians who would rather switch than fight.

There were others that charged that my purpose in that Des Moines speech was to stifle dissent in this country. Nonsense. The

*Vice-President Agnew did not limit his criticism of the News media to television. He often included newspapers, and in Montgomery, Alabama, on November 20, 1969, he made some scathing remarks about the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* before the Chamber of Commerce.

expression of my views has produced enough rugged dissent in the last week to wear out a whole covey of commentators and columnists.

One critic charged that the speech was disgraceful, ignorant and base; that leads us as a nation, he said, into an ugly era of the most fearsome suppression and intimidation.

One national commentator, whose name is known to everyone in this room, said: "I hesitate to get in the gutter with this guy."

Another commentator charges that "it was one of the most sinister speeches that I've ever heard made by a public official."

The president of one network said that it was an unprecedented attempt to intimidate a news medium which depends for its existence upon Government licenses. The president of another charged me with an appeal to prejudice, and said that it was evident that I would prefer the kind of television that would be subservient to whatever political group happened to be in authority at the time.

And they say I have a thin skin.

Here indeed are classic examples of overreaction. These attacks do not address themselves to the questions I raised. In fairness, others, the majority of the critics and commentators, did take up the main thrust of my address.

And if the debate that they have engaged in continues, our goal will surely be reached, our goal which of course is a thorough self-examination by the networks of their own policies and perhaps prejudices. That was my objective then, and that's my objective now.

Now let me repeat to you the thrust of my remarks the other night and perhaps make some new points and raise a few new issues.

I'm opposed to censorship of television, of the press in any form. I don't care whether censorship is imposed by government or whether it results from management in the choice and presentation of the news by a little fraternity having similar social and political views. I'm against, I repeat, I'm against media censorship in all forms.

But a broader spectrum of national opinion should be represented among the commentators in the network news. Men who can articulate other points of view should be brought forward and a high wall of separation should be raised between what is news and what is commentary.

And the American people should be made aware of the trend toward the monopolization of the great public information vehicles and the concentration of more and more power in fewer and fewer hands.

Should a conglomerate be formed that tied together a shoe

company with a shirt company, some voice will rise up righteously to say that this is a great danger to the economy and that the conglomerate ought to be broken up.

But a single company, in the nation's capital, holds control of the largest newspaper in Washington, D.C., and one of the four major television stations, and an all-news radio station, and one of the three major national news magazines—all grinding out the same editorial line—and this is not a subject that you've seen debated on the editorial pages of *The Washington Post* or *The New York Times*.

For the purpose of clarity, before my thoughts are obliterated in the smoking typewriters of my friends in Washington and New York, let me emphasize that I'm not recommending the dismemberment of the Washington Post Company, I'm merely pointing out that the public should be aware that these four powerful voices hearken to the same master.

I'm raising these questions so that the American people will become aware of—and think of the implications of—the growing monopoly that involves the voices of public opinion, on which we all depend for our knowledge and for the basis of our views.

When *The Washington Times-Herald* died in the nation's capital, that was a political tragedy; and when *The New York Journal-American*, *The New York World-Telegram and Sun*, *The New York Mirror* and *The New York Herald Tribune* all collapsed within this decade, that was a great, great political tragedy for the people of New York. *The New York Times* was a better newspaper when they were all alive than it is now that they are gone.

And what has happened in the City of New York has happened in other great cities of America.

Many, many strong, independent voices have been stilled in this country in recent years. And lacking the vigor of competition, some of those who have survived have—let's face it—grown fat and irresponsible.

I offer an example: When 300 Congressmen and 59 Senators signed a letter endorsing the President's policy in Vietnam, it was news—and it was big news. Even *The Washington Post* and *The Baltimore Sun*—scarcely house organs for the Nixon Administration—placed it prominently in their front pages.

Yet the next morning *The New York Times*, which considers itself America's paper of record, did not carry a word. Why? Why?

If a theology student in Iowa should get up at P.T.A. luncheon in Sioux City and attack the President's Vietnam policy, my guess is that you'd probably find it reported somewhere in the next morn-

ing's issue of *The New York Times*. But when 300 Congressmen endorse the President's Vietnam policy, the next morning it's apparently not considered news fit to print.

Just this Tuesday when the Pope, the spiritual leader of half a billion Roman Catholics, applauded the President's effort to end the war in Vietnam and endorsed the way he was proceeding, that news was on Page 11 of *The New York Times*. The same day a report about some burglars who broke into a souvenir shop at St. Peter's and stole \$9,000 worth of stamps and currency—that story made Page 3. How's that for news judgment?

A few weeks ago here in the South I expressed my views about street and campus demonstrations. Here's how *The New York Times* responded:

"He (that's me) lambasted the nation's youth in sweeping and ignorant generalizations, when it's clear to all perceptive observers that American youth is far more imbued with idealism, a sense of service and a deep humanitarianism than any generation in recent history, including particularly Mr. Agnew's generation."

That's what *The New York Times* said.

Now that seems a peculiar slur on a generation that brought America out of the great depression without resorting to the extremes of Communism or Fascism. That seems a strange thing to say about an entire generation that helped to provide greater material blessings and more personal freedom—out of that depression—for more people than any other nation in history. We have not finished the task by any means—but we are still on the job.

Just as millions of young Americans in this generation have shown valor and courage and heroism fighting the longest, and least popular, war in our history, so it was the young men of my generation who went ashore at Normandy under Eisenhower, and with MacArthur into the Philippines.

Yes, my generation, like the current generation, made its own share of great mistakes and great blunders. Among other things, we put too much confidence in Stalin and not enough in Winston Churchill.

But, whatever freedom exists today in Western Europe and Japan, exists because hundreds of thousands of young men of my generation are lying in graves in North Africa and France and Korea and a score of islands in the Western Pacific.

This might not be considered enough of a sense of service or a deep humanitarianism for the perceptive critics who write editorials for *The New York Times*, but it's good enough for me. And I'm content to let history be the judge.

Now, let me talk briefly about the younger generation. I have not and I do not condemn this generation of young Americans. Like Edmund Burke, I wouldn't know how to draw up an indictment against a whole people. After all, they're our sons and daughters. They contain in their numbers many gifted, idealistic and courageous young men and women.

But they also list in their numbers an arrogant few who march under the flags and portraits of dictators, who intimidate and harass university professors, who use gutter obscenities to shout down speakers with whom they disagree, who openly profess their belief in the efficacy of violence in a democratic society.

Oh yes, the preceding generation had its own breed of losers and our generation dealt with them through our courts, our laws and our system. The challenge is now for the new generation to put its house in order.

Today, Dr. Sydney Hook writes of "storm troopers" on the campus: that "fanaticism seems to be in the saddle." Arnold Beichman writes of "young Jacobins" in our schools who "have cut down university administrators, forced curriculum changes, halted classes, closed campuses and set a nationwide chill of fear all through the university establishment." Walter Laqueur writes in *Commentary* that "the cultural and political idiocies perpetuated with impunity in this permissive age have gone clearly beyond the borders of what is acceptable for any society, however liberally it may be constructed."

George Kennan has devoted a brief, cogent and alarming book to the inherent dangers of what's taking place in our society and in our universities. Irving Kristol writes that our "radical students find it possible to be genuinely heartsick at the injustice and brutalities of American society, at the same time they are blandly approving of injustice and brutality committed in the name of 'the revolution.'" Or, as they like to call it, "the movement."

Now those are not names drawn at random from the letter head of Agnew-for-Vice-President committee. Those are men more eloquent and erudite than I, and they raise questions that I've tried to raise.

For we must remember that among this generation of Americans there are hundreds who have burned their draft cards and scores who have deserted to Canada and Sweden to sit out the war. To some Americans, a small minority, these are the true young men of conscience in the coming generation.

Voices are and will continue to be raised in the Congress and beyond asking that amnesty—a favorite word—amnesty should be

provided for these young and misguided American boys. And they will be coming home one day from Sweden and from Canada and from a small minority of our citizens they will get a hero's welcome.

They are not our heroes. Many of our heroes will not be coming home; some are coming back in hospital ships, without limbs or eyes, with scars they shall carry for the rest of their lives.

Having witnessed firsthand the quiet courage of wives and parents receiving posthumously for their heroes Congressional Medals of Honor, how am I to react when people say, "Stop speaking out, Mr. Agnew, stop raising your voice."

Should I remain silent while what these heroes have done is vilified by some as "a dirty, immoral war" and criticized by others as no more than a war brought on by the chauvinistic anti-Communism of Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon?

These young men made heavy sacrifices so that a developing people on the rim of Asia might have a chance for freedom that they obviously will not have if the ruthless men who rule in Hanoi should ever rule over Saigon. What's dirty or immoral about that?

One magazine this week said that I'll go down as the "great polarizer" in American politics. Yet, when that large group of young Americans marched up Pennsylvania Avenue and Constitution Avenue last week, they sought to polarize the American people against the President's policy in Vietnam. And that was their right. And so it is my right, and my duty, to stand up and speak out for the values in which I believe.

How can you ask the man in the street in this country to stand up for what he believes if his own elected leaders weasel and cringe.

It's not an easy thing to wake up each morning to learn that some prominent man or some prominent institution has implied that you're a bigot or a racist or a fool.

I'm not asking immunity from criticism. This is the lot of a man in politics; we wouldn't have it any other way in a democratic society.

But my political and journalistic adversaries sometimes seem to be asking something more—that I circumscribe my rhetorical freedom while they place no restriction on theirs.

As President Kennedy observed in a far more serious situation: This is like offering an apple for an orchard.

We do not accept those terms for continuing the national dialogue. The day when the network commentators and even the gentlemen of *The New York Times* enjoyed a form of diplomatic immunity from comment and criticism of what they said is over.

Yes, gentlemen, the day is passed.

Just as a politician's words—wise and foolish—are dutifully recorded by press and television to be thrown up at him at the appropriate time, so their words should be likewise recorded and likewise recalled.

When they go beyond fair comment and criticism they will be called upon to defend their statements and their positions just as we must defend ours. And when their criticism becomes excessive or unjust, we shall invite them down from their ivory towers to enjoy the rough and tumble of public debate.

I don't seek to intimidate the press, or the networks or anyone else from speaking out. But the time for blind acceptance of their opinions is past. And the time for naive belief in their neutrality is gone.

As to the future, each of us could do worse than to take as our own the motto of William Lloyd Garrison, who said, and I'm quoting: "I am in earnest. I will not equivocate. I will not excuse. I will not retreat a single inch. And I will be heard."

THE NEWS MEDIA AND RACIAL DISORDERS

THE KERNER REPORT*

The President's charge to the Commission asked specifically: "What effect do the mass media have on the [1967] riots?"

The question is far reaching and a sure answer is beyond the range of presently available scientific techniques. Our conclusions and recommendations are based upon subjective as well as objective factors; interviews as well as statistics; isolated examples as well as general trends.

Freedom of the press is not the issue. A free press is indispensable to the preservation of the other freedoms this nation cherishes. The recommendations in this chapter have thus been developed under the strong conviction that only a press unhindered by government can contribute to freedom.

To answer the President's question, the Commission:

- Directed its field survey teams to question government officials, law enforcement agents, media personnel, and ordinary citizens about their attitudes and reactions to reporting of the riots;

*From the *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*, 1968.

- Arranged for interviews of media representatives about their coverage of the riots;
- Conducted special interviews with ghetto residents about their response to coverage;
- Arranged for a quantitative analysis of the content of television programs and newspaper reporting in 15 riot cities during the period of the disorder and the days immediately before and after;
- From November 10-12, 1967, sponsored and participated in a conference of representatives from all levels of the newspaper, news magazine, and broadcasting industries at Poughkeepsie, New York.

Finally, of course, the Commissioners read newspapers, listened to the radio, watched television, and thus formed their own impressions of media coverage. All of these data, impressions, and attitudes provide the foundation for our conclusions.

The Commission also determined, very early, that the answer to the President's question did not lie solely in the performance of the press and broadcasters in reporting the riots proper. Our analysis had to consider also the overall treatment by the media of the Negro ghettos, community relations, racial attitudes, urban and rural poverty—day by day and month by month, year in and year out.

On this basis, we have reached three conclusions:

First, that despite incidents of sensationalism, inaccuracies, and distortions, newspapers, radio and television, on the whole, made a real effort to give a balanced, factual account of the 1967 disorders.

Second, despite this effort, the portrayal of the violence that occurred last summer failed to reflect accurately its scale and character. The overall effect was, we believe, an exaggeration of both mood and event.

Third, and ultimately most important, we believe that the media have thus far failed to report adequately on the causes and consequences of civil disorders and the underlying problems of race relations.

With these comments as a perspective, we discuss first the coverage of last summer's disturbances. We will then summarize our concerns with overall coverage of race relations.

We have found a significant imbalance between what actually happened in our cities and what the newspaper, radio, and television coverage of the riots told us happened. The Commission, in studying last summer's disturbances, visited many of the cities and interviewed participants and observers. We found that the disorders, as serious as they were, were less destructive, less widespread, and less a black-white confrontation than most people believed.

Lacking other sources of information, we formed our original

impressions and beliefs from what we saw on television, heard on the radio, and read in newspapers and magazines. . . .

As we started to probe the reasons for this imbalance between reality and impression, we first believed that the media had sensationalized the disturbances, consistently overplaying violence and giving disproportionate amounts of time to emotional events and "militant" leaders. To test this theory, we commissioned a systematic, quantitative analysis, covering the content of newspaper and television reporting in 15 cities where disorders occurred. The results of this analysis do not support our early belief. Of 955 television sequences of riot and racial news examined, 837 could be classified for predominant atmosphere as either "emotional," "calm," or "normal." Of these, 494 were classified as calm, 262 as emotional, and 81 as normal. Only a small proportion of all scenes analyzed showed actual mob action, people looting, sniping, setting fires, or being injured, or killed. Moderate Negro leaders were shown more frequently than militant leaders on television news broadcasts.

Of 3,779 newspaper articles analyzed, more focused on legislation which should be sought and planning which should be done to control ongoing riots and prevent future riots than on any other topic. The findings of this content analysis are explained in greater detail in Section I. They make it clear that the imbalance between actual events and the portrayal of those events in the press and on the air cannot be attributed solely to sensationalism in reporting and presentation.

We have, however, identified several factors which, it seems to us, did work to create incorrect and exaggerated impressions about the scope and intensity of the disorders.

First, despite the overall statistical picture, there were instances of gross flaws in presenting news of the 1967 riots. Some newspapers printed "scare" headlines unsupported by the mild stories that followed. All media reported rumors that had no basis in fact. Some newsmen staged "riot" events for the cameras. Examples are included in the next section.

Second, the press obtained much factual information about the scale of the disorders—property damage, personal injury, and deaths—from local officials, who often were inexperienced in dealing with civil disorders and not always able to sort out fact from rumor in the confusion. At the height of the Detroit riot, some news reports of property damage put the figure in excess of \$500 million. Subsequent investigation shows it to be \$40 to \$45 million.

The initial estimates were not the independent judgment of

reporters or editors. They came from beleaguered government officials. But the news media gave currency to these errors. Reporters uncritically accepted, and editors uncritically published, the inflated figures, leaving an indelible impression of damage up to more than ten times greater than actually occurred.

Third, the coverage of the disorders—particularly on television—tended to define the events as black-white confrontations. In fact almost all of the deaths, injuries and property damage occurred in all-Negro neighborhoods, and thus the disorders were not “race riots” as that term is generally understood.

Closely linked to these problems is the phenomenon of cumulative effect. As the summer of 1967 progressed, we think Americans often began to associate more or less neutral sights and sounds (like a squad car with flashing red lights, a burning building, a suspect in police custody) with racial disorders, so that the appearance of any particular item, itself hardly inflammatory, set off a whole sequence of association with riot events. Moreover, the summer’s news was not seen and heard in isolation. Events of these past few years—the Watts riot, other disorders, and the growing momentum of the civil rights movement—conditioned the responses of readers and viewers and heightened their reactions. What the public saw and read last summer thus produced emotional reactions and left vivid impressions not wholly attributable to the material itself.

Fear and apprehension of racial unrest and violence are deeply rooted in American society. They color and intensify reactions to news of racial trouble and threats of racial conflict. Those who report and disseminate news must be conscious of the background of anxieties and apprehension against which their stories are projected. This does not mean that the media should manage the news or tell less than the truth. Indeed, we believe that it would be imprudent and even dangerous to down-play coverage in the hope that censored reporting of inflammatory incidents somehow will diminish violence. Once a disturbance occurs, the word will spread independently of newspapers and television. To attempt to ignore these events or portray them as something other than what they are, can only diminish confidence in the media and increase the effectiveness of those who monger rumors and the fears of those who listen.

But to be complete, the coverage must be representative. We suggest that the main failure of the media last summer was that the totality of its coverage was not as representative as it should have been to be accurate. We believe that to live up to their own professed standards, the media simply must exercise a higher degree of care and

a greater level of sophistication than they have yet shown in this area—higher, perhaps, than the level ordinarily acceptable with other stories.

This is not “just another story.” It should not be treated like one. Admittedly, some of what disturbs us about riot coverage last summer stems from circumstances beyond media control. But many of the inaccuracies of fact, tone and mood were due to the failure of reporters and editors to ask tough enough questions about official reports, and to apply the most rigorous standards possible in evaluating and presenting the news. Reporters and editors must be sure that descriptions and pictures of violence, and emotional or inflammatory sequences or articles, even though “true” in isolation, are really representative and do not convey an impression at odds with the overall reality of events. The media too often did not achieve this level of sophisticated, skeptical, careful news judgment during last summer’s riots.

Our second and fundamental criticism is that the news media have failed to analyze and report adequately on racial problems in the United States and, as a related matter, to meet the Negro’s legitimate expectations in journalism. By and large, news organizations have failed to communicate to both their black and white audiences a sense of the problems America faces and the sources of potential solutions. The media report and write from the standpoint of a white man’s world. The ills of the ghetto, the difficulties of life there, the Negro’s burning sense of grievance, are seldom conveyed. Slightings and indignities are part of the Negro’s daily life, and many of them come from what he now calls “the white press”—a press that repeatedly, if unconsciously, reflects the biases, the paternalism, the indifference of white America. This may be understandable, but it is not excusable in an institution that has the mission to inform and educate the whole of our society.

Our criticisms, important as they are, do not lead us to conclude that the media are a cause of riots, any more than they are the cause of other phenomena which they report. It is true that newspaper and television reporting helped shape people’s attitudes toward riots. In some cities people who watched television reports and read newspaper accounts of riots in other cities later rioted themselves. But the causal chain weakens when we recall that in other cities, people in very much the same circumstances watched the same programs and read the same newspaper stories but did not riot themselves.

The news media are not the sole source of information and

certainly not the only influence on public attitudes. People obtained their information and formed their opinions about the 1967 disorders from the multiplicity of sources that condition the public's thinking on all events. Personal experience, conversations with others, the local and long-distance telephone are all important as sources of information and ideas and contribute to the totality of attitudes about riots.

No doubt, in some cases, the knowledge or the sight on a television screen of what had gone on elsewhere lowered inhibitions or kindled outrage or awakened desires for excitement or loot—or simply passed the word. Many ghetto residents we interviewed thought so themselves. By the same token, the news reports of riots must have conditioned the response of officials and police to disturbances in their own cities. The reaction of the authorities in Detroit was almost certainly affected in some part by what they saw or read of Newark a week earlier. The Commission believes that none of these private or official reactions was decisive in determining the course of the disorders. Even if they had been more significant than we think, however, we cannot envision a system of governmental restraints that could successfully eliminate these effects. And an effort to formulate and impose such restraints would be inconsistent with fundamental traditions in our society.

The failings of the media must be corrected and the improvement must come from within the media. A society that values and relies on a free press as intensely as ours, is entitled to demand in return responsibility from the press and conscientious attention by the press to its own deficiencies. The Commission has seen evidence that many of those who supervise, edit, and report for the news media are becoming increasingly aware of and concerned about their performance in this field. With that concern, and with more experience, will come more sophisticated and responsible coverage. But much more must be done, and it must be done soon.

The Commission has a number of recommendations designed to stimulate and accelerate efforts toward self-improvement. And we propose a privately organized, privately funded Institute of Urban Communications as a means for drawing these recommendations together and promoting their implementation. . . .

The Commission's major concern with the news media is not in riot reporting as such, but in the failure to report adequately on race relations and ghetto problems and to bring more Negroes into journalism. Concern about this was expressed by a number of participants in our Poughkeepsie conference. Disorders are only one aspect

of the dilemmas and difficulties of race relations in America. In defining, explaining, and reporting this broader, more complex and ultimately far more fundamental subject, the communications media, ironically, have failed to communicate.

They have not communicated to the majority of their audience—which is white—a sense of the degradation, misery, and hopelessness of living in the ghetto. They have not communicated to whites a feeling for the difficulties and frustrations of being a Negro in the United States. They have not shown understanding or appreciation of—and thus have not communicated—a sense of Negro culture, thought, or history.

Equally important, most newspaper articles and most television programming ignore the fact that an appreciable part of their audience is black. The world that television and newspapers offer to their black audience is almost totally white, in both appearance and attitude. As we have said, our evidence shows that the so-called “white press” is at best mistrusted and at worst held in contempt by many black Americans. Far too often, the press acts and talks about Negroes as if Negroes do not read the newspapers or watch television, give birth, marry, die, and go to PTA meetings. Some newspapers and stations are beginning to make efforts to fill this void, but they have still a long way to go.

The absence of Negro faces and activities from the media has an effect on white audiences as well as black. If what the white American reads in the newspapers or sees on television conditions his expectation of what is ordinary and normal in the larger society, he will neither understand nor accept the black American. By failing to portray the Negro as a matter of routine and in the context of the total society, the news media have, we believe, contributed to the black-white schism in this country.

When the white press does refer to Negroes and Negro problems it frequently does so as if Negroes were not a part of the audience. This is perhaps understandable in a system where whites edit and, to a large extent, write news. But such attitudes, in an area as sensitive and inflammatory as this, feed Negro alienation and intensify white prejudices.

We suggest that a top editor or news director monitor his news production for a period of several weeks, taking note of how certain stories and language will affect black readers or viewers. A Negro staff member could do this easily. Then the staff should be informed about the problems involved.

The problems of race relations coverage go beyond incidents of

white bias. Many editors and news directors, plagued by shortages of staff and lack of reliable contacts and sources of information in the city, have failed to recognize the significance of the urban story and to develop resources to cover it adequately.

We believe that most news organizations do not have direct access to diversified news sources in the ghetto. Seldom do they have a total sense of what is going on there. Some of the blame rests on Negro leaders who do not trust the media and will not deal candidly with representatives of the white press. But the real failure rests with the news organization themselves. They—like other elements of the white community—have ignored the ghettos for decades. Now they seek instant acceptance and cooperation.

The development of good contacts, reliable information, and understanding requires more effort and time than an occasional visit by a team of reporters to do a feature on a newly-discovered ghetto problem. It requires reporters permanently assigned to this beat. They must be adequately trained and supported to dig out and tell the story of a major social upheaval—among the most complicated, portentous and explosive our society has known. We believe, also, that the Negro Press—manned largely by people who live and work in the ghetto—could be a particularly useful source of information and guidance about activities in the black community. Reporters and editors from Negro newspapers and radio stations should be included in any conference between media and police-city representatives, and we suggest that large news organizations would do well to establish better lines of communication to their counterparts in the Negro press.

In short, the news media must find ways of exploring the problems of the Negro and the ghetto more deeply and more meaningfully. To editors who say “we have run thousands of inches on the ghetto which nobody reads” and to television executives who bemoan scores of underwatched documentaries, we say: find more ways of telling this story, for it is a story you, as journalists, must tell—honestly, realistically, and imaginatively. It is the responsibility of the news media to tell the story of race relations in America, and with notable exceptions, the media have not yet turned to the task with the wisdom, sensitivity, and expertise it demands.

The journalistic profession has been shockingly backward in seeking out, hiring, training, and promoting Negroes. Fewer than 5 percent of the people employed by the news business in editorial jobs in the United States today are Negroes. Fewer than 1 percent of editors and supervisors are Negroes, and most of them work for

Negro-owned organizations. The lines of various news organizations to the militant blacks are, by admission of the newsmen themselves, almost nonexistent. The plaint is, "We can't find qualified Negroes." But this rings hollow from an industry where, only yesterday, jobs were scarce and promotion unthinkable for a man whose skin was black. Even today, there are virtually no Negroes in positions of editorial or executive responsibility and there is only one Negro newsman with a nationally syndicated column.

News organizations must employ enough Negroes in positions of significant responsibility to establish an effective link to Negro actions and ideas and to meet legitimate employment expectations. Tokenism—the hiring of one Negro reporter, or even two or three—is no longer enough. Negro reporters are essential, but so are Negro editors, writers and commentators. Newspaper and television policies are, generally speaking, not set by reporters. Editorial decisions about which stories to cover and which to use are made by editors. Yet, very few Negroes in this country are involved in making these decisions, because very few, if any, supervisory editorial jobs are held by Negroes. We urge the news media to do everything possible to train and promote their Negro reporters to positions where those who are qualified can contribute to and have an effect on policy decisions.

It is not enough, though, as many editors have pointed out to the Commission, to search for Negro journalists. Journalism is not very popular as a career for aspiring young Negroes. The starting pay is comparatively low and it is a business which has, until recently, discouraged and rejected them. The recruitment of Negro reporters must extend beyond established journalists, or those who have already formed ambitions along these lines. It must become a commitment to seek out young Negro men and women, inspire them to become—and then train them as—journalists. Training programs should be started at high schools and intensified at colleges. Summer vacation and part-time editorial jobs, coupled with offers of permanent employment, can awaken career plans.

We believe that the news media themselves, their audiences and the country will profit from these undertakings. For if the media are to comprehend and then to project the Negro community, they must have the help of Negroes. If the media are to report with understanding, wisdom and sympathy on the problems of the cities and the problems of the black man—for the two are increasingly intertwined—they must employ, promote and listen to Negro journalists.

PRESS BEHAVIOR IN DALLAS

THE WARREN REPORT*

... If Oswald had been tried for his murders of November 22, the effects of the news policy pursued by the Dallas authorities would have proven harmful both to the prosecution and the defense. The misinformation reported after the shootings might have been used by the defense to cast doubt on the reliability of the State's entire case. Though each inaccuracy can be explained without great difficulty, the number and variety of misstatements issued by the police shortly after the assassination would have greatly assisted a skillful defense attorney attempting to influence the attitudes of jurors.

A fundamental objection to the news policy pursued by the Dallas police, however, is the extent to which it endangered Oswald's constitutional right to a trial by an impartial jury. Because of the nature of the crime, the widespread attention which it necessarily received, and the intense public feelings which it aroused, it would have been a most difficult task to select an unprejudiced jury, either in Dallas or elsewhere. But the difficulty was markedly increased by the divulgence of the specific items of evidence with which the police linked Oswald to the two killings. The disclosure of evidence encouraged the public, from which a jury would ultimately be impaneled, to prejudge the very questions that would be raised at trial.

Moreover, rules of law might have prevented the prosecution from presenting portions of this evidence to the jury. For example, though expressly recognizing that Oswald's wife could not be compelled to testify against him, District Attorney Wade revealed to the Nation that Marina Oswald had affirmed her husband's ownership of a rifle like that found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. Curry stated that Oswald had refused to take a lie detector test, although such a statement would have been inadmissible in a trial. The exclusion of such evidence, however, would have been meaningless if jurors were already familiar with the same facts from previous television or newspaper reports. Wade might have influenced prospective jurors by his mistaken statement that the paraffin test showed that Oswald had fired a gun. The tests merely showed that he

*From the *Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy*, 1964.

had nitrate traces on his hands, which did not necessarily mean that he had fired either a rifle or a pistol.

The disclosure of evidence was seriously aggravated by the statements of numerous responsible officials that they were certain of Oswald's guilt. Captain Fritz said that the case against Oswald was "cinched." Curry reported on Saturday that "we are sure of our case." Curry announced that he considered Oswald sane, and Wade told the public that he would ask for the death penalty.

The American Bar Association declared in December 1963 that "widespread publicizing of Oswald's alleged guilt, involving statements by officials and public disclosures of the details of 'evidence,' would have made it extremely difficult to impanel an unprejudiced jury and afford the accused a fair trial." Local bar associations expressed similar feelings. The Commission agrees that Lee Harvey Oswald's opportunity for a trial by 12 jurors free of preconception as to his guilt or innocence would have been seriously jeopardized by the premature disclosure and weighing of the evidence against him.

The problem of disclosure of information and its effect on trials is, of course, further complicated by the independent activities of the press in developing information on its own from sources other than law enforcement agencies. Had the police not released the specific items of evidence against Oswald, it is still possible that the other information presented on television and in the newspapers, chiefly of a biographical nature, would itself have had a prejudicial effect on the public.

In explanation of the news policy adopted by the Dallas authorities, Chief Curry observed that "it seemed like there was a great demand by the general public to know what was going on." In a prepared statement, Captain King wrote:

At that time we felt a necessity for permitting the newsmen as much latitude as possible. We realized the magnitude of the incident the newsmen were there to cover. We realized that not only the nation but the world would be greatly interested in what occurred in Dallas. We believed that we had an obligation to make as widely known as possible everything we could regarding the investigation of the assassination and the manner in which we undertook that investigation.

The Commission recognizes that the people of the United States, and indeed the world, had a deep-felt interest in learning of the events surrounding the death of President Kennedy, including the development of the investigation in Dallas. An informed public provided the ultimate guarantee that adequate steps would be taken to apprehend those responsible for the assassination and that all neces-

sary precautions would be taken to protect the national security. It was therefore proper and desirable that the public know which agencies were participating in the investigation and the rate at which their work was progressing. The public was also entitled to know that Lee Harvey Oswald had been apprehended and that the State had gathered sufficient evidence to arraign him for the murders of the President and Patrolman Tippit, that he was being held pending action of the grand jury, that the investigation was continuing, and that the law enforcement agencies had discovered no evidence which tended to show that any other person was involved in either slaying.

However, neither the press nor the public had a right to be contemporaneously informed by the police or prosecuting authorities of the details of the evidence being accumulated against Oswald. Undoubtedly the public was interested in these disclosures, but its curiosity should not have been satisfied at the expense of the accused's right to a trial by an impartial jury. The courtroom, not the newspaper or television screen, is the appropriate forum in our system for the trial of a man accused of a crime.

If the evidence in the possession of the authorities had not been disclosed, it is true that the public would not have been in a position to assess the adequacy of the investigation or to apply pressures for further official undertakings. But a major consequence of the hasty and at times inaccurate divulgence of evidence after the assassination was simply to give rise to groundless rumors and public confusion. Moreover, without learning the details of the case, the public could have been informed by the responsible authority of the general scope of the investigation and the extent to which State and Federal agencies were assisting in the police work.

While appreciating the heavy and unique pressures with which the Dallas Police Department was confronted by reason of the assassination of President Kennedy, primary responsibility for having failed to control the press and to check the flow of undigested evidence to the public must be borne by the police department. It was the only agency that could have established orderly and sound operating procedures to control the multitude of newsmen gathered in the police building after the assassination.

The Commission believes, however, that a part of the responsibility for the unfortunate circumstances following the President's death must be borne by the news media. The crowd of newsmen generally failed to respond properly to the demands of the police. Frequently without permission, news representatives used police offices on the third floor, tying up facilities and interfering with nor-

mal police operations. Police efforts to preserve order and to clear passageways in the corridor were usually unsuccessful. On Friday night the reporters completely ignored Curry's injunction against asking Oswald questions in the assembly room and crowding in on him. On Sunday morning, the newsmen were instructed to direct no questions at Oswald; nevertheless, several reporters shouted questions at him when he appeared in the basement.

Moreover, by constantly pursuing public officials, the news representatives placed an insistent pressure upon them to disclose information. And this pressure was not without effect, since the police attitude toward the press was affected by the desire to maintain satisfactory relations with the news representatives and to create a favorable image of themselves. Chief Curry frankly told the Commission that

I didn't order them out of the building, which if I had it to do over I would. In the past like I say, we had always maintained very good relations with our press, and they had always respected us.

Curry refused Fritz' request to put Oswald behind the screen in the assembly room at the Friday night press conference because this might have hindered the taking of pictures. Curry's subordinates had the impression that an unannounced transfer of Oswald to the county jail was unacceptable because Curry did not want to disappoint the newsmen; he had promised that they could witness the transfer. It seemed clear enough that any attempt to exclude the press from the building or to place limits on the information disclosed to them would have been resented and disputed by the newsmen, who were constantly and aggressively demanding all possible information about anything related to the assassination.

Although the Commission has found no corroboration in the video and audio tapes, police officials recall that one or two representatives of the press reinforced their demands to see Oswald by suggesting that the police had been guilty of brutalizing him. They intimated that unless they were given the opportunity to see him, these suggestions would be passed on to the public. Captain King testified that he had been told that

A short time after Oswald's arrest one newsman held up a photograph and said, "This is what the man charged with the assassination of the President looks like. Or at least this is what he did look like. We don't know what he looks like after an hour in the custody of the Dallas Police Department."

City Manager Elgin Crull stated that when he visited Chief Curry in his office on the morning of November 23, Curry told him that he

“felt it was necessary to cooperate with the news media representatives, in order to avoid being accused of using Gestapo tactics in connection with the handling of Oswald.” Crull agreed with Curry. The Commission deems any such veiled threats to be absolutely without justification.

The general disorder in the Police and Courts Building during November 22–24 reveals a regrettable lack of self-discipline by the newsmen. The Commission believes that the news media, as well as the police authorities, who failed to impose conditions more in keeping with the orderly process of justice, must share responsibility for the failure of law enforcement which occurred in connection with the death of Oswald. On previous occasions, public bodies have voiced the need for the exercise of self-restraint by the news media in periods when the demand for information must be tempered by other fundamental requirements of our society.

At its annual meeting in Washington in April 1964, the American Society of Newspaper Editors discussed the role of the press in Dallas immediately after President Kennedy’s assassination. The discussion revealed the strong misgivings among the editors themselves about the role that the press had played and their desire that the press display more self-discipline and adhere to higher standards of conduct in the future. To prevent a recurrence of the unfortunate events which followed the assassination, however, more than general concern will be needed. The promulgation of a code of professional conduct governing representatives of all news media would be welcome evidence that the press had profited by the lesson of Dallas.

The burden of insuring that appropriate action is taken to establish ethical standards of conduct for the news media must also be borne, however, by State and local governments, by the bar, and ultimately by the public. The experience in Dallas during November 22–24 is a dramatic affirmation of the need for steps to bring about a proper balance between the right of the public to be kept informed and the right of the individual to a fair and impartial trial.

THE CHICAGO POLICE AND THE PRESS

THE WALKER REPORT*

Not only in Chicago, but also throughout the nation there has been a storm of controversy over the fairness of mass media coverage—and particularly television coverage—of the Democratic National Convention. We have not been charged with investigating that aspect of convention week. Our concern here is with instances of violence involving media representatives and police.

We address the following questions, and shall consider media coverage only insofar as it bears on them.

1. Was any news staged and manufactured by demonstrators and newsmen?
2. Were newsmen calculated targets of violence by police?
3. Were any police attacks on newsmen unwarranted and unprovoked?

There is good reason to seek answers to these questions—of about 300 newsmen assigned to cover the parks and streets of Chicago during convention week, more than 65 were involved in incidents resulting in injury to themselves, damage to their equipment, or their arrest. . . .

Basic difficulties in providing coverage began weeks before the convention when a strike by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) against Illinois Bell Telephone Company held up most of the advance preparation of the convention hall facilities. The International Amphitheatre was the vital control and origination center for all media. Normally a minimum of ten weeks is required to install the complex cable systems, including microwave relay links for live remote coverage at key hotels and elsewhere. The impasse almost forced the convention elsewhere.

Microwave antennas, which dotted hotel roofs in Miami Beach for the Republican convention and allowed live television coverage inside and outside of hotels, could not be installed in Chicago. Seemingly endless union jurisdictional disputes on top of the three-month-old telephone strike left network news officials apparently convinced that there was virtually no chance of live pickups outside the convention hall and fearful that there might be none inside either.

*From the *Report to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence*, 1968.

The alternative in either case was reliance on video tape and film for television and on tape for radio. The procedure, according to network sources, could delay radio-TV transmissions for 20 to 30 minutes to an hour or more. Extent of the delay would depend not only on time needed to develop the film that was used—probably under 30 minutes—but also on transportation to the stations. Finally, a month before the convention was to start, a moratorium on the telephone strike was reached. The moratorium requested by city officials allowed IBEW volunteers to wire the Amphitheatre only. This blocked virtually all live coverage elsewhere. . . .

On Thursday prior to the convention Superintendent Conlisk directed the following order which was read at all roll calls for the next three days:

During and prior to the Democratic National Convention there will be many out-of-town newsmen in the city who will not have Chicago police press cards but will carry other types of press credentials. These credentials whether issued by the Democratic National Committee News organizations or other police departments will serve to properly identify the bearers as newsmen. . . .

It is in the interest of the department and the City of Chicago that there be a harmonious relationship between department personnel and the news media representatives who will report the Democratic National Convention to the world.

But the press and Chicago officials, particularly the police, had disagreements just prior to the convention. The Chicago Fire Department inspected television equipment vans and ordered them re-wired, saying they did not conform to the Chicago code. Police imposed a parking ban on TV camera vans. They ordered TV cameras off sidewalk locations near the convention hotels and threatened, according to one TV technician on the scene, to take the cameras apart “piece by piece” if they weren’t moved.

Frank Sullivan, a former Chicago newspaper reporter, and now director of Public Information for the police, denied the parking ban and aimed a stifling television coverage. “It is no device to block TV coverage,” he said. “It is simply a matter of priority. The delegates need space to board buses and the delegates take priority over television.” He said the police were working to locate nearby lots for television trucks. Some video tape trucks were already parked in a lot behind the Conrad Hilton Hotel. Cables were strung into the hotel to cameras, but no cameras were permitted on the sidewalk in front of the hotel or in open windows overlooking the front entrance. The police said that, because of security problems, cameras would not be

allowed to shoot film out of hotel windows. In addition, no cameras would be allowed on the roof of the Amphitheatre.

At a meeting with top representatives of the TV industry in Mayor Daley's office on Saturday noon a compromise was reached. The Mayor instructed a city street official to give them what they wanted "as long as security measures aren't violated." As it turned out, the TV representatives wanted live cameras in Grant Park across from the Hilton. The Mayor approved, but the Secret Service vetoed the plan.

They also wanted to construct a wooden TV platform at the southwest corner of Balbo Drive and Michigan Avenue in front of the Haymarket Lounge. This was rejected on the grounds that cameras at that location would tie up traffic. Finally it was decided to allow cameras in certain fixed positions.

The mounting list of television network problems led Richard S. Salant, CBS News president, to say that they formed "a pattern well beyond simple labor disputes, logistics and security problems."

Minor friction between police and press continued over the weekend before the convention opened. Overhead camera shots from "cherry picker" units were discouraged. Mobile news vans were told to move along from chosen locations. Between the restrictions created by the IBEW strike and the denial of parking to news vans on the street, live coverage other than at the Amphitheatre and at O'Hare Field (where President Johnson might arrive) had been pretty effectively barred, and newsmen felt more and more "squeezed" by the overwhelming security measures. They speculated among themselves, "Was the Democratic Party trying to minimize coverage of violence in the streets, should it occur?"

The stage was set. Press facilities were operational, and newsmen were ready to cover the many-sided convention story, determined to do so despite whatever problems arose.

By the time the convention began, there were over 6,000 newsmen in Chicago, 4,000 of them from out of town. The TV networks sent, by far, the largest contingents; NBC had over 750 in its Chicago Task Force, CBS about 740 and ABC about 500. . . .

As has been documented, there were ample causes before and during the convention week for media-police hostility. The media representatives felt hampered and frustrated by the convention arrangement difficulties and the ever-present security precautions. The police are never enthusiastic about the presence of newsmen in large-crowd situations and their irritation during the week grew for the reasons described above. Police emotions were heightened by their

impression, as they listened to radio, watched TV and read newspapers, that the media coverage was anti-Chicago, anti-Mayor Daley and anti-Police. . . .

The first instance of violence involving a member of the press in connection with the demonstrators took place Saturday night at about 11:45 p.m., at Clark Street opposite Menomonee Street on Chicago's Near North Side. *Chicago Daily News* reporter Lawrence Green came across some youthful demonstrators on the sidewalk who were shouting at police patrolling the street.

According to Green, he and other newsmen at the scene were ordered "in front" of the police lines and the police then charged the crowd on the sidewalk. Green said he was pushed, then stumbled, and another reporter fell on top of him. Green had his press credentials visible around his neck. As he scrambled to his feet, he said he held out his press card and yelled, "Press! Press! Press!" Nonetheless, a policeman came up to him and clubbed him on the back. Another police officer, seeing his credentials said, "Fuck your press cards."

Late Sunday night, the Chicago police cleared Lincoln Park of demonstrators. The demonstrators left the park and flowed into the Old Town area of Chicago's North Side and later marched downtown to the Michigan Avenue bridge. In the process, several clashes with the press occurred. . . .

On Monday, before the convention started, the first reports of beatings of newsmen began circulating, and articles and pictures appeared in the newspapers late Monday.

Police Superintendent James B. Conlisk ordered an investigation of the reports of clubbing of newsmen and photographers, and a general order was issued emphasizing the order of the previous week and calling for complete cooperation with newsmen. . . .

Despite these precautions, Monday, August 26, was to be one of the most hazardous days for newsmen. On Monday afternoon, a TV reporter was warned by two police detectives, separately, that "the word is being passed to get newsmen" and "be careful—the word is out to get newsmen."

In the early afternoon, an ABC-TV crew assigned to cover the hippies and demonstrators went to Lincoln Park. The crew consisted of correspondent James Burns, cameraman Charles Pharris, electrician Jud Marvin and audio-man Walter James. All were neatly dressed, wearing suits, and had clearly visible press badges. They went to the park because Burns had heard a report that there would be self-defense exercises by the National Mobilization Committee To End War in Vietnam. They were the only crew there. Only a few



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Law and Order

police officers and demonstrators were present. About 2 p.m., the four were sitting on the grass when a squadrol moved into the park. A number of demonstrators gathered around the squadrol. The police jumped out and pulled Tom Hayden out of the crowd. Pharris, who was kneeling on the ground about 35 yards away, started to film the arrest. As he rose, a policeman rushed up behind him and clubbed the zoom lens of his camera, breaking it and knocking it to the ground. Then he struck Marvin on the back with his club, and ran away before any of the four could get a clear look at him. . . .

At 5 a.m. Tuesday *Newsweek* News Editor Hal Bruno dispatched the following telegram to Mayor Daley and Superintendent James Conlisk. The telegram was typical of others to follow.

Newsweek Magazine hereby informs you that for the second night in a row our reporters and photographers were subject to unprovoked attacks by Chicago policemen. Three of our men were injured and we have evidence that individual policemen are deliberately assaulting newsmen. We can identify men and units and are anxious to cooperate with you so that immediate measures can be taken to safeguard newsmen in the performance of their duty. . . .

Wednesday morning, Chet Huntley on NBC radio broadcast nationally: "We in the calling of journalism have hesitated to talk about our problems in Chicago . . . but the hostility toward any kind of criticism, and the fear of telling how it is has become too much and it becomes our duty to speak out. . . . The significant part of all this is the undeniable manner in which Chicago police are going out of their way to injure newsmen, and prevent them from filming or gathering information on what is going on. The news profession in this city is now under assault by the Chicago Police."

On Wednesday night the violence broke out again. . . .

Chicago Daily News photographer Paul Sequeira was covering the demonstrations near the Hilton Hotel. After taking a picture of a police lieutenant spraying mace at people, he was himself maced by the same lieutenant. His camera blocked the spray, so he was not affected. (A picture relating to this incident appears in the photographic section.) A short while later Sequeira was following a police line moving north from the Hilton on Michigan Avenue. He wore a helmet marked "PRESS" and carried cameras around his neck. The police line turned west on Jackson Boulevard. As it did, Sequeira came upon the following scene:

A man in an army sergeant's uniform was beating a man dressed in white (identified as Dr. Richard Scott, intern at Presbyterian-St. Luke's Hospital). Approximately 12 policemen were standing around watching. Sequeira began photographing the incident. At least two policemen approached him saying, "Get out of here." Sequeira showed his press card and shouted "Press." He was hit on the helmet, arm and back by police and forced to his knees. Suddenly his helmet was on the ground. Sequeira tried to use a camera to fend off the blows to his head. Then, he curled up in the street and the police stopped clubbing him. His right hand was broken and he had head injuries. Despite his injuries, Sequeira continued covering the demonstrations. He took another picture of the "sergeant" (later identified

as an AWOL soldier, but not a sergeant) about 20 minutes later. When the man demanded the film and tried to kick him, Sequeira stopped a police car. The police took the sergeant into custody. Sequeira was treated for his injuries at Passavant Hospital later that night. . . .

On the *Today* show Thursday morning, Hugh Downs asked his NBC-TV viewers if there was any word to describe Chicago policemen other than "pigs!" One viewer who objected was Frank Sullivan, the beleaguered press officer for the Chicago police. "I was so incensed that I asked Superintendent Conlisk if it would be o.k. for me to hold a press conference," he said.

At 10:30 a.m., speaking extemporaneously before a large and stormy gathering of newsmen, Sullivan described demonstration leaders as communist revolutionaries "bent on the destruction of the United States. They are a pitiful handful. They have almost no support. But, by golly, they get the cooperation of the news media. They are built into something really big. . . . Let's get this thing into perspective." He charged news media with bias and poor judgment in criticizing the Chicago police. . . .

Chicago's Mayor Richard J. Daley held a press conference of his own late Thursday morning. He publicly criticized both the media and the protesters. Reading from a prepared statement, and giving no opportunity for questions, Mayor Daley placed much of the blame for the street disorders on the news media. He said the media set the stage for the disruptions by detailing the advance plans of the demonstrators. He also claimed that the efforts of law enforcement agencies were "distorted and twisted" in news accounts. The Mayor further charged that television was a "tool" used in plans for "calculated disruption and rioting." . . .

Also, on Thursday, a federal appellate judge, responding to the appeal of photographers O'Sullivan, Berliant, Morrill and Schnell, issued an injunction. The order restrained police from interfering "by force, violence or intimidation" with the constitutional rights of newsmen to cover public events.

That night, in an appearance with Walter Cronkite on CBS, Mayor Daley challenged the television networks to cover the more positive side of the police-demonstrator story, rather than merely the violent aftermath of each incident. He contended that the cameras never showed the police reasoning with the marchers or showing them where they could move freely or safely. Nor did TV ever tell about the policemen who were hurt, he said. . . . [Editor's Note: only a few incidents were included here.]

A total of 49 newsmen are described as having been hit, maced, or arrested, apparently without reason, by the police. Forty-three were hit, three were maced and three were arrested. Of the newsmen involved, 22 were reporters, 23 were photographers and 4 were members of the TV crews.

In ten of these incidents, photographic or recording equipment was deliberately broken; in one, the police intentionally knocked a reporter's notebook out of his hand.

In over 40 instances, the newsman involved was clearly identifiable as such; that is, even aside from photographers carrying the identifying apparatus of their trade, newsmen wore helmets, carried visible press badges or press passes hanging around their necks. In only four situations do the facts indicate that the newsmen were so mixed in with the crowd that the police could have hit them under the mistaken apprehension that they were demonstrators.

Forty-five of the incidents occurred at night, four during the daytime. Fourteen of the newsmen were from Chicago and the balance were from out of town. The average age was about 31 years; 28 were in the 20 to 30 year age bracket; ten were from 31 to 35; seven were over 35. We do not know the ages of the other four.

Ten of the incidents took place on Saturday and Sunday. The greatest number—25—occurred on Monday. None occurred on Tuesday (except for the Dan Rather incident at the Amphitheatre, which is not represented in the above statistics). On Wednesday, however, the violence resumed: there were 14 incidents.

There is evidence of a number of other instances of police-press violence. In 12 of these incidents, newsmen were struck by police baton; in three their photographic equipment was damaged by police. These are not reported in this chapter either because they took place when the police were moving large crowds (making it possible that any injury to newsmen was accidental) or because we do not have enough information to warrant their inclusion in this report.

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