

NIEMAN REPORTS

THE NIEMAN FOUNDATION AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Vol. XLVII No. 3 Fall 1993

FIVE DOLLARS

Harrison E. Salisbury

1908–1993
Reporter, Editor,
Author, Mentor



Japan's Feisty New Press
T.R. Reid

Balkan Reporters
Rewrite Guidelines
Sylvia Poggioli

Repression in East
Timor
Rui Araújo

A Changing Africa and the Media

*“...to promote and elevate the standards of
journalism in the United States”*

—Agnes Wahl Nieman, the benefactor of the
Nieman Foundation.

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AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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A Memorial to Harrison Evans Salisbury

BY BILL KOVACH

An organization like the Nieman Foundation with a discrete mission is fortunate to find from time to time opportunities to illuminate that mission with new lights provided by singular examples.

Few missions are so simply and so succinctly stated as that of the Nieman Foundation. It is to "elevate the standards and practices of journalism."

The career of Harrison Evans Salisbury (1908-1993) offers such an opportunity and the light it provides us is explained in the following pages of Nieman Reports. To focus the light on what made Salisbury's career so outstanding, we asked the writers of the following short pieces to share with us their appraisal of him, especially any lesson learned from his philosophy and work. To reinforce those reminiscences, we are also publishing excerpts from the Joe Alex Morris Jr. Memorial Lecture he delivered at Harvard in 1988. In that lecture he discussed the difficulty that journalists face in trying to learn the truth about events.

What you will read in the tributes and in the lecture is an underlying message written in many forms. That message is that the secret of great journalism is no secret at all. As with the mission of the Nieman Foundation, there are simple truths at the root of the best journalism.

In the past decade we have made quality journalism very difficult of definition. As the economics of the news business in which journalism is embedded has become more market driven we have redefined good journalism in economic terms. As whole cultures and societies redefine and reorder themselves we have redefined good journalism in social terms. Good journalism has come to be described as a matter of

demographics or good economics; as a matter of political correctness; as a matter of quality color separations. Good journalism is all those things. For the world of journalism has become more complicated as the world of communications has become more complicated.

But the light of Harrison Salisbury's career reminds us that this complex edifice is built on a simple and straightforward foundation. Its base firmly rests on the curious mind of a journalist of integrity.

As the simple declarative sentence communicates best, simple reporters with integrity elevate the standards of journalism. But as both of these things are simple of description, neither is simple in execution. The simple sentence and the simple reporter result from hard, disciplined work infused with great integrity and an ultimate respect for those who will receive the results of the work.

Harrison Salisbury was not a Nieman Fellow. He said he could never find the right time to apply. But he was a favorite of many Nieman classes. His seminars remain highlights of the Nieman experience for many fellows. He was an advisor to Nieman curators and, as he toured the world, one of the program's most diligent advocates and talent scouts. More importantly, the record of his work celebrates the values of the Nieman Foundation.

I would like to add one last small example of the impact of that work. I had hoped to share this personally with Harrison but didn't make the phone call in time in June. At a meeting with Russian journalists in Moscow which I attended at the invitation of Dr. Bruce Allyn and the Harvard Conflict Management Group, Harrison Salisbury's name

came up. We were discussing the destructive nature of uninformed reporting and of the kind of stereotypes careless reporters often adopt.

Vladimir Pozner, a man who bridged the American and the Russian cultures with great agility and understanding, said he could recall a shining example of a reporter who resisted those stereotypes and whose tireless reporting created clarity and understanding. That was Harrison Salisbury, he said. And, he added:

"No other writer, American or Russian, has ever written about the Russian people with more understanding than Harrison Salisbury did with his book on the siege of Leningrad."

It is in the light of that quality of his work that the Nieman Foundation has agreed with his family to seek to raise money to establish a memorial fund in Harrison Salisbury's name to support an international journalist. ■

THE SALISBURY FUND

The Harrison Salisbury Fund is being established to provide financial support for an international Nieman Fellow. Contributions should be sent to the Nieman Foundation, 1 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138. Checks should be made payable to the Nieman Foundation. The contributions are tax-deductible.

REMEMBERING HARRISON

RUSSELL BAKER

Columnist

The New York Times

Harrison had somehow arranged never to become old. Deals like this are commonly done with the Devil, and if that was the agent with whom Harrison dealt it was probably worked out when he went to see the old rogue about getting a visa to travel through Hell. He had been everywhere else, often long before any other newspaper pilgrim had even thought of traveling there. I remember a story he filed from a Mongolian yurt when Mongolia was still the far side of the moon. And others from Albania when none but the Albanians knew Albania or wanted to. Harrison was thrilled just to have been there. Ahead of anybody else of course.

It was the boyish gusto for adventure that distinguished him from most of us who were younger by a generation or more, and too often apt to be jaded, world-weary, tired-of-it-all by age 40. Not Harrison. At 80 he still had the intact mischief gene of a 15-year-old, not to mention the capacity for outrage of a college kid who has just learned that life is unfair and thinks something ought to be done about it, and damned fast too.

What a rare and lovely blessing it is for a journalist, this power to retain youth's passion for being always at grips with the whole world. In Harrison the passion ran so deep that he used up the whole world before it used up Harrison. And so, nearing his 80th year he was trekking thousands and thousands of miles through outermost China to reconstruct the Long March of Mao Zedong. What Harrison needed finally was a bigger world to fit his appetite for adventure.

Writers and film people constantly talk about a sequel to "Huckleberry Finn," which would tell the story of what happened to Huck after he grew

up. It's a silly idea because Huck grown up would be just another grown-up wondering how life had managed to slip through his fingers so fast. Anyway, *The Adventures of Harrison Salisbury* is such a lovely tale that there is no longer any need for professional hacks to invent an adulthood for Huck Finn. Harrison went ahead and lived it.

I think of him now touring Hell with notebook out, trying to find out where they keep Stalin and whether there are special privileges for American senators.

DAVID HALBERSTAM

Author

I was a sophomore in college in 1953, the year that Harrison did his extraordinary reporting on the events in the Kremlin which followed the death of Stalin, and I was mesmerized by his work; it was the kind of reporting that made me desperately want to be a journalist. I don't think you can underestimate the immense impact of reporters like Harrison and Homer Bigart on the generation that I belonged to. They and a relatively small handful of others like them did a kind of reporting that was well ahead of its time, regularly going against the grain in what was a far less iconoclastic age. They were possessed not merely of physical courage, but, far more important, intellectual courage as well. Harrison as much as anyone I ever knew seemed to celebrate the fact that the kind of reporting he specialized in would always make him at least momentarily unpopular. He seemed, more than anything else, amused by the firestorm he created when he went to Hanoi and reported on the less than surgical quality of American bombing.

He was an American original, an always restless native radical. He reported on seven decades in American life, and he as much as anyone chronicled for

American readers the coming (and now the passing) of the 20th Century. He always lived in the present, and he remained, more than anything else, young of spirit, never resting on his very considerable laurels, and ever distrustful of conventional wisdom. He never wanted to talk about anything he had witnessed in the past; instead he was passionately involved in what was happening in the present. I don't think I ever saw him so happy as when he had dinner in Moscow three years ago with David Remnick, then of *The Post*—the idea of being able to share his views of a country that had been so large a part of his life with someone so talented, so gifted, and so young was clearly thrilling to him. Of one of my contemporaries, a quite gifted reporter, he once said dismissively, "I don't like him. He's an old man in a young man's body." The first time I met him was in February 1960 when he was 50 and I was 25 and when we both witnessed the sit-ins of young black students in Nashville. I had always thought of myself as the hardest working reporter around and then that day I looked across the street in the area outside the Greyhound Terminal and saw *him*—that face was already familiar even in an age when reporters had not yet made their mark on television—and it was an epiphany. I had never seen anyone so driven; he seemed almost feral as he moved from one young person to another, constantly scribbling in his notebook. So this is how the big boys do it, I thought.

Some 25 years later we had become close friends, and once on the occasion of my 50th birthday I had complained to my wife about how tired I was of being a reporter and always living on the road, and how I doubted that I could do it very much longer. "Don't be silly," she said, "you'll be just like Harrison." So we decided, in order to make me feel younger, rather than give a 50th birthday party for me, we would

A Pilgrim's Unending Quest for Knowledge

Harrison Salisbury wrote that his life was a long journey and he was a pilgrim in an unending quest for knowledge. In the 1988 Joe Alex Morris Jr. Memorial Lecture at Harvard he explained the difficulties that journalists face in the quest for truth. Here are excerpts from that lecture.



Charlotte Salisbury's favorite picture of Harrison

I want to talk about some of the problems that are involved in newspaper reporting and coverage. Problems which exist particularly for the foreign correspondent, but equally for the correspondent who is attempting to report the events of a city or a community or a nation. Almost any kind of human happening which comes into his scan is subject to principles about which I propose to speak.

You may have noticed that I called [this talk] "Vietnam—The Rashomon Effect."

[The Japanese film] "Rashomon" shows [an] event as it appears to each one of the participants. It seems to the audience that a murder has occurred. But the longer the film goes on, and as we successively see this person and this person and this person in this set of circumstances, the more uncertain we become as to who committed that murder, although in the beginning we thought we knew.

In the end, we find ourselves, not only uncertain and unable to say which one of the people we saw

throw a 75th for him.

It was a grand occasion. My wife, Jean, had chosen distinctively American foods and American wines, for this most distinctively American reporter; the guest list was wondrous—among others Sheehan, Baker, Hersh, Gruson, Lewis, Lukas. ("There's no one here but people who have caused trouble for The New York Times," the wife of one executive said as she entered.) We could not, of course, hold the party on his exact birthday because he was already scheduled on that particular milestone, to be, pacemaker and all, up near the Yen-an caves retracing Chairman Mao's long march (I have a private vision of

that trek, of Harrison surrounded by a group of young Chinese Army officers, all of the Chinese, of course, out of breath) and he was not about to change his schedule for anything as frivolous as a 75th birthday party in his honor. He had no time to waste. In the 83rd and next to last year of his life he was busy doing the interviews for what would be his last book, but I found it hard to get together with him, for he was also finishing up the book tour for his previous book. And he was doing *legwork* for a review of David Remnick's book on the collapse of the Soviet Union when he died.

CLIFTON DANIEL
Former Managing Editor
The New York Times

By any measure, Harrison Salisbury was one of the great newspapermen of the 20th Century, a century in which history moved at a faster pace than at any time in our great adventure on this planet. And Harrison did his level best to experience and recount as much of that history as was humanly possible.

He was tireless, and he never faltered in the task he had set for himself. He wrote 29 books. He was not striving to set records, but to satisfy an insa-

was guilty, but we find ourselves uncertain as to whether or not a murder actually did occur. Now that, of course, is an exaggeration, but it is the kind of exaggeration which illuminates, because the proposition which it illuminates is: What is truth? And how difficult it is to establish truth.

This is what journalists, be they foreign or domestic, are all about. We are engaged in a constant struggle to find out what happened, how it happened, and what it means.

The first lesson which any journalist learns as a cub reporter, is on his first assignment, almost certainly. Which is very apt to be a very simple event—an automobile accident, any simple event of that kind. The reporter interviews one man who drove one car, a man who drove the other car, passengers if he can find them, people on the street and the police. And he quickly discovers that that event occurred in six or seven different ways. At first he's totally confused. But as a reporter with a responsibility of cutting through these different versions, he does his best to reconcile them. He writes an account which incorporates these different versions, including the contradictions. That is as close as he will come to truth in this particular death. Now, it may not be true at all. It may be that there was some other factor involved in this simple accident which none of these people reported to him, or perhaps did not see.

If you extrapolate from that particular event, you begin to understand the magnitude of the task of the reporter and

the editor in determining what happens and in determining how the story must be constructed, in determining the reliability of this reporter and his eye and his observations. It is not a simple thing.

Only [if] you have been involved in a war can you understand how complex this may be—how men on the battlefield not only do not know what the man next to them did or what the enemy did or what another enemy did, but they can't remember what they did. The reporter coming along later attempts to put this story straight, either from talking to the actual participants or, far more often, talking to the higher-ups to whom the reports have gone, simplified, exaggerated, incorporating mistakes. Any report you read in the newspaper of this kind of an event is only an approximation and it may not be an accurate approximation.

Not because the reporter didn't try, not because the witnesses he spoke to didn't try to tell the man exactly what happened, but because the confusion and the uncertainty is so great, that no one really knows what did happen. If you begin to magnify that from the small skirmish on the front line, and begin to try to understand a large campaign or a general movement, and if you compare, for example, the reports of that encounter, which are made by the side you happen to be covering, with the reports which are made by the enemy, enormous gaps exist.

The newspaper reporter is not ordinarily in a situation to judge what happened on the other side. He only takes the evidence of the people on his side, because they're

tiable journalistic curiosity. He shared the product of that curiosity with a vast audience.

He was a first-rate teacher, raconteur and lecturer. He made history live.

Harrison and I were friends and partners for half a century, although we began our relationship as rivals. He was News Editor of the United Press in London during World War II. A few yards down Fleet Street, I held a comparable job with the Associated Press.

We parted company when the UP, as news agencies are wont to do, snatched him up, and sent him to Moscow, with no preparation whatsoever. That didn't faze Harrison. He had eyes and he could see, fingers and he could write. As all

good newsmen do, he educated himself on the job; he was a self-made expert. His two great fields of interest were Russia and China.

His longest hitch in Moscow was five years with The New York Times, and, in my opinion his very best book was about Russia—"The 900 Days," the story of the agonizing German siege of Leningrad in the Second World War.

After the war, and Stalin's death, I succeeded him as Moscow correspondent of The Times, and in 1955 joined him on the paper's staff in New York.

In 1963, when I was chosen to be managing editor of The Times, the first question asked me by my boss was, "What are you going to do with Harrison Salisbury?" My reply was instantaneous



In Tiananmen Square, Beijing

the only ones he's able to get to. It will be much later, if ever, that he will hear the report which the enemy takes as being accurate. We seldom think of those things when we see a simple clip on television. We've been seeing a lot of them, for example, of the contras in Nicaragua. Usually what we see is men in battle dress, with weapons in their hands. They're trailing through a jungle, or they're down a road. We don't know what those men are doing. We don't know where they are. We don't know what's going on.

Anyone who has been in a war and has

and unambiguous: "Make him assistant managing editor." It was the best decision of my career.

Harrison performed superbly as an editor, but he never lost interest in being a reporter. He was especially eager to get into Communist China, but Peking and Washington jointly thwarted him for several years.

I suggested to Harrison that if he couldn't get into China, he should work his way all around it, with two purposes in mind: To learn as much as he could about China from those on the periphery, and perhaps find a way to worm his way into the country itself.

The most spectacular result of that tactic was that he wangled an invitation to Hanoi, the Communist capital of

been in headquarters, for example, and watches the reports as they come in, knows that the headquarters of the commander is totally ignorant of what's going on in the battlefield because the reports come in such [a] conflicting manner. They come in different time frames.

Now this can be further complicated by a circumstance which all reporters know. Editors like a good story. Editors of the electronic medium like a good picture. It may well be that the best picture is not of the important action at all. It may be some little dramatic moment, which has no significance whatsoever to the fighting, but which in a sense, epitomizes something.

It is a cliché, but nonetheless probably a very true cliché, to say that Vietnam for Americans was a living-room war. The evening news would present us one of these vignettes. We all remember that picture of the South Vietnamese officer pointing a pistol at the prisoner's head and shooting and down he goes. It's an indelible image.

What does it tell us about the war? Not very much. Does it tell us that the Vietnamese officer executes prisoners? Well, if we know anything about war, we know that many prisoners are indeed executed by their captors.

I remember talking to some German prisoners in Russia in the Crimea in World War II—there were several thousand of them—who said the most dangerous moment in the war is when you surren-

der. Will you be able to surrender without being shot? They were Germans fighting Russians. They could have been Japanese fighting Americans. Americans fighting Japanese.

So this simple and indelible image isn't telling us anything new about the war. But it may very well have an effect on our emotions. We may be revolted by the sight of the man and his pistol at the head of this lone figure.

Does that mean that that image should not be shown on television, because it doesn't really mean anything one way or another? I wouldn't say that for a moment. But I would say, when we see this, we should understand that this is a dramatic moment in a war. It doesn't mean anything more than that, one way or the other.

We have another dramatic image, in which [a] Buddhist monk sits down in the open street and crosses his legs and pours gasoline over himself, touches a match to it, and burns up before our eyes. Dramatic? Super dramatic. It's one of the most dramatic things you have ever seen. Does this picture have a meaning? Does it tell us something about what's going on in that war? Yes, it does. It demonstrates that the Buddhists are so opposed to the war—we don't know why—that they're willing to sacrifice their lives before our eyes.

We will remember that scene as long as we live. It will affect our emotions. Does it tell us more than we knew about the Buddhists? Probably, in this case, it does,

because we don't know much about Buddhists. We don't know that they have, perhaps a ceremonial attitude toward life which is different from our own. If this is true, then we get a new insight into the kind of people who are engaged in this war.

You can take another one of these remarkable images that will always be in the minds of people who saw it. This is a picture of a thatched hut and an American soldier coming up with his cigarette lighter and setting fire to that thatched hut.

Is that a meaningful picture? Not in the sense that the soldier burning down a thatched hut has done anything which is unusual in any possible way. There probably were thousands of thatched huts that were burned down in the war. But it has a special meaning emotionally to us, because here we see an American GI—we have a very fine image in our mind of our troops in Vietnam—and he seems to set fire for reasons that we do not understand—to a thatched hut in which some ordinary, peaceful people are living.

I think that in the case of each of these, we seem to see an act which has an element of pure truth in it. What we do not see is that there can be another way of looking at all of these different acts. We do not have that philosophy in our minds. We do not have that rationale in our minds, either as reporters most of the time, and certainly not as viewers and listeners, as ordinary people, trying to grasp in some way, the complex frag-

North Vietnam, during the miserable Vietnam War. His reporting disclosed that, contrary to Washington's assertions, the American bombing of Hanoi was hitting not only military targets but also civilian ones. Anybody who knew anything at all about so-called precision or pinpoint bombing knew it was impossible to avoid civilian casualties in a city such as Hanoi.

Harrison had blown the lid off again, and LBJ and Company were furious.

Now, I'll let somebody else take up the story—his phenomenal success with the Op-Ed page of *The Times*, for example, but I can't quit until I pay a tribute to Charlotte Salisbury: She made the man happy, as happy as he had ever been. They got together when their

children were grown, and they could give themselves unstintingly to each other. Where he went, she went also. She was with him even when he retraced the Long March of the Communist forces in China, the march that eluded Chiang Kai-shek and eventually led to Mao's conquest of China.

Only near the very end did Charlotte say she'd had enough—no more trips to China. She had served her time, and done it nobly. Nobody appreciated that more than Harrison.

GLORIA EMERSON Author

In the Fifties and the Sixties it was a newspaper written, edited and man-

aged by men, but few of them were especially striking. Harrison Salisbury, with those years in Russia behind him, was an intimidating but alluring figure, especially to a young reporter desperate to escape from the women's news department as it was called. (We had no news). Our first conversation came when he summoned me to praise an obit I had written. He was not effusive. He did not promise release from women's news. Other things were on his mind. He seemed to frown even when he smiled.

It was some years before I found out how humane the man was, how tolerant of human frailties except when it came to reporting. In 1968 when I was in the Paris bureau he assigned me on

ments of what's going on in Vietnam.

I use Vietnam only as an example, because you can take any single human event and analyze it in the same way. In many ways, I suppose, the most dramatic event in the Vietnam War, on the American side, at any rate, was the Tet Offensive. It was February 1968. It happened during the great festival in that part of Asia.

It was unleashed at a moment when the Americans had, or seemed to have, the work fairly well pinned down. They were not losing very much, they were not gaining very much. If anything, the Americans were gradually pushing down the Vietnamese. The force levels on our side were such that we were able to contain them and probably grind them away.

[General] Westmoreland was saying, as he said so often, that there was light at the end of the tunnel. Americans were more or less relaxed at that moment. Suddenly, the Tet offensive was unleashed. It involved an extraordinary mobilization of North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces. They had infiltrated over a period of probably six months into the areas right around the American strongholds in Saigon and just outside of Saigon and to the North, to the old capital of Huế.

Overnight they unleashed this offensive, and with dramatic results. We read the accounts of the Vietnamese swarming in, breaking down, coming into the American Embassy compound in Saigon, the heart of the heart of the American power in Vietnam. Thousands of Americans are



In New York in 1985

killed. Thousands of Vietnamese are killed too. In the end, the Americans regain control of the situation, but at the highest cost and sacrifice. This event, which we saw on television and which was reported by the best reporters in the business, has become almost emblematic of two starkly contrasting views of what that war was.

I submit that this is not merely a matter of prejudice—not merely a matter of some people disregarding the facts. It is of two

perfectly consistent views. It is, as in *Rashomon*, two —I'm simplifying, because there are more than two—differing views of the same event, which arrive at startlingly different conclusions.

The view of the Tet Offensive as it was reported by American reporters and cameramen in the first instance, and indeed as it was reported by the military to themselves, in the first instance, was of a shattering blow. An attack which caught the American command clearly by surprise, which held the old capital of Vietnam for a period of 10 days, struck deeply into our defenses, inflicted such casualties as we never had before, and which caused panic among many elements of the American establishment in South Vietnam.

There is a second and equally strong viewpoint, which I have heard again and again [from] American military. Some were out there and some were never closer than several thousand miles. That was that it was a remarkable American victory. The rationale comes from the fact that while the attack was severe, was savage [and] inflicted terrible damage, it didn't succeed in driving us out of Vietnam, and after that attack, the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong were so weakened that for a long period of time, six months, maybe a year, they were unable to mount another successful offensive operation.

Well, it doesn't take too much analytic ability to see that these are two sides of a coin. It is true great damage was inflicted

the telephone to locate and interview Senator Eugene McCarthy who was on a Riviera vacation after losing the Democratic presidential nomination. I was not certain where the senator was. I think I asked how would I ever find him, which Harrison chose not to hear. He was not a man to help lift you over the hurdles. He expected you to leap.

I leapt. Twenty-five years later I still have his telex congratulating me in four words. It was a benediction and I began to press harder to be sent to the war in Vietnam.

Once inside the war there came a day when I was not sure I could keep working and I needed to talk to him. I called from the USO in Saigon and reached Harrison at home. He did not seem

surprised or alarmed by the tone in my voice. He was very calm, patient and helpful. If he had started fussing about my state of mind it might have wrecked me. In the years to come he never spoke of that call.

His own courage was almost contagious. It helped me to remember his coverage of the U.S. bombing of non-military targets in North Vietnamese cities. It was said that when he came back to the paper there were men in the newsroom who did not want to shake his hand. What he taught the rest of us was that the best journalists should not expect love, praise or the great prizes.

It was his wife, Charlotte, who told me the most memorable story about Harrison's determination, his astonish-

ing *stubbornness*. They were on an arduous journey in China for Harrison's book, "The Long March: The Untold Story." Then in his late seventies, Harrison fell during a hike, to the horror of his Chinese companions and his wife. He picked himself up, brushed off the dirt and pebbles, and said: "Well, that should shake up the adrenaline." And on they went.

THOMAS P. WHITNEY
Retired Correspondent
Associated Press

HES is how Harrison Evans Salisbury often signed himself—and it's how I have chosen to refer to him here.

on the Americans. It is true, great damage was inflicted on the North Vietnamese. In reality, almost every major military battle, in any war you want to pick, has these same two elements in it. Battles usually involve heavy casualties on both sides. Whether it is a victory or a defeat may very often be determined, not by what happened on the battlefield that day but what happens later on.

In the case of the Tet offensive, the North Vietnamese continued to hold firm, even though their losses were staggering. The American side, on the other hand, was taken aback. It is reasonable to say that they were staggered by this event and by the reports. This reached into the highest echelons of the government. In fact, it went right up to Lyndon Johnson. I don't think any reporter who knew anything about the situation would say that Lyndon Johnson was one who likely would give up his often expressed wish to "bring home the coonskin" from Vietnam. In other words, to come out of Vietnam with a victory. But this event, be it an American military success in a technical sense, or be it a Vietnamese victory, was enough to stagger him. From that moment on, for practical purposes, although the war went on year after year, for the United States it was all downhill.

No one, I think, would argue one way or the other, that it was anything other than that. But the actual events, and the picture of those events in our minds, will be argued about 100 years from now.

I would submit that's a very natural thing.



NEW YORK TIMES PHOTO

*In Red Square, in front of
St. Basil's Cathedral*

If we understand what Rashomon tells us, we must know that so far as truth is concerned, there isn't any truth. There are varying degrees of this truth. There are varying degrees of what happens under any circumstance. Reporters and correspondents understand this far better than the general public, perhaps. In that respect we, as reporters and correspondents, are at fault.

I think that the Rashomon Effect covers almost everything that newspapermen do. I know that I myself, as a reporter particu-

larly in the Soviet Union, without having ever heard of Rashomon [or] the philosophy that underlay it, was constantly being subjected to this particular and very natural human tendency.

As a reporter in Stalin's Russia, with the censorship which scrutinized every single word that I was able to transmit to The New York Times, I had a very difficult task after the wreckage of my stories by the censor, examining them carefully to see if anything could be salvaged, to see if they could be repackaged in some way, which would approximate giving the American reader some notion of what was going on in the Soviet Union.

Some months when I possibly filed 32, 34, 35 stories, maybe five would go through the censorship. Another seven or eight would be riddled, but might possibly be salvaged in some way or other. And the rest would be killed. It required me to judge whenever I got a story back from the censorship, whether it was worthwhile sending it on with its mutilated version of what was at best an imperfect view of what was happening in the Soviet Union, or whether to just throw it in the scrap heap. Where possible, I tried to salvage the copy and send it on to New York for publication, in the view that imperfect as it was, considering the tense situation between the United States and the Soviet Union, considering the fact that each side considered the other as a possible opponent in [a] nuclear war, one which might break out at almost any moment, any amount of information that could be provided to the United States

I first met HES one morning in March 1949 in my Associated Press office in room 225 of the Hotel Metropole, overlooking Sverdlov Square and the Bolshoi Theatre in the center of Moscow. HES had dropped in to say hello and to ease the joint. He had arrived the day before to take up his duties as correspondent for The New York Times and was making his courtesy calls on the handful of Western correspondents left in Cold War Moscow.

HES was sizing me up swiftly and carefully and I was returning him in kind. What I saw facing me was a tall, slim 40-year-old, very serious chap, obviously a prototype ectomorph and a chain smoker (at that time). He asked a series of precise, probing questions

which showed that he had done his homework well. He was clearly an excellent listener.

"Garrulous" was not a term one would ever apply to HES. And yet he was not unfriendly or uncommunicative. "Still waters run deep!" I thought to myself and that time at least I was right.

That first meeting was the beginning of a long professional association with one of the more remarkable men of our time—and also of a landmark friendship.

While I was in Moscow for the AP, through July 1953, HES and I saw each other virtually every day. We collaborated on many important stories—as,

for example, on the strange and threatening events leading up to the death of Stalin and its rapidly developing aftermath. When HES returned to New York to join the city desk of The Times I was on the foreign desk of the AP. We saw each other often in the city or out on assignment or at our country house in Connecticut, which we shared for a number of years.

If there were one word to describe HES as a journalist it would be "indefatigable." He never gave up in his pursuit of an important news story. When he encountered a fast-shut door he did not turn away from it. He laid siege to it. He brought to bear on it every weapon in his arsenal until it finally opened. That is how he broke through the Great Wall

public should be provided, regardless of its imperfections.

I suppose I should have understood and been philosophical about the fact that when these reports, which were as good as I could get through the censorship, arrived in the United States, and if they were published—and many times they were simply thrown away by *The Times*—that they would be then attacked and criticized by people who said that they were pro-Russian propaganda.

Here you had the irony of a reporter fighting to get something through the censorship, and when he did get it through the censorship, being denounced for having done it. Being denounced for carrying propaganda for a government which was doing its best to keep him from sending anything at all.

A Rashomon Effect, but sort of a reverse of that. Because the reverse was in the lack of information either that I sent out or which was published by *The Times*, and the responses. The responses on either side paralleling the Russians denouncing me for sending these stories and often calling me in and threatening me for what I had said, and then the reader denouncing *The Times* and denouncing me for publishing it.

So you get it both ways. You can say, as I have often said, well, if you get nothing but bouquets in this business, you must be missing the best part of the story. Because being a reporter or being a newspaper, you're not in this business to win prizes, to win praise, you're in the

business to try and present the best possible picture in spite of Rashomon and all the other circumstances.

It's a very difficult task. And it is done imperfectly by the best reporters in the best newspapers. I think that it is time, considering the amount of criticism which the media in general receives from the public, to understand that many people in this country simply do not understand what the newspapers are about. They do not understand what job they are doing. They do not understand what would happen if the press simply stopped reporting what are regarded by many people as controversial items.

Many people say that newspapers only report unpleasant news. They only report unpleasant news about Americans abroad, about our troops, about our military establishment, about our politicians. They never say good things. I say I know a place—or did know a place, until *glasnost* and Mr. Gorbachev came along—where you can live all your life and you will find newspapers that never report anything unpleasant about the country, which never report anything unpleasant about the military establishment, which have nothing but bouquets for the leaders, where everything is fine and the sun shines every day.

The place where that sort of reporting occurs is Moscow and the newspapers which indulge in it are *Pravda* and *Isvestia* and all the other Soviet newspapers. If that's the kind of report you think that we ought to have in this

country, one which has its own kind of Rashomon Effect—it picks one effect and blots out all the others—fine, we have that example.

But I also say that maybe that's the difference between this country and the Soviet Union and other countries of that ilk. They consciously try to present a positive image.

Many critiques of newspapermen are accurate. They're rude, they're pushy, they're always trying to find something out, usually something unpleasant. They ask these questions, they confront politicians. It's their business. They don't do it because—well, maybe some of them enjoy confrontation. I must say I don't enjoy it at all. But if you're going to try and cut through all the different versions of an event, sometimes the only way is to go straight to the heart and go as hard as you can. It may not work. You may just bang right up against a stone wall. Once in a while you'll crash through. There are many ways of doing it, and I think I prefer some of the other ways of doing it, but you cannot avoid the confrontation between the press and the people in authority whether it's this country or any other country if you're going to try to get through this miasma with which the truth is surrounded.

You may remember, I hope you do, that Winston Churchill once said that in wartime truth must be surrounded by a bodyguard of lies. That's a very curious and typically picturesque Churchillian expression. What does it mean? It really

of China more than once. That is how he got to Moscow repeatedly. And to Hanoi, to Ulan Ude in Outer Mongolia.

His career as a journalist consisted of an unbelievable series of great "scoops." These were not just sensational news stories. They chronicled events and developments that remade the world of the 20th Century.

For example, HES broke the story of Nikita Khrushchev's secret speech at the 20th Party Congress in February 1956 in which Khrushchev revealed Stalin's crimes. He broke the story not from Moscow where all the Western correspondents were handcuffed by Soviet censorship. He broke it from *The New York Times* newsroom in New York. How? With a telephone. He called

Times correspondents and everyone else in Moscow he could think of and he got all sorts of answers. He put them all together and his story brought the secret speech out in the open. With thunderous results.

Likewise HES broke the story of the great rift which took place in 1959 and 1960 between the Soviet Union and Communist China. How? HES journeyed over 30,000 miles in 1959 in Siberia and Outer Mongolia, picking up crucial pieces of evidence all the way along.

HES would go anywhere for an important story. Who else but HES would have traveled with a pacemaker planted in his chest to keep his heart ticking, and a faithful, loving, courageous wife,

Charlotte, by his side, for several months and more than 7,000 miles in the dreary backwoods of China to be able to write the story of that keystone event in Red China's history, the long march of the Chinese Communists in the late Thirties.

HES never stopped. In his eighties he was still hard at work writing important books and articles and reviews, researching new subjects, lecturing, traveling in pursuit of news stories.

He enjoyed his life and work intensely. My late wife, Julie, like me a close friend of HES, once said to me: "I have never known anyone so happy as Harrison."

HES set forth his credo sharply and succinctly in his vivid memoir "A Journey for Our Time:"

means that you don't bother to tell the truth in wartime. You've got the censorship, you've got all these weapons to conceal what the truth is, and you don't want the truth known because, number one, the enemy might get some advantage of it, number two, it's entirely possible that your own people would lose some faith in your invincibility if they knew the reality of the situation. Well, I don't think it's a very good argument and I know it's no good in peacetime.

I seemed to have wandered a good bit away from Rashomon but maybe not very far, because it's entirely possible that after the confrontational reporter, the tough reporter, the one that digs and has the help of some others, has dug out the whole story and published it in *The Post* or in *The Times*, he may still have missed something. That's all right too. We cannot expect perfection, we can't expect perfection in our newspapers, our information services, in our presidents or our public officials, but we can expect the people will work as hard as possible to try and find the information that enables American people to make judgments on their public officials and on the great policies [of the country]. That's the business of the newspaper. Nobody's going to give them any bouquets. If you catch the President out, he's not going to like you. But maybe it will save you from a mistake and it might even save you from a world war. ##

"I have been on a long journey and now I know that I will always be a pilgrim in the same progress, an unending quest for knowledge..."

He served this credo well.

ARTHUR MILLER

Playwright

Harrison was essential. I connect that quality to very few writers. I relied on him, somehow, to give us the real goods—about China, about Vietnam, about Russia, and of course the USA. He had an uncommon way of *enveloping* an issue or a story. He lived in forward motion and drew upon a deep pool of impatience. He had a way of emitting cold in the presence of bullshit, and real heat when truth was spoken. The

essential question about an event or an individual was always the eye at the center of any storm—what would this do to ordinary people?

I guess I was prouder of his friendship than almost anything.

ROGER WILKINS

Author

The spirit of Harrison Salisbury was both daunting and inspiring. As I was approaching 60 and wondering whether my best work was behind me, Harrison published "The New Emperors," a superb book on the governance of China under the Communists. He was 82 at the time.

After a splendid review in *The New York Times*, I called to express my awe at his work habits and sustained level of excellence. I concluded by saying, "That's the spirit," and Harrison howled. It was the line he always used to praise and raise the sights of the small group who, during the 70's, the publisher's office at *The Times* came to view as Harrison's Revolutionaries: the late Charlotte Curtis, David Schneiderman, J.C. Soares, Pam Vassil, one or two others and me.

Harrison was our rabbi. It was funny that such an austere midwestern WASP (Did you ever see that extraordinary photograph of Harrison in his Astrakhan in front of St. Basil's) could become the guardian of the professional aspirations of a black guy stumbling badly through midlife.

Harrison had encouraged me to write for the Op-Ed page before I got into the newspaper business. He then convinced me that I could write. "That's the spirit," he would say when I would submit a piece. Finally, he facilitated my move from *The Washington Post* to *The Times*.

Years later Harrison asked casually if my father had been a man who was fastidious about both his clothing and his use of the English language. Since my father had died three decades earlier, I was stunned that Harrison could describe him so precisely.

"How did you know him?" I asked incredulously.

"Oh, he broke me in at *The Minne-*

sota Daily when we were students in the 20's," Harrison replied.

When I called my color-blind rabbi a few months before he died to tell him I was buying copies of his last book, "Heroes of My Time," for each of my children, Harrison said: "That's the spirit."

And so, for a lot of reasons, I'm going to try to hang onto that spirit for the rest of my days.

VLADIMIR POZNER

Co-host Pozner & Donahue

If you ever met Harrison Salisbury, or read anything he wrote, the one thing that jumped out at you was his Americanism. To begin with, he had this truly Jeffersonian sense of independence, a quiet pride in speaking his mind as he saw fit; this was a free man—not in the conventional sense, that is to say, who enjoys the rights stated in the Constitution. He was internally free. He would have been free in jail, in exile, in a concentration camp; his was a freedom no one could ever take away, a freedom based on the conviction that, next to life itself, freedom is our most precious asset.

As a journalist he had no peers. It would be banal to say that he wrote well, that he had a profound respect for the English language. Far more importantly, he had a profound respect for the reader. Differing from so many journalists past and present, he never tried to impress you with his person—his courage, his intelligence, his ability with words (although he had all of these and much, much more). He never forgot whom he was writing for, why he was doing the job he did so excellently: He worked not for *The New York Times*, not for Mr. X, Y, or Z; he worked for you and me, for all of us who could not wait to see what Harrison Salisbury had to say. Few journalists have that kind of understanding of their profession and calling.

Much of this has to do with respect for the human condition, for people in general, regardless of where they live and under what system. During the years when he reported on the Soviet

Union, he never took the easy path of painting the entire nation in one dark color. His understanding of the nation was as deep as his empathy for the people, a fact brilliantly and powerfully demonstrated by his epic book "The 900 Days," the best work, bar none, written about the siege of Leningrad during World War II.

Harrison Salisbury left a legacy that budding journalists should delve into and use as a musician uses a tuning fork so as to make sure their works ring true. For me, his passing has left an emptiness, a sense of loss. Some people are irreplaceable.

NEIL SHEEHAN

Author

Whenever I think of Harrison, I think of the post cards. They came every Christmas during the long years of researching and writing my book on the war in Vietnam. Sherlock Holmes would have recognized the typing on the card as that of a wire service veteran. The ribbon was faded from constant use and some of the letters were askew, presumably because Harrison had bent the keys out of shape with his nonstop hammering. The message never varied. He would admonish me for not staying in touch during the year and tell me to call him. Of course I had not been in touch. I had been ashamed to contact this man who had been my friend and patron on *The New York Times*, who was turning out one book after another in what were supposed to be his sunset years while I was stuck on a long march. But I would call as soon as the card came. He would talk me through whatever problems I happened to be facing at the moment and then buck me up to press on in the new year. The world will remember Harrison for the towering figure he was in our craft. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have his friendship will also remember him for his generosity and the warmth of his heart.

EUGENE ROBERTS

Retired Executive Editor The Philadelphia Inquirer

Not long after he allegedly retired, I asked Harrison how work on his latest book was going. He said which one; he was working on four.

I should have known. I had seen his always-on-the-case work ethic closeup after I became National Editor of *The New York Times* in 1969. Harrison was then Assistant Managing Editor and my coach and mentor. He had been National Editor himself and he said feel free to call him whenever I had a question or problem. Once I spent an hour with him in the mid-afternoon only to run into another problem around 8 p.m. I called his home. Charlotte, his wife, answered and said Harrison was in Madison, Wisconsin, and at that very moment should be walking onto a stage at the University of Wisconsin to give a speech. "But," I said, "I just saw him in the office." "Well," said Charlotte, "you know Harrison." The next morning, when I arrived at work, Harrison was at his desk.

So it went with Harrison. He was the most indefatigable person I've ever known. Nothing could deter him. He was, in a word, indomitable, not to mention the world's foremost practitioner of the rebounding basketball philosophy of life: the harder fate throws you to the floor, the more speed you pick up on the rebound.

When Harrison became Assistant Managing Editor in charge of special projects at *The Times*, the word ran through the newsroom that Harrison, brilliant though he be, was out to pasture. Then suddenly he was in Hanoi, the first American reporter to report the Vietnam War from the other side. It was one of the most publicized reporting feats of the century.

Then, when he later became Op-Ed page editor, the word was that he was, this time, really out to pasture. His tenure on the Op-Ed page was, of course, a tour de force in innovative editing. Illustrations from his page prompted book and art exhibitions. The contributions he attracted were stunning. No one turned down Harrison. He discov-

ered writers other editors had never heard of, but wished they had.

For Harrison, this was just another chapter in an incredibly rich life: the first *Times* reporter in Russia after World War II, the Pulitzer, a succession of books that taken apart from his newspaper career would alone have made him important and famous, successful children, and a successful marriage to Charlotte, a formidable talent in her own right. It was, altogether, an amazing life. He would not settle for less.

BETSY WADE

Practical Traveler Columnist The New York Times

How can one be sad about a life like HES's? He died at 84, on the road, with his amazing wife beside him and with the review of his latest book rolling on *The Times* presses for the coming Sunday. What book-writing fool, what insider of the newspaper business, given a chance, could make a better choice?

It confirms the insight of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in the period from 1970 to 1973, when HES was creating the Op-Ed page for *The Times*. The Russian came to call, as John Van Doorn, then Salisbury's deputy, told it. He discovered the editor in his office, a stack of manuscripts on his desk. HES was sticking one of these sheets, clean side up, into his typewriter. "What are you doing?" the Russian asked. HES was brisk. "I have delivered the manuscript for that book," he said. "I am starting the new one." "But you must be a horse!" Solzhenitsyn said. HES was of course a work horse—always at it, prolific and focused, right to the end.

His inexplicably underrated book on *The Times*, "Without Fear or Favor" (1980) has proved an indispensable resource. No one else got the stories of management caving under government pressure the way he did. I depended on his account of the C.I.A. intervention with *The Times* ownership at the time of the overthrow of Arbenz in Guatemala in my editing of a collection of Homer Bigart's dispatches. Bigart's story for *The Herald Tribune* makes clear that the coup was not exactly a populist

revolt, but only HES documents the machinery.

I worked directly for him on only one occasion, the time of the assassination of JFK. I ended up on the East Coast all-star copy desk created to handle the story. Bob Crandall, an assistant news editor, was in the slot on the inside of the great arc. Salisbury paced behind him, picking up one phone after another, giving instructions to Crandall, talking to Tom Wicker in Dallas, sending reporters to the scene, shrugging off the bull pen. Deadlines came and went and the paper did not close. I have never seen anyone in such total charge.

Everyone remembers bizarre details from Nov. 22, 1962, but I remember a whole machine geared up and running under the direction of one man. Eric Pace's obituary said that HES "remained at his desk in the newsroom" throughout the period, but that is not quite right: I don't think he ever got to his desk.

JACK LANGGUTH

**Professor of Journalism
University of Southern California**

Harrison Salisbury's qualities that shone brightest to me over the last 30 years were his ferocious intellect and his romantic spirit.

After he married Charlotte, Harrison's manner became courtly and beaming, but his mind remained uncompromising. He had no time for idiocy, even less for those who resisted his efforts to enlighten them. But with that bristling intelligence came a passion for beauty—in the precision of words, the eloquence of deeds.

I saw a vivid example one night 10 years ago during a speech on Vietnam on a California campus. Harrison was well into a reasoned analysis of the war's background when he was interrupted suddenly by shouts from men in fatigue shirts. "Talk about the veterans," they yelled. They had come across country to hear their story told at last. "Talk about us!"

Harrison stopped in mid-sentence. For a moment he seemed distracted, even annoyed. But he saw the justice of

their demand and swung from his scholarly remarks into an unscripted tribute to the heroism of young men sent to fight a war nobody wanted.

Working only off his emotions, he roused the packed auditorium with his unmistakable love of courage, of the underdog and, perhaps, especially, of the gallantry of lost causes.

DAVID SCHNEIDERMAN President and Publisher The Village Voice

I met Harrison 23 years ago when he walked up to me in The New York Times newsroom, where I was clerking on the foreign desk, and asked if we could chat. It was a startling moment. I was on the bottom rung of The Times, just out of graduate school and only two months into my first job.

Harrison wanted to interview me for the job of his assistant on the forthcoming Op-Ed page. I got the job—and an incomparable mentor. No relationship in this business has meant more to me than the one I enjoyed all those years with Harrison.

He was kind, accessible and extremely demanding.

I sat a few feet from Harrison for three years and marveled at his energy, his tenacity and his passion. Harrison expected much of me, offered me extraordinary amounts of rope (which I nearly hung myself with on a few occasions) and gave me his unconditional support in all my journalistic trials and tribulations.

Drawn to the controversial and the cantankerous, Harrison admired those who challenged officialdom. He loved The Times but could be its sternest critic. He had a sentimental streak about America, but was suspicious of politicians who wrapped themselves in the flag.

I have spent the last 23 years in this profession with Harrison looking over my shoulder. Though he didn't always agree with everything I said and did, he was my teacher and my moral compass.

There is no need to enumerate Harrison's achievements. He was one of the giants of 20th Century journalism. Even more important to me, he

was a warm, passionate and deeply understanding man who shaped my career and my life more profoundly than anyone I have ever known.

JOHN CREWDSON National Correspondent The Chicago Tribune

The longest time I ever spent with Salisbury alone was the day he flew to Houston, where I used to live, to interview me for his book about The Times. By lunchtime he was out of questions, but it was clear he didn't want to leave. He was comfortable sitting on my old sofa, it was blistering hot outside, and he had nothing else to do in Houston anyway except go back to his hotel. So I made some sandwiches and we continued our talk. Only this time it was him talking and me listening, asking a question whenever he seemed in danger of stopping, which wasn't too often.

What I got that afternoon was a remarkably candid summation of his career, the high spots and the not-so-high, from wire service days through the Soviets and the Chinese and the National Desk and Hanoi—The Harrison Salisbury Story read by the author to an audience of one, who at that moment would have given anything for a tape recorder or an excuse to take notes. When I sensed he was really nearing the end I ventured the only personal question of the day. He was twice my age and should have been sitting somewhere under a tree. But I knew, and so did he, that he could still out-report me if he wanted without breaking a sweat. I wanted to know what had driven him all these years, in spite of the sometimes formidable obstacles that had been tossed in his path by suspicious governments and hostile politicians, and even his own contemporaries at The Times. He thought for a second and I expected something bitersweet, maybe a trifle dark, but when he looked up there was a twinkle in his eye. "Oh, well," he said, as if the question really needed no answer. "You know, John, there's just nothing more fun than finding things out." I remem-

ber thinking, of course. We gradually lost touch after I left *The Times*, a decision he had opposed, but I thought about him often and about what he said. A decade later, at the time of Tiananmen Square, I turned on the radio and heard him describe, like a cub reporter calling in a fire, what it had been like to watch the slaughter from his hotel window. Of course, I remember thinking. Who else?

R. W. APPLE JR.
Washington Bureau Chief
The New York Times

Harrison Salisbury the foreign correspondent and Harrison Salisbury the author were known to all, Harrison Salisbury the teacher and editor to few.

I was a metropolitan desk rookie at *The New York Times* in the fall of 1963 when that tall, lean, sardonic figure called me to the national desk and put me to work on one tiny corner of the paper's vast coverage of the Kennedy assassination. Then, as ever after, he glared at me through his wire-rimmed glasses, gave me my assignment, which seemed to me as big as the Matterhorn, and managed to suggest, simultaneously, that he doubted I could handle it and that he had total confidence in me.

The next summer, he chose me for *The Times's* team at the 1964 Democratic convention in Atlantic City. He was in charge, and his senior reporters were a bunch of journeymen named Wicker, Lewis, Frankel and Baker. My job was to watch Bob Kennedy, and when a turbulent demonstration broke out on the convention floor as Kennedy mounted the podium, Salisbury handed me a floor pass and sent me into battle. When it ended, he told me to write a sidebar.

At that altitude, the air was a little rarified for me, and I guess I froze a bit. Harrison looked over my rather stiff first take, scrawled across it the accusatory question, "Where the hell's the music?" and handed it back. Scared as I was, I was determined to earn his approval; I sensed (correctly) that his

praise was reserved for bigger talents than mine. I started again, and the second time he moved the piece to *New York* and onto Page One.

Under the lash of his perfectionism, I did far better that night than I had known I could, and his scorn for the merely adequate has never left me. I can see him scowling over my shoulder now, full of the wintry skepticism that he learned in populist Minnesota, on guard against those who, like me, too often settle for too little.

JOHN CHANCELLOR
Retired Commentator, NBC

When we first met, he was a celebrated foreign correspondent, bedecked with honors and awards, but my admiration for him had been shaped by things he had done years before.

When I was breaking in at *The Chicago Sun-Times*, older reporters remembered him as a bright kid from Minneapolis who had covered the income tax trial of Al Capone for United Press in 1931. Hecht and MacArthur had written "The Front Page" only three years before, and Harrison Salisbury, in those days, was very much the streetwise, hard-drinking police reporter. He had once been informed, in detail, of a plot to assassinate the mayor of Chicago but had obeyed the reporters' code of those days and never told the police.

Forty years had gone by when he told me that story, but his memories of those days were fresh and joyful. He had loved working in gangland Chicago, just as he had loved traveling across the Mongolian steppe, visiting Tibet or writing about the great historical figures of his time. This incurable romantic lived a life of boyhood dreams come true. That makes him our kinsman, but you have to admit, he did it better than most.

STEPHAN SALISBURY
Senior Cultural Writer
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Back in the late 1960s, when I was a student at Columbia and the war in

Vietnam was raging and the cities were, too, I became more than a little involved in extracurricular politics. My father was distressed by a lot of my activities—the confrontations with police, the arrogance of argument, the dreaminess of revolutionary talk. He was troubled by Vietnam and racial inequities too, but he believed strongly that the political system could and should be used to correct itself. After all, here was a man who later, in 1966, ventured to Hanoi to report on the devastation of U.S. bombing—reports that enraged Johnson administration officials and helped change the course of the war.

My father was a man of reason. Sure the Hanoi story was a great scoop. He loved that. But it also provided information. Information helped educate and education led to change. That's really what his career was all about. In a sense, he was a 19th Century utilitarian—he believed in education and progress. But for me, progress was illusory, a shell game. And slow.

How to deal with such an impassioned son? Argument? A pointless exercise, as anyone who remembers those heady, sometimes deadly, often silly, days well knows. We talked—he always wanted to know what was happening with young people—but we didn't argue. One day, after I delivered a particularly bizarre soliloquy about disintegrating American society, he gave me a slim volume on the *Narodnaya Volya*, the *People's Will*, a small band of Russian revolutionaries, including Lenin's brother, who haplessly tried to assassinate Alexander III. They were all hanged. The Russian people, concerned with more immediate problems, ignored the fiasco.

This taught me a basic lesson: look dispassionately, gather what facts you can and from that, understanding and even change will eventually emerge. My father was a true democrat as parent and journalist. And because of that, he believed in the ultimate goodness and sense of a passionate son and of an America often off the track. ■

Japan's Feisty New Press

Newspapers, Magazines and TV Abandon Passive Role to Attack the Corrupt 'System'

BY T. R. REID

One of the wisest of America's professional press-watchers, Jonathan Alter of Newsweek, came to Japan on a fellowship earlier this year and spent a good deal of time watching the press. He concluded that the Japanese media serve as "amplifiers of the status quo," working in a news culture where "the emphasis is on consensus" and the basic structure of news-gathering "is almost totally contrary to genuine, digging journalism." Alter's view is in line with those of some other insightful Western observers, including the Dutch journalist Karl van Wolferen, whose powerful 1989 book "The Enigma of Japanese Power," describes a "house-broken press" peopled with reporters who "never really take on the System."

It is daunting to find oneself in disagreement with people of this stature. But having read and watched huge quantities of Japanese journalism over the year or so leading up to the historic election on July 18—when the voters finally decided to dump the entrenched system of conservative one-party rule—my conclusion is different. I would argue that one of the key forces responsible for Japan's political earthquake in 1993 was a feisty, free-wheeling press corps that attacked and undermined the established "System" with vigor and persistence.

The media, particularly the print press, did an admirable job of digging up hidden stories about corruption in the political world and the business establishment. The targets included not

only politicians and corporate presidents but also right-wing nationalist groups and the organized crime syndicates, the *yakuza*, elements of society that Western critics have routinely described as off-limits to the Japanese press.

This relentless coverage helped bring about the no-confidence vote in June that led to the fall of the Liberal-Democratic government. In the ensuing national election campaign, TV reporters took the lead, pushing the politicians for specifics and generally refusing to accept the cloudy generalities that used to pass for campaign discourse in Japan. The crucial turning point in this year of upheaval—the event that made it clear both to politicians and people that something important was happening—came about almost entirely because of the national newspapers and a free-wheeling, highly competitive collection of weekly news magazines.

Last August, the most powerful man in Japanese politics, the Liberal Democrats' behind-the-scenes kingmaker, Kanemaru Shin, admitted that he had received an illegal payoff of \$4 million in cash from a delivery firm that was trying to buy favor in Nagatacho, Tokyo's version of Capitol Hill. After a couple of weeks of huffing and puffing, the political world and the prosecutors tacitly agreed to let Kanemaru off with a wrist-slap: a misdemeanor plea, a small fine, and the loss of one of his party titles. With that, everybody settled back to business as usual.

But there was one problem: the media refused to go along.

The newspapers began a relentless series of exposés of Kanemaru and his corporate benefactors. The Yomiuri Shimbun, the largest-circulation newspaper in Japan (and in the world, for that matter) and The Mainichi Shimbun dug into the mob strings attached to the company that paid off Kanemaru. The Asahi Shimbun came up with a complex but fascinating scoop showing how Kanemaru and another kingpin of Japa-



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nese politics, Takeshita Noboru, had cut a secret deal with the yakuza and the far right to assure Takeshita's election as prime minister.

Very quickly, the weekly magazines and the tabloid-like sports newspapers joined the fray, with delicious stories about countless other illicit political payoffs—who paid whom, how much cash was handed over, and where the politicians hid the stash.

The weeklies offered fascinating accounts of that first \$4 million payment to Kanemaru. The payoff took so much currency—50,000 separate 10,000-yen bills—that the corporate bagman couldn't find a suitcase big enough to hold the money. Finally, he filled a grocery cart with cash and wheeled it

“People power,” moved by continuing stories on corruption in high places, suddenly began to play a powerful role in Japanese politics.

into the office of Japan's most powerful politician. The concept of a grocery cart jammed with money—the story was subsequently confirmed at Kanemaru's trial—seemed to crystallize the pervasive sleaziness of Japanese politics. It caught the nation's attention—and mine as well. I used that grocery cart over and over in my Post stories to explain why things were finally changing in Japan.

I was also smitten with a marvelous piece in a sports daily about the Liberal-Democratic governor of Niigata Prefecture, who got just under a million dollars in a corporate bribe. He kept the secret cash in a coin locker at the local train station—and reportedly made his staff pay the \$4 charge to renew the locker each day. This item ran under a giant headline in blood-red characters that said, roughly, “Can't you lend me 4 bucks? I've only got a million.”

TV journalists played a role as well. Japan's most popular and powerful newscaster, Kume Hiroshi of TV Asahi's national evening news show, used to tell his viewers “this stuff is compli-

cated, but it's important that you understand it.”

A laid-back fellow with no pretensions, Kume used stuffed dolls and play money to demonstrate how illegal payoffs moved from business to politicians, and how the politicians and the bureaucracy paid back their benefactors with government contracts and other goodies. At first, I laughed at this; it seemed so childish to see a national news anchor playing with dolls. In fact, though, Kume-san helped me—and, presumably, millions of voters—to understand just how corrupt the old system was.

The media onslaught fueled, and was in turn fueled by, a growing sense of anger among the normally passive Japanese electorate. I clearly remember the evening when NTV News anchor Sakurai Yoshiko walked onto the set, as she does at the start of the show every night, to announce the day's leading news item. “There's a new force in Japanese politics tonight,” Sakurai said, with obvious satisfaction. “It's called people power, and it will change this country.”

Indeed it did. “People power,” moved by continuing stories on corruption in high places, suddenly began to play a powerful role in Japanese politics. Voters went on the warpath against Kanemaru in particular and the dominant Liberal-Democratic Party in general. Kanemaru himself was drummed out of politics. Eventually, the public anger reached the point in mid-June when Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi's government fell on a no-confidence motion.

In the ensuing campaign for the July election, the print press was not quite so impressive. Its coverage was strongly slanted against the LDP and in favor of any person or party promising “change,” no matter how vague the promise. There were many editorials criticizing the politicians for their fuzzy positions on policy issues, but surprisingly few stories to help voters sort out the policy differences between one party and another.

This shortfall in print coverage was largely filled by aggressive and innovative TV reporting. Clearly taking a cue from the likes of Clinton and Perot in the U.S. in 1992, candidates made the rounds of the talk shows and the na-

tional news broadcasts—inventing a whole new style of Japanese campaigning in the process. The newscasters and interviewers, on the whole, were probing, persistent, and anything but gentle with the visiting pols.

The TV coverage included both old-fashioned, bare-knuckle interviewing (“Why are you lying about reform?” one interviewer asked the prime minister) and state-of-the-art high-tech gadgetry. On the Sunday before the election, the Fuji-TV network's “Report 2001” program—in essence, Japan's “Meet The Press”—managed to get Miyazawa and the heads of all eight opposition parties to appear for interviews. The format included the predictable panel of journalists, both Japanese and foreign, to ask questions.

In addition, though, there was a studio audience of 50 people, each holding a little black box with two buttons on it. As each politician spoke, the audience members would click a button, indicating either “I believe him” or “I don't believe him”—with the results shown in real time in a small window on the screen. The moderator would break in now and then to say something like, “Miyazawa-san, I'm sorry to tell you, but only 3 percent of our audience members believe what you're saying right now.”

You could hardly say that the Japanese press was perfect during the past year of historic turmoil. There was a clear tendency to pile on once a politician was caught in the sights. The feverish energy devoted to exposing Kanemaru and a few other designated bad guys could better have been used to pursue a broader range of political and business problems. But criticism like that can sometimes be directed at the American press as well.

There were differences, but in general Japan's mass media performed very much like the American press would have in a similar period of political uproar. The media were neither deferential nor house-broken. Far from advocating the status quo or protecting the System, the Japanese press corps seemed, to this reader at least, to be hell-bent for change—and the bigger the change the better. ■

Scouts Without Compasses

*War in the Balkans Is Forcing Correspondents
To Rewrite Their Guidelines*

BY SYLVIA POGGIOLI

In mid-August 1992, I traveled to Northern Bosnia with a group of about 15 foreign reporters. We visited an area where there were no United Nations peacekeepers and which had been up to then inaccessible to relief workers and journalists. By late afternoon, we arrived at Bosanska Krupa. Not all of us in the group had wanted to go that far. We had already seen evidence of massive destruction of Muslim homes, the rubble of many dynamited mosques and terror-stricken men held in a Serbian-run prison camp and we had spoken to dozens of frightened Muslims who wanted to flee the area. Among us were several free-lance photographers and a television reporter who were frustrated that they had not gotten any shots or footage because Serbian militiamen had not allowed them to take pictures. The TV reporter, who had never been in the region before, said to me, "I don't know about you but I don't have a story yet."

Along with the photographers he had been pressing us to go on and on, from checkpoint to checkpoint. It was getting dark and one of the cardinal rules for reporters in a war zone is not getting stuck at night in a situation they cannot control. We soon realized we had broken the rule when a group of Serbian militiamen wielding Kalashnikovs surrounded us, put a fighter in each of our cars and made us take a narrow donkey path up a steep mountain slope. For the next several hours, the armed Serb in my car sat in the front seat in stony silence, caressing his weapon. He broke the silence only to interrogate us to find out whether we were Catholic, Orthodox or Muslim.

We were finally released when we got to the main road where local Serbian policemen convinced the militiamen it was not in the best interest of their cause to harm such a large group of foreign reporters.

This was only one of many harrowing experiences I had in former Yugoslavia but I feel that more than any other it vividly underscored many of the problems confronting journalists reporting on this major post-Cold War crisis.

Covering the disintegration of Yugoslavia has often forced reporters to act as scouts without compasses in a completely unknown terrain. The difficulty in covering the physical land is only one problem. Reporters have had to wade through the complex cultural, historical and political geography of these conflicts. And very few had the necessary instruments. With the end of the Cold War, a whole set of principles of analysis had become useless and reporters had to confront new problems that most of them had never explored before, such as ethnic self-assertion, tribalism, religious conflicts and the rights and limits to self-determination. At times it was more important to have knowledge of anthropology than of political science.

When I arrived in Belgrade in October 1988 for my first assignment in Yugoslavia, I brought with me the latest Western publications on Yugoslav political developments. When war broke out two and a half years later I realized those books were outdated and useless and I had to begin a difficult search for old and out-of-print books on Balkan history, on the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, and on the Catholic-Orthodox schism—long-forgotten



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subjects, which had suddenly re-emerged as the signposts needed to understand what was happening now.

The Cold War had accustomed generations of reporters to analyze world events almost exclusively in terms of the bipolar confrontation, where good and evil were easily defined and identified. This mindset often proved unsuitable in trying to make sense of the disorder created by the collapse of Communism. And it was an easy prey for the highly sophisticated propaganda machines that have characterized the conflicts in former Yugoslavia.

The wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia have not been played out only in the battlefield. They have also been wars of faxes and computer messages. Starting with the 10-day war in Slovenia in June and July of 1991, one of the most difficult tasks for reporters has been to protect themselves from the propaganda offensive.

The Slovenia Information Ministry organized a media center in a modern underground conference hall in Ljubljana. Here troops of young multilingual Slovenes constantly churned out reams of war bulletins. I sat through numerous bunker press conferences held by Defense Minister Janez Jansa while a dozen militiamen pointed Kalashnikovs at the reporters. The reason given was that they believed Serbian "terrorists" had infiltrated the press corps. The effect was to create an atmosphere of extreme tension and alarm. Press conferences were often called as late as 7 p.m. We were supplied with excruciatingly detailed accounts of battles too far away to check personally before deadline. Often we learned the next day that the battles had never taken place.

One morning, neatly printed posters were taped next to hotel elevators listing the various alarms indicating everything from air raids to chemical and nuclear attacks. On another day, violent explosions above our hotel were later explained as anti-aircraft artillery fired by the Slovene Territorial Defense against Yugoslav Federal jets which were said to have dropped bombs on the hill overlooking the center of the city. The official version was that television and

radio transmitter antennas were located on the hill, but transmissions were never interrupted and reporters who went to look never found evidence that bombs had been dropped there.

Every day the official death count mysteriously decreased. At the end of the war we learned that there had been about 50 killed, the majority of whom were young recruits of the Yugoslav Federal Army. The Slovenes never missed an opportunity to depict the conflict in the bloodiest terms possible in order to win international support for their cause as a "westward-leaning democracy" against the "brutal Communist aggressor." Those labels stuck and were reinforced as the war moved into Croatia.

The Croats soon learned from the Slovenes' use of propaganda. The Croatian news agency HINA and Croatian radio and TV unremittingly bombarded the outside world with minute details of clashes, most of which were impossible to check. The best-known examples of vast exaggeration were reports of the massive damage inflicted on Dubrovnik, the magnificent medieval fortress city on the Adriatic. For months, Croatian media reported that the monuments in the old quarter had been devastated by Yugoslav Army shells and mortars. Western journalists who visited the walled city after the campaign ended reported seeing only superficial damage.

Another striking example of manipulation of facts was the case of a massacre in Gospic, Croatia, in 1991. Film footage showing the mutilated bodies of two young men was aired on Croatian and German TV, which identified the victims as Croats slaughtered by Serbs. The bodies were later recognized by relatives as being those of Serbs. The German network later apologized for the false report. I was reminded of this incident—and many similar relabelings of atrocity victims—this spring when my interpreter in Belgrade told me she had been a close friend of one of the young Serbs from Gospic whose dead bodies had been passed off as those of Croats.

The Croats went even further than the Slovenes in the information war. Not only did the Croatian government hire the public relations firm Rudder-Finn to get its message out, but Croatia could also depend on its large expatriate communities in the United States, Canada and Australia to put pressure on the media in their home countries. Croats abroad have shown they are much better organized than Serbs, although they have not always been very careful in picking the people they sent out into the field. In the fall of 1991, I received a thick package from a U.S.-based Croatian organization. The propaganda material included—I presume inadvertently—a copy of a hand-written fax sent from Zagreb to the organization. It had been sent by a photographer who, it was clear from the contents, had been sponsored and sent by this organization to the war front. The photographer described his work in enthusiastic terms; he said he was "really" covering the war—not like some correspondents who he said spent their time at the bar of the Intercontinental Hotel—and he voiced disappointment that two European Community monitors who had recently been shot in the legs had not been killed.

Letter-writing campaigns by members of both Croatian and Serbian communities in the U.S. criticizing news coverage have been a constant of the Yugoslav wars. The aim appeared to be to discredit the correspondent in the field, and many reporters told me they were having more and more difficulty in convincing their editors that what they had seen firsthand was the real story, not what was contained in U.S.-originated faxes. The result in some cases was to strengthen considerably the role of the editor at the desk and weaken the position of the correspondent in the field both in the way stories were assigned and in the way events were interpreted.

These have not been wars where the warring factions organize trips and escort journalists to the front-line, or where journalists can depend on independent pool reports. Press conferences by military leaders, other than by U.N. officials, have been rare. Journalists in

the war zones have been on their own. The risks have been enormous (more than 30 journalists have been killed since the conflicts began), all the more so in a political culture where militiamen of all the warring sides are convinced journalists are spying for the enemy. A Croatian militiaman guarding a prison camp in Southern Bosnia summed up this attitude when he menacingly told an Associated Press reporter who was trying to get into the camp last year, "Reporters are like soldiers, the less they know the longer they live."

The Serbs' deep-rooted conviction that throughout history they have been the victims of foreign powers has put them at a disadvantage in the propaganda war. Little or no effort has been made by the Belgrade government to try to win over the hearts and minds of the West through its media. And the Milosevic-controlled Serbian TV—the major source of information—has provided Serbs exclusively with the Serbian nationalist version of the conflicts. This has fomented a profound distrust, bordering on outright hatred, for foreign reporters, who are widely blamed by Serbs for their international isolation. And—as in Croatia, where the media is equally under total control of the Tudjman government—distrust of reporters is also rooted in a Communist tradition against freedom of the press.

While there is widespread agreement that the Belgrade government and Serbian fighters have been the major culprits in the conflicts, the Serbs' entrenched attitude toward the outside world may have contributed to their being demonized and perceived by world public opinion as the sole culprits in the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia.

I went to Sarajevo for the first time in September 1991, six months before the war started and I was struck by the sophistication and cosmopolitanism of the city. The Writers' Club, an elegant, glass-enclosed restaurant and jazz bar, was filled with intellectuals, film makers and journalists. The skyline of old Sarajevo was famous for the proximity of its Orthodox and Catholic churches, mosques and synagogues (the only

unwritten rule was that no minaret or bell tower could be higher than any of the other houses of worship.)

Dealing with Sarajevo's citizens was immediately easy. Nearly everyone I met spoke a foreign language and had traveled widely in Europe. Many were Muslims, because for centuries Muslims lived primarily in the cities and, as

The best known example of vast exaggeration were reports of the massive damage inflicted on Dubrovnik, the magnificent medieval fortress city on the Adriatic. For months, Croatian media reported that the monuments in the old quarter had been devastated by Yugoslav Army shells and mortars. Western journalists who visited the walled city after the war ended reported seeing only superficial damage.

representatives of the urban middle class, they naturally became foreign journalists' favorite sources.

Months later, traveling through Bosnian villages just before the outbreak of the conflict, I discovered a reality that was perhaps unknown even to many citizens of Sarajevo. The much touted religious tolerance and intermingling of Serbs, Croats and Muslims symbolic of the Bosnian capital was often rare outside urban areas.

The impression created by secular, multicultural Sarajevo may have helped overshadow some of the main aspects of the war. The conflict has been variously described as a civil war based on ethnic and religious hatred, as an inevitable explosion after decades of Communist suppression of nationalist differences, or as a simple land grab. But traveling through the countryside another aspect emerged. It is what the former mayor of Belgrade—and Milosevic opponent—Bogdan Bogdanovic describes as a war of the mountain against the city, of rural backwardness against urban co-existence. The cornerstone of the Muslim-led government's appeal for a united Bosnia—and the message it has promoted through the media to the outside world—has been shaped by the cosmopolitan reality of Sarajevo and some other cities, but does not always correspond to the pre-war tensions and animosities that had long existed in many other parts of Bosnia.

If one went to look at the results of the first free elections in Bosnia in the fall of 1990, it was clear that the harmony of Sarajevo was unique: throughout Bosnia, the ethnic parties prevailed, and voting results mirrored the map of ethnic population distribution.

But, as the major information sources, Muslim intellectuals and their leaders (often providing inflated statistics on mixed marriages) were very successful in exploiting an image of pre-war idyllic co-existence, and the media in turn reduced an extremely complex conflict to a war of aggression from the outside.

It was the sudden and dramatic siege of Sarajevo, that began on April 6, 1992, that drew the international media to the Bosnian capital. And the focus on the continuous bombing and shelling of the city reinforced misperceptions of the war. For months very little or no attention was paid to what was happening in other parts of Bosnia. This past May in Pala, the Bosnian Serb stronghold, a Bosnian Serb official told me that the shelling of Sarajevo had often been intensified on purpose, as part of

a specific strategy to distract media attention from the Serbs' military campaigns elsewhere.

It was not until August 1992 when the first refugees from Northern Bosnia arrived in Croatia, that the world learned of concentration camps and of vicious campaigns of "ethnic cleansing." The refugees told stories of harassment, fighting, atrocities and expulsions by Bosnian Serbs that had begun many months before. And it was not until the Muslims and Croats—erstwhile allies—began massacring each other this spring that journalists were forced to deal with the "other war" and discovered that reciprocal "ethnic cleansing" had been going on for months in Central and Southwestern Bosnia.

In June 1993, two American reporters who had been covering the region for some time were discussing the disastrous role the international community had played in this tragedy. One of the reporters then said, "but it has been journalism's finest hour."

I beg to differ. There have been innumerable instances where those of us who have covered these conflicts have fallen into the disinformation trap. One of the most insidious was the numbers game—number of dead, number of refugees and, especially, number of rape victims. At the end of 1992, the Muslim-led Bosnian government said that up to 50,000 Muslim women had been raped by Serbs in Bosnia. A report by a special European Community commission, which did not include direct interviews with victims, placed the number at 20,000. On January 21, 1993, Amnesty International issued a report based on interviews with victims conducted over months by the organization itself, by women's and human rights groups working in the region and by journalists in the field. While it stated that Muslim women had been the chief victims, it said all three warring sides in Bosnia had committed rapes and abuses against women. The report cited several difficulties in assessing the full extent of sexual abuse of women in Bosnia, including the shame and social stigma which discourage many women from speaking of the abuses they have suffered. The report added that the issue

of rape has been widely used as a propaganda weapon with all sides minimizing or denying abuses committed by their own forces and maximizing those of their opponents. In Geneva, Amnesty's legal officer, Nick Howen, said in a news conference there was no evidence to back up the figure of 20,000 Muslim rape victims cited by the European Community report. And in Zagreb, American relief workers I spoke to dismissed that same estimate as highly exaggerated. But still today, the number of 50,000 (and higher) has stuck and the prevailing perception is that only Muslim women have been the victims and Serbian fighters the only perpetrators.

What has been almost completely ignored is that the numbers game has a long tradition in the Balkans. Even today, there are no reliable figures indicating exactly how many people died in the civil war during World War II or how many Serbs were killed at the Ustasha concentration camp of Jasenovac in Croatia (Serbs claim as many as a million, Croats say as few as 100,000). Nationalist leaders have traditionally manipulated numbers like these as a means to foment ethnic tensions and hatred as well as to cleanse the historical record. As Ivo Andric (born in 1892 in Travnik, Bosnia) described in his novel "Bosnian Story" about the period under Ottoman rule, the selective use of numbers is an old Balkan habit:

"Once, some years ago, when Suleiman Pasha the Skopljak went with an army against Montenegro and burnt Drobnjak, Hamza [the town crier] was ordered to proclaim this great Turkish victory and to give out that a hundred and eighty Montenegrin heads had been cut off. One of the crowd which always gathers round the crier asked aloud, 'And how many of ours were lost?' 'Ah, that'll be given out by the crier in Montenegro,' replied Hamza calmly and went on with the announcement set down for him."¹

As the conflicts have worsened and international organizations have be-

come more and more divided and impotent, I have felt that as journalists covering former Yugoslavia (at times the only outsiders to be present in a particular area), we have found ourselves bearing an enormous responsibility. Policy in Western capitals—or lack of it—has increasingly been based on news reports, and from my experience I have seen that many times the media have been better at pulling emotional strings than at analyzing facts. The use of good-guy and bad-guy stereotypes often obscured the complex origins of the conflict (something must be wrong when a Senator such as Joseph Biden can say self-assuredly that Serbia invaded Bosnia, ignoring facts such as that Bosnia's pre-war population was 31 percent Serb and that since early in Tito's regime at least 60 percent of the Yugoslav Federal Army's weapons and ammunitions have been located in Bosnia). And little emphasis was given to some crucial factors such as the well-documented pre-war agreement between the Croatian and Serbian leaders, Franjo Tudjman and Slobodan Milosevic, to carve up Bosnia between them; Milosevic's long-standing consent to Slovenian independence, and Tudjman's publicly asserted opposition to the creation of a Muslim state in the center of Europe. I cannot help but think that one reason why the media spotlight on former Yugoslavia dimmed late this spring was that the collapse of the so-called Muslim-Croat alliance in Bosnia made it abundantly clear that there were no innocents in this war.

In his book "The Rebirth of History," Misha Glenny had predicted that the collapse of Communism and the end of the Cold War would render obsolete an Old World Order system of analysis. He said it would profoundly change the profession of journalism, which now requires a rediscovery of history, geography and a rethinking of global relationships. Yugoslavia was the first serious test of this need for a new approach. No, I don't think it was journalism's finest hour. But it has taught us the clear lesson that journalists as scouts now need new compasses if they are to be a reliable link between facts on the ground and public opinion. ■

¹Ivo Andric, "Bosnian Story," translated by Kenneth Johnstone, Lincoln-Prager Publishers Ltd, London, 1959, p. 79.

Reminiscences of East Timor

BY RUI ARAÚJO

Indonesia occupied East Timor in 1975. Since then, according to human rights officials, 100,000 to 200,000 Timorese, out of a population of 750,000, have perished, victims of Indonesia's repression. Five foreign journalists have been killed covering the struggle between Indonesia and the Timorese. Rui Araújo, a Portuguese television journalist and Nieman Fellow 1991, has been to Indonesia five times, four times to East Timor. In the following reminiscences of his visit last May, he explains the impact of the visits on him as a journalist.

We were dining at the Hotel Turismo in Dili, the capital of East Timor. Petrus Suriady explained to me: "You have a problem. The military commander and the Secret Service fear for your life." Suriady, Indonesian journalist, businessman and guide, denies being an agent of the Indonesian Secret Police. Yet, he is constantly accompanying foreign journalists to East Timor and follows the Indonesian Red Berets on behind-the-lines missions.

"This is unbelievable!" I replied, not trying to suppress my anger. Suriady continued: "They had a meeting early this morning to discuss your problematic situation. You made another mistake. You left Dili late last night and journalists are not supposed to engage in such escapades. Nor are they supposed to spend nights roaming the jungle to make contact with the guerillas."

Demonstrating that he had learned nothing, he imparted a last piece of advice. "Be cautious! You have lots of enemies here. I would say the Timorese from Atauro island don't like you much. I am not sure we can guarantee your safety."

Still angry, I shot back: "Too bad for you! It was something I had to do. Making threats to reporters is wrong. I am not speaking as a lone Portuguese journalist. This is not 1975 anymore. The five foreign journalists your troops shot to death was a big mistake. I am doing my job, so stop trying to fuck me."

I was responding to the intellectual terrorism and moral intimidation the Indonesians were attempting to inflict upon me and those of my profession.

After dinner I left him and joined a group of journalists at the garden bar. Suriady was not too far away. I could hear his voice, something like cartoon lockjaw—so excruciatingly stretched out you could fall asleep waiting for him to get to the end of the sentence.

◇

At the trial to judge Xanana Gusmao, the Timorese leader, for sedition, soldiers were much in evidence. There



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was also an overabundance of officials who, in the best Indonesian tradition, examined each passport and press card six times before passing it on to the next official, who examined it six times more. Although the paper shuffling slowed the line through the arrival gate to a sweltering crawl, the Secret Service bureaucrats seemed unconcerned. Promptness and efficiency, I was to learn, were not welcomed.

Most Portuguese reporters were still barred from East Timor. For Xanana's trial, in fact, few foreign journalists of any nationality were welcomed. I was surprised by and suspicious of the reasons the Indonesian military let me come back. After all, I was the same "Portuguese pain-in-the-ass" reporter earlier placed on their blacklist. "The devil you know..." a sarcastic Ian Macintosh (ABC-Australia) offered, as a way of explaining why the Indonesians had permitted my return.

◇

During the trial, foreign journalists had to stay in the last rows of an adjoining courtroom. We received orders from police officials not to record anything. Only the Indonesians were allowed to take pictures and record sound and image. Xanana was far away from us. "Sorry for the lack of loudspeakers, it's a difficult technical problem," an official spokesman explained.

The trial judge, Hieronimus Godang, intoned "José Alexandre Gusmao, alias Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, alias Xanana, for 17 years the chief of resistance in East Timor, is found guilty of leading a separatist movement and illegal possession of weapons."

Judge Godand proceeded through the 200 pages of accusations, getting progressively angrier. The sentence: life imprisonment, the maximum asked for by prosecutors. After passing sentence, the judge explained that "the reason the punishment is so heavy is that the defendant's actions disturbed stability in East Timor." Finally, he tucked a large white handkerchief in his pocket and, still scowling, ordered the trial ended.

◇

I had recorded Xanana's first interview with Portuguese television (RTP)



EPA Photo

Rui Araiço being led away by Indonesian police.

almost four months before his capture last November. We had met again in Jakarta, earlier this year, for a second interview in captivity. At that time there were 15 soldiers, policemen, Intel intelligence agents, a military camera crew and two official translators with us in the same little room. Xanana smiled.

Xanana was under intense pressure. He knew he was dead if he said anything against Jakarta's rule. He did not. I, in turn, did not ask him a single question about military or political issues. I followed the advice of Bill Kovach, the curator of the Nieman Foundation—"let the window open, that's all."

Xanana spent our 28 minutes of "conversation" signaling in Morse code, his foot on my foot. He said nothing important, knowing he was not alone.

◇

After this interview I left Indonesia on police orders. I was again becoming "persona non grata." I made further contacts with the rebels and some Indonesian democrats. Later, back in Jakarta, I was arrested at Sukarno Airport and, after four hours of interrogation and surveillance, was escorted "manu military" to the first flight out of Indonesia for Europe. The fact I had a legal visa and a "green light" from an Indonesian general to be back in Indonesia did not seem to matter. I had succeeded in reaching the ranks of the Indonesian blacklist.

In the meantime, Xanana had given up, or so it seemed, according to what Tony Emerson of Newsweek later wrote: "Xanana, captured last year by Indonesian troops, urged rebels of his Fretilin movement to surrender. Placed in the dock on charges of leading an armed rebellion, Xanana told the court, 'I am an Indonesian citizen,' apparently renouncing his dream of an independent East Timor. Then, in his trial in May, Xanana took the stand in his own defense and issued a dramatic about-face in his first language, Portuguese." He thus apparently confirmed the insistence by his supporters that his statement had been coerced by the Indonesian Army or distorted by official translators.

The trial was a summary one, filled with controversy and injustice. Xanana could not choose his lawyer nor could he speak his language. After long weeks of silence he was permitted to denounce—in Portuguese—the "cowardly and shameful" occupation and declare "before my conscience, I am a citizen of East Timor." The trial judge did not wait to hear Xanana out. He silenced the defendant after two minutes and, four days later, sentenced him. Said Asia Watch Executive Director, Sidney Jones:

"This is the first Indonesian political trial in memory where the defense statement has been censored by the judges.

A courtroom is the only place in Indonesia where unfettered freedom of expression is possible. In this case it was clearly the Indonesian government that felt it had something to lose by Xanana's speaking freely."

Xanana shouted "Viva Timor Leste" and was escorted under heavy guard out the back door of the courtroom.

Suddenly there was shouting in the parking lot. I looked around and saw two motorbikes and three vans screech up, horns blaring, impeding the recording of interviews. It was the security parade. In the midst of this hectic excitement, I managed to talk with Xanana's family. Xanana's sister was angry with the injustice but could not tell us much. I still remember a silent meeting I had months before with her and her husband, both of whom had been detained "for protection" in an illegal jail of Intel in downtown Dili. Their crime—being related to Xanana.

Our interview with Xanana's sister was interrupted by an attack on us by Indonesian "thugs." As we later learned, our attackers were brought to the site on government trucks and provided with guns and knives. Their job was to intimidate us and prevent any communication between the foreign press and the Timorese people. They were successful in their mission. Both my cameraman, Godofredo Guedes, and I were beaten, suffering black eyes and bruises. Finally, the police escorted us back to our hotel where we were kept under close surveillance.

My flight into Dili for the Xanana trial was a long one. It gave me ample opportunity to reflect on why I was compelled to cover the situation in East Timor. I had been bothered by the idea that, like many others, my thoughts about Timor were guided by preconceptions. Based on what I had learned from many sources, I had, for instance, expected the guerrilla rebellion to be a story of awful atrocities, with the Indonesians suppressing the Timorese brutally. Of people being pushed out of helicopters. Of innocent women and children shot in cold blood. In fact, some observers insist that the atrocities have been worse than those in Cambodia.

The problem was how to report it. I could not and would not ignore it. I was a reporter and thus, by definition, a trouble-maker and thorn in someone's side. Perhaps, though, my feelings had gotten in the way of my reporting. A good reporter does not let that happen.

But this was more than a simple story for me. It was a question of ethics and humanity as well as honor and respect for my craft. I felt it inevitable that the reporter is caught up in human affairs. While some journalists refuse to acknowledge this, preferring to ascend to a non-existent nirvana or neutrality, I do not.

In 1983, after the dramatic adventures of Adelino Gomes of Publico, one of Portugal's greatest reporters in 1975, I was the first Portuguese journalist to be authorized to cover the reality of the occupied island. I knew what Amnesty International's report said of extrajudicial executions, disappearances, torture and political imprisonment:

"...accounts of hundreds of killings of non-combatant civilians during and shortly after the invasion itself, the systematic execution of hundreds of people who had surrendered to or been captured by Indonesian forces in 1978 and 1979; the 'disappearance' or killing... after arrest on suspicion of links with Fretilin forces; after interrogation in centres in Dili; after being taken out of temporary detention centres or official prisons." I also knew that diplomatic files confirmed the Amnesty report. I knew the dossier. Yet the Indonesians denied everything.

All of this was more than sufficient to make me check the situation with curiosity, pugnacity and invention. It was a big story. But the obstacles were great. The Indonesians prevented me from talking freely to the people, sending armed soldiers ahead to intimidate the people and bar me from going into certain areas. Of course there was no way to record the atrocities on camera. The picture of the territory presented to me by the military had no such violence and the Indonesians denied me the opportunity to record evidence from interviews or shots of victims. I de-

cided, with the approval of José Manuel Barata Foyo, my editor at the time, to forego regular television shots. Instead I used the method of theatre to tell the story of the dreadful accumulation of gratuitous horrors that concealed history. I used the silence of the people, letting their eyes and glances tell the story and contrasted those faces and their eloquent silence with the official verbal diarrhea of Indonesian officials.

The result was that I took the side of those people: the vulnerable heroes of a forgotten war. What else could I do?

"Not a single similar visit to Atauro Island with television cameras has been permitted since then by the military that said on various occasions that Rui Araújo's trip had been a disaster for them," wrote British sociologist John G. Taylor in his book, "Indonesia's Forgotten War." ■

Objectivity

Is There Something Better?

Jay Rosen writes about public journalism in the winter edition of *Nieman Reports*.

Hate Speech—How to Handle It

Private Colleges Have Not Only the Legal Right to Enforce Speech Codes That Prohibit Verbal Harrassment But They Also Have the Responsibility to Do So

BY WILLIAM R. COTTER

In January, as a group of black women gathered outside a high-rise dorm at the University of Pennsylvania joyfully—and noisily—marked the rounding of their sorority, hateful words—"nigger," "bitch," "fat ass"—pelted them from the rooms above. In another incident at Penn this year, black students allegedly seized almost every copy of the daily campus newspaper because they objected to the opinions of a columnist. Both events—and the university's response to them—put Penn and its president, Sheldon Hackney, at the center of an increasingly volatile conflict between free speech and racial harassment.

The university took no immediate action against the students involved in the newspaper incident, though when Hackney was nominated by President Clinton to head the National Endowment for the Humanities, a Penn spokesperson told the press that the students would be subject to disciplinary action this fall. And they should be, because what they did was equivalent to tearing down a poster or heckling a speaker into silence. Their act constituted a clear violation of free speech.

In contrast, Penn moved swiftly against the one student who admitted taunting the sorority sisters, (although he personally said he simply called them "water buffalos") and the attention that case received raises troubling questions about the right—indeed, the obligation—of colleges and universities to protect all members of their communities from all forms of abuse while giving priority to our fundamental commitment to freedom of expression.

Right now, on editorial pages across the country, in Congress and in the broader arena of ideas, a battle is being fought that may redraw the boundaries of free speech. Some say speech of all kinds should be protected. Others, myself included, say private colleges not have not only the legal *right* to enforce speech codes that prohibit verbal harassment, they have a *responsibility* to do so.

At first blush it may seem incongruous for a college president to advocate any restriction on speech. Colleges and universities were designed as havens for the free and open exchange of ideas. One of the oldest traditions we have—the tenure system—was instituted partly to allow academics to pursue their ideas without fear of losing their salaries along with a king's favor or a university president's approval. I am dedicated completely to the preservation of tenure and of colleges as sanctuaries of unfettered thought.

But as the president of a private college, I have a unique trust. Unlike state universities, which are bound by constitutional interpretations that increasingly restrict their ability to act against verbal harassment, private colleges (except in California) are free to enact speech codes. So my peer presidents and I are presented with a challenge: to balance the need for free speech with the need to provide a civil atmosphere for all of our students. Indeed, the easy way out would be to refuse to institute sanctions against any kind of speech. But that would be irresponsible, and college presidents



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should not walk away from this challenge. After all, we do not preside over institutions that are the equivalents of Hyde Park Speakers' Corner, where hate speech can be spewed and passersby have the option to stop and listen or to keep going, secure in the knowledge that they probably will never see the speaker again. Colleges, especially small colleges like Colby, are more like families; members of these communities cannot avoid each other for long, and they certainly cannot—and should not have to—avoid common walkways for fear of being harassed verbally.

The Penn case is only the most recent in a string of incidents in which students were subjected to such abuse. Two years ago, a student was expelled from Brown University for yelling anti-Semitic, anti-homosexual and racist epithets from his room into a common courtyard. At Colby, we have disciplined both black and white students for racial taunts. The universities of Michigan and Massachusetts—and many others—have grappled with hate graffiti. Officials in the University of California system warn of a "backlash" against Asian-American students. Occidental College, also in California, recently became enmeshed in conflicting state and federal lawsuits after they announced that they planned to hold disciplinary hearings under their sexual harassment policy against a group of fraternity men who ran to a sorority singing about mutilating women's genitalia with a chain saw. In each case, the colleges and universities involved have tried to reconcile their commitment to free speech with their desire to guard against verbal harassment—especially of minority students and women.

Words wound. The old rhyme that ends "but names will never hurt me" wasn't true for the women at Penn. I suspect it isn't true for any of us. Hurtful words can resonate in our lives more deeply than superficial physical injuries—a fact recognized recently by U.S. Roman Catholic bishops, who noted that "violence in any form—physical, sexual, psychological or *verbal* [emphasis mine]—is sinful." People who use words as weapons against others should find no shelter at our colleges

and universities. This can occasionally involve written words, such as racist, misogynist, or anti-Semitic notes affixed to the door of a dormitory room or on the customary classroom seat of an intended victim. However, most written speech, in college newspapers for example, advocating even outrageous views must normally be unfettered unless it descends to libel or constitutes such a vicious, personal attack on an individual or a small group that it would be the equivalent of proscribed verbal harassment.

College administrators have striven for many years to build diverse communities on their campuses, communities

Would the [Wall Street] Journal—or any newspaper—permit its employees to hurl racial, sexist or anti-Semitic epithets at each other in the newsroom on the grounds that free speech must be protected? Of course not. Nor should colleges allow such behavior.

that reflect the makeup of the nation as a whole—and we've done so with support from the U.S. Supreme Court and others outside higher education. But it is not enough to *admit* a diverse student body. We have an obligation to protect those who are vulnerable to physical and verbal harassment. By definition, educational institutions must provide an atmosphere in which learning can take place. Order is required for meaningful discussion, and support for those who may feel vulnerable is necessary if they are to participate in the educational process. Speech that injures or silences people limits partici-

pation and impedes education.

Nevertheless, many in the media, in Congress and even in the American Civil Liberties Union seem insensitive to the obligation of a college to create a civil atmosphere.

Last year, a Wall Street Journal editorial condemned Colby, along with Penn, Stanford, the University of Minnesota, the University of Florida and Brown, for trying to curb verbal harassment. The editorial misquoted and distorted Colby's policies and subsequently failed to print a clarifying letter from me. In June of this year, The Journal took pride in the turmoil they helped cause at Penn and called for the abolition of all speech codes, even the most carefully crafted and sparingly used. "We were happy to have played some part in bringing... the case at Penn to wider public attention," the editors wrote. "But it is important to understand how unexceptional that case was. That this awful intimidation and self-censorship flourishes elsewhere is caused by the fact that so many schools are led by what are simply weak men.... [W]hat we learned at Penn and elsewhere is that it is time for the speech codes to go. Abolish them. They are a blot on the idea of a university."

No. Carefully drawn speech codes are an essential part of the university's obligation to preserve an environment where free speech can flourish. Would The Journal—or any newspaper—permit its employees to hurl racial, sexist or anti-Semitic epithets at each other in the newsroom on the grounds that free speech must be protected? Of course not. Nor should colleges allow such behavior.

The Journal also criticized 200 members of Harvard's class of 1993 for turning their backs on General Colin Powell as he delivered his commencement address, even though The Journal usually champions such examples of free expression. In this case I agree with The Journal. Some of us "weak men" (and women) in higher education work hard to guarantee the right of controversial speakers to be heard on our campuses and implore our students and faculty to listen to opposing views. When rumors reached me that some faculty members

and students were considering a boycott of Colby's commencement this year because Bob Dole was to address the ceremony, I objected in a public forum. I told the assembled senior class and the faculty that such an action would not only be impolite, since Senator Dole was a guest of the college, but would violate the most basic understanding of the obligation to listen—particularly in an academic community whose purpose is the pursuit of knowledge.

We are obliged to make special efforts to seek out contrary opinions and to encourage others to do so, and boycotting speakers—before we have even given them a chance to be heard—seems to me almost as offensive as interfering with free speech itself. Of course I recognize the importance of free speech, but I draw the line when speech is used not to communicate ideas but simply to injure others.

Not only do newspapers such as *The Journal* rail against policies designed to promote verbal civility on campus, so do many conservatives in Congress—with, oddly enough, the blessings of the ACLU.

In 1991, Congressman Henry Hyde introduced HR 1380 to amend Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 "to protect the free speech rights of college students." His bill would have applied First Amendment prohibitions that now affect only state institutions (including public universities) to private colleges. Lower federal courts have struck down verbal harassment codes enacted at state universities in Michigan and Wisconsin, although the U.S. Supreme Court has not yet passed on their constitutionality. But the Court's 1992 decision in *R.A.V. v. The City of St. Paul* may have eliminated even the "fighting words" exception to the First Amendment established a half century ago, so hate speech codes at state universities may be unconstitutional even when they try to restrain "fighting words." However, the Supreme Court has yet to rule directly on this issue, and I hope that some state university administrators will stand by needed codes and appeal any adverse lower court decisions until there is a definitive Supreme Court ruling.

In earlier cases, the Supreme Court has specifically encouraged colleges to recruit a diverse student body and has held, in the public school context, that administrators of public institutions have broad powers to guarantee an orderly and civil atmosphere. It is possible, therefore, that the Court might uphold a carefully tailored state university speech code.

When he introduced his bill, Hyde said, "I do not condone bigoted speech, but driving such sentiments underground through academic sanctions does not eliminate bigotry. It just makes it fester. Instead, we should unleash the most effective weapon of the democratic society—more speech."

More *bigoted* speech? More epithets thrown from one side to the other and back? More drunken shouting from windows? Does that increase understanding? Does that help individuals explore unpopular opinions? Is there a difference between speech and harassing epithets? If so, how can a line be drawn and what should colleges do?

The ACLU endorsed the Hyde Bill, and its president Nadine Strossen, appeared with Hyde when he introduced it. Yet the ACLU tells us in other policy papers that "colleges and universities have an affirmative obligation to combat racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of bias." They advise a college to "utilize every opportunity to communicate through its administrators, faculty and students its commitment to the elimination of all forms of bigotry on campus." But if colleges cannot respond meaningfully to bigoted speech or hate graffiti aimed at students, how can we fulfill that commitment? Would simple condemnation of uncivil speech restore the feeling of belonging and security to which all students are entitled? I doubt it.

I, along with officials from other colleges, met with Mr. Hyde to explain the difficulty we face in trying to ensure both free speech and freedom from verbal assault. I told him about a white Colby student who had jeered the opposing team at a hotly contested basketball game with racial taunts. Colby security officers warned the student, then removed him from the gym, and he

People who use words as weapons against others should find no shelter at our colleges and universities.

subsequently was denied his sport's captaincy. Mr. Hyde agreed that the college should have taken action in that case. But Hyde's proposed legislation and the *Journal's* advice would prevent private colleges from taking such steps if they wished to continue receiving federal money.

Michael Grieves, the executive director of the conservative, Washington-based Center for Individual Rights, says his organization would not have defended the expelled Brown University student. (Center lawyers successfully defended Professor Michael Levin of City College, who was under investigation for saying that blacks are intellectually inferior to whites, as well as a George Mason University fraternity that held an "Ugly Woman" contest in which a young man appeared in black face.) "There is a real distinction," says Grieves, "between genuine speech and being a lout and having nothing to say at all." I agree, and this crucial distinction is exactly what the colleges must try to define.

So, am I saying that I believe students who cross the line between free speech and verbal abuse ought to be expelled immediately? Absolutely not. No one learns anything that way. But how can we protect, even *invite* unpopular speech and controversial opinions—including those that touch on matters of race, religion or gender—while censoring verbal harassment? By creating a system for airing complaints that everyone can trust to be genuinely fair.

Both the University of Pennsylvania student who admitted shouting at the black sorority sisters and the women themselves say the case was handled badly. Five months after the complaint was lodged—after a storm of publicity—the women dropped the charges, say-

ing that not only had they been harassed, they had been "further victimized by the media and, thereafter, by the judicial process and agents of the university."

Over the years, Penn has developed an intricate system for reviewing campus disciplinary matters—but that intricacy lends itself to the kind of unwanted publicity and outside interference Penn suffered this spring. It was a very public airing of Penn's dirty laundry, and in the end, nobody benefited much—and the causes of racial harmony and free speech were both damaged.

On most of our campuses these incidents are handled through the student judicial process—and that almost always results in a loss of confidence by everyone, "winners" and "losers" alike, in the fairness of the institution. Student/faculty judicial boards simply aren't equipped to handle such tricky matters.

I think we should develop quick, effective systems for clearing the air after an incident of verbal harassment by getting the parties together to talk. If that fails and some sort of mediation is required, there should be a private, impartial, nonjudicial hearing.

In these emotionally charged cases, colleges and universities should be able to call on arbitrators. Each party in the dispute could choose one person from a list of lawyers, civil rights leaders, journalists, counselors, clergy and others willing to serve and those two could select the third. The panel would then make its findings promptly, using procedures it—and not the college—determined.

Taking a case to a panel, not to a courtroom, might encourage more talk on campus about the twin values of free speech and freedom from harassment. At the very least, that procedure would not fan the distrust that typically accompanies these incidents. And maybe those who have suffered abuse, such as the Penn sorority sisters, could actually end up feeling whole and cherished and respected by their colleges instead of torn and bloodied by the process. ■

Internet as a Journalist's Tool

BY TOM REGAN

About a year ago I dropped by my mother's house near Halifax to see my sister. After the usual bantering, we launched into one of our regular what-will-we-do-to-save-the-world? conversations. At one point, my sister, an archaeologist and student of international development at a local university, started to talk about Rigoberta Menchu, the Mayan Indian from Guatemala who had won the Nobel Peace Prize. She rattled off fact after fact about Menchu's work. I listened, a bit surprised at the depth of her information. After all, I worked for a newspaper and I paid attention to such things. Yet at no time could I remember reading about some of the aspects of Menchu's work that my sister was describing.

Finally I stopped her and asked, "Where did you learn all this stuff?", expecting her to name some magazine or university study.

"Oh, I got it all off the Internet."

At that moment a door opened somewhere in the recesses of my brain and a light turned on. Obviously my sister was describing an unknown source of information (at least to me) that ran like a current beneath the machinations of the everyday media. I determined to find out what this "Internet" was, and how I could use it as a journalist.

I have spent much of this past year in that quest. And I am here to tell those of you who aren't already on the 'Net, that the ship is passing you by, and that the Internet may be the single most important tool available to journalists today, and certainly will be in the future.

By now I suppose that some of you are muttering, "Okay, enough with the dramatic build up. What the hell is Internet?"

The Internet is an enormous treasure chest, full of information jewels,

some of them priceless, some of them cubic zirconia, most of them useful. It exists in a place called Cyberspace. The Internet is a computer network of networks that extends around the world. It enables you to sit at your kitchen table (or from your desk at work) and research information on the North American Free Trade Agreement, communicate with an expert on AIDS research in



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Africa, download the complete Congressional record of the politician of your choice, retrieve the entire text of U.S. Supreme Court decisions moments after the court releases them, find out the itinerary of the President (or drop him a note), discuss the dangers to children of overexposure to Barney the Dinosaur—to name just a few things. Most of this can be done at a mere fraction of the cost and in considerably less time than it would take you to find the same information by phone, fax, or “snail mail,” as the postal system is referred to in Cyberspace. In order to access this treasure chest, you need three tools: a computer, a modem and a connection to the Internet itself.

There is no organization called “Internet”, no telephone number to call where a friendly voice will answer, “Hello, you’ve reached Internet, how may we help you?” The Internet came into being about 20 years ago in a way similar to many of the other modern

The Internet is an enormous treasure chest, full of information jewels, some of them priceless, some of them cubic zirconia, most of them useful.

technological inventions we cherish: it was a military experiment. The Internet was originally called ARPAnet, created by the U.S. Defense Department’s to support military research. The idea was to create a system that could withstand nuclear attack. As more and more organizations joined, and computers got faster, people found ARPAnet too slow. So in the late 80’s the National Science Foundation built its own network, and more important, allowed access to just about anybody who could hook up to it. The NSF fought for universal access by funding campus connections only with institutions promising to spread it

around to everyone.

As for who runs the ‘Net, that’s a tough question to answer in limited space. Ed Krol, author of “The Whole Internet Catalog and User’s Guide,” describes it this way: “In many ways the Internet is like a church: it has its council of elders, every member has an opinion about how things should work, and you can either take part, or not. It’s your choice.” In a sense, the Internet is one of the purest examples of real democracy around. Everyone pays for his or her own part. Networks get together and decide how to connect with each other and pay for those connections. Private companies can sell dial-up connections to individuals for a small price.

It’s important to note the difference between the Internet and commercial services like Compuserve or America On-Line. The Internet does not exist to make profit. It exists to encourage the exchange of information. Some commercial services now offer connections to the Internet, as well as other private services. While you must pay a cost to a private vendor to connect to the Internet—unless you’re lucky enough to work for a university or research institute—Internet costs are much lower than those of private companies, and the amount of information available much greater.

So What Can It Do for Me?

Plenty. Internet uses a number of tools to access information: File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Telnet, e-mail, Gopher, WAIS, Finger, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), Network News, and the list is growing. Rather than go into long descriptions of each tool (it’s much smarter to pick up one of the books recommended below), perhaps a few practical examples of how to use the Internet for journalistic purposes are in order.

Recently I decided to write a story on Canada’s debt problem. Several politicians and right-wing business groups were running around yelling “The sky is falling!” and demanding that the government make enormous cuts in Canada’s social programs. I wanted to find out if there was any substance to these dire predictions.

I started by firing up the ‘Net and logging on to my Network News pro-

gram. Network News is a huge collection of bulletin boards (BBS) on every subject imaginable—over 2000 and growing exponentially. Some are incredibly informative, others are juvenile trash. I posted a note to a Canadian politics group, asking for anyone with real information to reply to my query. Then I hopped over to my e-mail program, and sent out a note to a LISTSERV group on Canadian politics. LISTSERV groups are like the BBS’s, only more refined and less trashy. I then used my gopher program to help me find any postings on the Canadian economy. All of this took me about a half-hour.

When I checked an hour later, responses to my queries abounded. A professor in Montreal sent me several excellent articles on the economy. Another person posted a note to the BBS citing three international economists from major U.S. financial firms who said Canada’s debt crisis was being overblown. I contacted a name given to me by another source and arranged an interview with an expert on Canadian economics in Australia. (How he got there and why he wanted to study Canadian economics is a story in itself.)

Without the Internet, it would have taken weeks to research the story, and I would have been limited to “experts” in and around Nova Scotia. The Internet allowed me to expand the scope of my article enormously, and do it in a fraction of the time (and of the cost) normally required.

Needless to say, many journalists know about Internet. During the failed Soviet coup of 1991, people at a small e-mail company with an Internet connection used e-mail to tell the outside world what was happening. Organizations like CNN and Associated Press used e-mail to communicate back to the sources in Moscow. It’s not unusual these days to see requests for information on subjects from organizations like MTV, ABC-News, or The New York Times. Yet these requests often come from individuals, rather than organizations. The inability of many editors and management officials to see the advantages of supporting such a system for their papers is a common topic of discussion among reporters and others on media

LISTSERV groups.

That's not to say the Internet is flawless. Internet burnout is already a common complaint—there is so much information out there that if you're not careful you spend all your time sorting the wheat from the chaff, and not enough time baking bread (or writing stories). As noted above, the quality of the information is sometimes suspect. It takes time to find out where to look and how to find what you want. There are some who argue that the Internet is just one more way to keep reporters off the streets and away from real people. The Internet is also an immature medium. Journalists seem to spend a great deal of time talking to each other on the 'Net about how to use it.

But it's important to remember that the Internet is a tool, and how you use that tool depends on you. Information technology and computer-assisted journalism will dramatically alter the landscape of journalism. No doubt there were journalists who complained bitterly when they were asked to stop using pens and start using typewriters. It's not hard to remember when modern-day journalists complained about the change from typewriters to computers. Yet in each case, after a few months on the new system, most reporters were unwilling to do without the new technology. I predict the same thing will happen with the Internet.

Marshall McLuhan's global village is no longer the stuff of academic musings. Today, the Internet may seem like a fancy car that looks great, but gives lousy gas mileage. But as more and more people tinker with the system, improve and refine the methods for finding information, the Internet will become that indispensable method of global "transportation" that will take reporters to sources of information previously unimaginable.

Not to mention the smooth ride. ■

Michael Crichton Writes An Obit of the Mass Media

Following are excerpts from a speech by Michael Crichton, the author, to the National Press Club in Washington on April 6, 1993:

In my own mind it's likely that what we now think of as the mass media will be gone in 10 years—vanished without a trace. We all know the statistics about the decline in newspaper readership and network television viewership, the polls which increasingly show negative attitudes toward the press and the media, and with good reason. A generation ago, Paddy Chayefsky's "Network" looked like outrageous farce. Today, when Geraldo Rivera bares his buttocks, when The New York Times misquotes Barbie doll, and NBC fakes news footage of Chevy trucks, "Network" looks like a documentary.

According to recent polls, large segments of the American population think the media is attentive to trivia, and indifferent to what really matters. They also believe that the media does not report the country's problems, but instead is a part of them. Increasingly, people perceive no difference between the narcissistic, self-serving reporters asking the questions, and the narcissistic, self-serving politicians who refuse to answer.

I'm troubled by the media's response to these criticisms. We hear the old professional line: "Sure, we've got problems; we could always do our job better." Or there's the time-honored: "We've always been disliked because we're the bearer of bad news. It comes with the territory. I'll start to worry when the press is liked." These responses suggest to me that the media just doesn't get it, doesn't understand why the consumers are now unhappy with their wares....

Let's talk about quality.

The American media produce a product of very poor quality. Its information is not reliable, it has too much chrome and glitz, its doors rattle, it breaks down almost immediately, and it's sold without a warranty. Poor product quality results in part from the American educational

system, which now graduates workers too poorly educated to generate high-quality information. In part, it's a problem of near-sighted management that encourages profits at the expense of quality. In part, it's a failure to respond to changing technology. And in large part, it's a failure to recognize the changing needs of the audience.

In recent decades, many American companies have undergone the painful, wrenching changes that restructuring produces in order to create high-quality products. Because improved quality demands a change in the corporate culture—a radical change.

Generally speaking, the American media have remained aloof from this process. There have been some positive innovations in recent years, like CNN and C-SPAN. But the news on television and in newspapers is generally perceived as less accurate, less objective, less informed than it was a decade ago. Because instead of focusing on quality, the media have tried to be lively or engaging. Selling the sizzle not the steak, the talk show host not the guest, the format not the subject. And in doing so, I would argue it has abandoned its audience.

Who will be the GM or IBM of the '90's—the next great institution to find itself obsolete and outmoded while obstinately refusing to change? I suspect one answer will be The New York Times and the commercial networks. Other institutions have been pushed to improve their quality. Ford now makes a better car than it has at any time in my life, and we can thank Toyota and Nissan for that. But who will push The New York Times?

The answer, I think, is technology.... The modern thrust of technology, I would argue, is radically different because it is changing the very concept of information in our society. Information today is vitally important. We live by it.

More and more, people understand that they pay for information. Online databases charge by the minute. As the link between payment and information be-

comes more explicit, consumers will naturally want better information. They'll demand it, and they'll be willing to pay for it. There is going to be—I would argue there already is—a market for extremely high quality information.

[W]hat if someone offered a service with really high quality information? A service where all the facts were true, where the quotes weren't piped, where the statistics were presented by someone who knew something about statistics. What would that be worth? A lot. Because good information has value. The notion that news is filler between the ads is an outdated idea.

There's a second and related trend here: I want direct access to the information that interests me, and increasingly I expect to get it. This is a long-standing trend in many technologies. When I was a kid, telephones had no dials. If you wanted to place a call, you picked it up and talked to an operator who placed the call for you. Now, if you've ever had the experience of being in a situation where someone else has to place your calls, you realize how exasperating and frustrating that is. We can all do it faster and better ourselves. Today's media equivalent of the old telephone operator is Dan Rather or the front page editor or the reporter who prunes the facts in order to be lively and vivid. Increasingly, I want to remove those filters, and in some cases I already can.

My ability to view C-SPAN brings us to the third trend.... For 200 years, the media have been able to behave in a basically monopolistic way. The media have treated information the way John D. Rockefeller treated oil—as a commodity in which the distribution network rather than product quality was the primary importance. But once people can get the raw information themselves, that monopoly ends. That means big changes soon. Once Al Gore gets the fiber-optic highway in place and the information capacity of this country is where it ought to be, where it should have been several years ago, then I will be able, for example, to view any public meeting of Congress on tape. And I will have artificial intelligence agents roaming the databases, downloading stuff I'm interested in and assembling for me a front page or a nightly news show that addresses my interests. I'll have the 12 top stories that I want, I'll have short summaries available, and I can double-click for more detail. How will Peter Jennings or MacNeil/Lehrer or a newspaper compete with that? The media institutions will have to change. ■

InternetSpeak

TELNET: Telnet is a program that allows you to log in to another computer to run software there. Typically, you log in either to access a "shell" command environment or some other utility, like a weather server or game.

ANONYMOUS FTP: FTP stands for file transfer protocol. FTP allows you to copy files from a remote computer to your local host. Thousands of sites provide anonymous FTP service, allowing you to download everything from online books, to satellite pictures of the weather, to public-domain utilities and games for your personal computer.

USENET: The Usenet is a global bulletin board, of sorts, in which millions of people exchange public information on every conceivable topic.

FINGER: Finger is a program that returns information about a registered user on a computer.

IRC: IRC is the Internet Relay Chat, a service where users can "talk" via typing to people around the world.

ALEX/ARCHIE/GOPHER/HYTELNET/NETFIND/PROSPERO/VERONICA/WAIS/WHOIS/WWW/X.500: These are all part of a new generation of network information resources that help you find what you're looking for much quicker. ■

Books on Internet

(Thanks to Kevin Savetz and his "Internet Services Frequently Asked Questions and Answers" file.)

Exploring the Internet: a Technical Travelogue by Carl Malamud. Prentice-Hall.

The Internet Companion, A Beginner's Guide To Global Networking by Tracy LaQuey with Jeanne C. Ryer (Addison-Wesley). Useful for the computer-literate Internet novice. ISBN: 0-201-62224-6. 1993. \$10.95.

Internet: Getting Started. Franklin F. Kuo, Series Editor. SRI. Internet Information Services. Prentice Hall. How to join the Internet, various types of access. An extensive list of access providers, including many outside of the United States. ISBN: 0-13-327933-2. 1993. Paperback, 360 pages. \$28.

The Internet Passport: NorthWestNet's Guide to Our World Online 4th ed. NorthWestNet and the Northwest Academic Computing Consortium, Inc. Comprehensive. 516 pages. \$39.95 (\$19.95 plus shipping for schools, nonprofits) NorthWestNet, 15400 SE 30th Place, Suite 202, Bellevue, WA 98007.

The Whole Internet User's Guide and Catalog by Ed Krol. O'Reilly & Associates. Covers basic utilities used to access network and guides users through databases of databases to access millions of files and thousands of archives. Includes resource index that covers approximately 300 important resources. ISBN: 1-56592-025-2. 1992. 400 pages. \$24.95.

Zen & the Art of Internet by Brendan Kehoe. Prentice Hall. What can be done with Internet. Fundamental topics considered trivial by many. ISBN: 0-13-010778-6. 112 pages. 1993. \$22. ■

The African Media in a Changing Africa

This year, for the first time, the annual conference of the Nieman Foundation and the African-American Institute was broadened to include members of the International Women's Media Foundation. Following are excerpts from the conference, held in Harare, Zimbabwe July 1-2.

Opening Session

GWEN LISTER

Editor, The Namibian

One must say that change is coming about in some parts of Africa, but this is hardly at a breath-taking pace. Media practitioners from across the African continent meeting in Windhoek in 1991 welcomed the changes [in the] increasing numbers of African states that were moving toward multiparty democracies and said that these provided a climate in which an independent and pluralistic press could emerge. But they pointed out that in most countries media repression was still the order of the day. What is now known as the Windhoek Declaration on creating an independent and pluralistic African press was adopted at that conference. It stated that consistent with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the establishment, maintenance and fostering of an independent, pluralistic African press was essential to the development of democracy and economic development on the African continent.

The Media Institute of Southern Africa came into existence in accordance with the sentiments expressed in the Windhoek Declaration and has now actively started monitoring the state of the media, particularly in the southern part of Africa, and has commenced training projects in accordance with that as well. The information ministers of the Organization of African Unity adopted the Windhoek Declaration, but it is significant to note that these governments have

made very little progress toward promoting the aims and objectives of the declaration. Repression still continues, and a variety of pressures, subtle or unsubtle, are still applied throughout the continent despite this verbal commitment.

In South Africa, bush radio was banned effectively despite a commitment from the South African government that they would deregulate the airwaves. In Zambia, promises of deregulation by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy have not yet been fulfilled and Zambian airwaves still remain in the control of the government. In Angola, journalists have been murdered and still no answers have been found as to who or what was responsible. In Malawi, despite moves towards democracy, repressive press laws still have to be replaced, and the state of the media there is still not good despite moves toward an independent press. In Mozambique, a movement towards democracy is being hampered by restrictions on the independent press. A new newspaper which is about to come into being in Mozambique is being hampered by import duties about half of the value of the equipment they are trying to bring in. One can go on and on with examples on the continent.

I would probably not be honest if I did not single out Namibia. Three years after independence, freedom of the press, I am pleased to say, is an accepted fact. The people of our country are able to exercise their democratic voice and freedom of information and expression is a fundamental contribution to the fulfillment of human aspirations. The government in Namibia, while it may not always like the criticism which is leveled at it, has accepted the watchdog role of the media and is constantly held accountable for its

actions. I would go so far as to say that the government has, instead of being affected badly by criticism in the press, gone from strength to strength.

It is time that we, as African journalists in the interests of the people we represent, take off our blinkers as far as the governments are concerned and make them accountable. Restrictive legislation against the press in the many countries needs to be replaced. The media has to be protected from economic censorship, such as crippling import duties. Revision of broadcasting legislation is vital in order to give the people access to the airwaves. As we know there is a high illiteracy rate, and radio is still a very vital means of communication. There is hardly any country in Southern Africa, apart from Namibia, which has freed up the airwaves and made them open to organizations apart from the government. The need for deregulation in this regard is paramount.

The fact that press freedom is a fundamental right has to take root and grow. Governments may point to the growth of the independent press in their respective countries, but I feel this is usually despite rather than because of the governments in question. The African media still has a very long way to go, and it is up to both governments and journalists to take up the challenge to free up the press. I think we will find that Africa will be freed up in the process.

KABRAL BLAY-AMIHERE

Publisher, The Independent, Ghana

I believe it is proper for us to begin our discussion from where the African press is coming from. That historical perspective, I believe, can help us to understand better

the challenges that face us in our changing Africa. The African media have undergone many changes from the days of colonial rule to multiparty politicalism, one-party states and unity role to democracy again. It can be said that any institution which leads to such changes is bound to be an agent as well as a victim of the changes. This statement is very true of the African media.

Communication scholars have shown how the African media, dating from 1821, when *The Royal Gazette* was founded in Sierra Leone, contributed in many ways to end colonial rule. The media is regarded as an instrument of liberation.

Today democracy is returning to many parts of Africa. In many African countries we can see that the press woke up from their bondage to join democratic forces to pressurize governments to respect the wind of change. Where democracy has returned one can still see the press helping make democracy a permanent feature of our lives. Today many African countries are going through International Monetary Fund structural adjustment programs. From at least the Ghanaian experience, it seems to me that economic development and our whole existence in this world can only be promoted in a democratic atmosphere. It is bad to be poor; it is worse to have no voice at all to complain about your poverty. The media can ensure that we do not relapse into the dark days of tyranny. One of the greatest challenges facing the African media is in strengthening democracy where it exists and helping to bring it about where it does not exist.

Has the Democratic Experience in Africa Encouraged an Independent Media?

CHAIR: TAMI HULTMAN,
Director, Africa News Service

In this decade African people across the continent have been demanding accountable response of governments. In countries where gains towards that goal have been achieved, newspapers have flourished, deregulation of airways has been discussed, and in at least one case a clandestine radio station is broadcasting. At the same time, in many cases the plight of the press is still dire. Despite the growth of free media, journalists everywhere have discovered that the battle is not over. The governments that came into power at the ballot box are often no more enamored of being criticized than those who came to power in other ways and who exercise autocratic controls.

TREVOR NCUBE

Editor, Financial Gazette, Zimbabwe

What actually happened which encouraged the emergence of an independent press in Zimbabwe is that we had a breakdown of our economy. Our economy deteriorated quite rapidly, particularly [in] the 80's.

We had the coming together of the two main tribes in this country—Zanu PF and Zapu. That coming together in itself tended to open an avenue for debate, and it tended to open an avenue also for the independent press to emerge. Both the black people in the country [and] the whites that controlled the economy were unhappy and discontented with what was taking place. They felt that they had to find an avenue to ventilate their frustrations, and I must say they found that avenue in the independent press, which at that time was quite small. So one would say that the political ineptitude of the government and the ruling party did create conditions conducive for the emergence of an independent press. That independent press still survives now.

But democracy is not as vibrant as we would want it to be; the independent press is not as strong as we would want it to be. I think it is playing its little role to

ensure that democracy does become viable, does become strong, and does become durable. But there are still concerns which I think I should share with you. And these concerns are that the independent press, although it has played an important role, still is unable to penetrate the rural population where 70 percent of the people reside. There is no way that the independent press can claim to influence a democratization process as long as it is unable to infiltrate 70 percent of the population.

The second issue of concern is the fact that the government still controls 100 percent of radio and television.

My concluding remark is that we still have in Zimbabwe a very conservative corporate sector; we still have in Zimbabwe a very conservative advertising sector. To me now, as I sit here, the corporate sector and the advertising sector pose a very serious threat to the survival of the independent press. Until the corporate sector and the advertising sector appreciate the role of the independent press then maybe the independent press still has a battle to do with the corporate sector. As you know, most of us really survive—about 80 percent—through advertising. If they pull the rug out from under our feet then we are done for.

REHANA ROSSOUW

Political Correspondent, South, South Africa

In the past few months South African journalists have learned a few hard lessons about why they should not be too optimistic about the prospects of a free press in our country. The process leading to the appointment of a new board of the South African Broadcasting Corporation illustrated sharply once again recently that some political parties are extremely reluctant to relinquish control of a key sector of the South African media. We were so optimistic a few months ago in South Africa; we were so proud of the fact that Western governments sent observers to our country to study our election process for a new board to control the SABC, but overnight we were taken back to the darkest days of state control of the media. The government rejected the submissions made by the independent board and substituted a chairman of its choice.

A hard lesson was learned here. We cannot be too complacent in South Africa that any government promises on press freedom and, more important, society's



Kabral Blay-Amihere of Ghana and Frank Ferrari of the African-American Institute



Seated left to right—Rehana Rossouw of South Africa, Adrienne Diop of Senegal and Norah Appolus of Namibia

participation and station in this process are going to be met. What we do know that will emerge at the end of our negotiation process is a government of national unity. The obvious problem with this is that the struggle for political power and control is going to continue in South Africa for at least another five years.

But in South Africa we have some advantages. We have a wealth of government mistakes to learn from. Compared to a number of countries represented here, we have quite a large media infrastructure for when we achieve independence. The challenge for us therefore is to transform these structures. The SABC, for example, represents the greatest challenge to media people in South Africa. As a public broadcaster it will have to transform from his master's voice to an organ of unbiased information, education and development.

The final advantage South Africa enjoys is the fact that we are drafting a new constitution and a new bill of rights for a new democratic South Africa. Another lesson I have learnt this week is that compared to a number of countries represented here, journalists in South Africa are sadly unorganized. A constitution, Africa has taught us, is not a good enough guarantee of press freedom. We cannot assume that press freedom will be handed to us on a platter by a new government in South Africa. We will have to organize, to educate our society of the critical role of an independent media.

NORAH APPOLUS

Senior Controller
Namibian Broadcasting Corporation

Yes indeed, the democratic experience in Africa has encouraged an independent

media, at least as far as my country is concerned. We have a democracy in Namibia, and I would like to think that it is a true democracy. With that democracy came a commitment on the part of our politicians to maintain that democracy. Once they had that commitment they realized that one of the ways to maintain that democracy was to put into place legislation for an independent media. Now that has been done. They have taken it a step further by granting autonomy to the Public Broadcasting Network, which means it is free from government interference despite the fact that it is government subsidized.

This [autonomy] means that we can act as a watchdog on the government like our counterparts in the written press. We can criticize the government, and the government can take cognizance of the aspirations and the concerns of the people at the grassroots level. That is one of the ways of sustaining our democracy.

But it is not enough to have the legislation, it is not enough for the concept or for the right of an independent media to be written into the constitution. More than that, the people themselves need to be educated as to what it means to have an independent media, to have a voice, to make government accountable. We have seen cases where the concept of an independent media is written into several African constitutions, but because the commitment was not there and largely because the populations were not sensitized to what it means to have government accountable, they hijacked that and ignored [it]. They used the media to continue their dictatorships. The real challenge here is making the people aware that it is a fundamental human

right for which they must fight if the slightest violations appear.

ADRIENNE DIOP

Senegalese Television Broadcasting

What is the role of print press when three-fourths of the country is illiterate? It does not reach the masses, it does not reach those people in the country. Only through broadcast media [can] the message go through. In this respect I am afraid to say that we are really far behind.

Radio and television have always been controlled by the government. The managing director, the editorial chief are important people in the station and [are not appointed] on their professionalism and ability but on a political basis. So you would have on top people who are faithful to the party and who share its views. Journalists who have a free opinion are not promoted; they stay at the same level. Even if no journalist has been put in jail, no journalist has been killed in Senegal, the situation is more serious, in an insidious way. You are posted in remote areas where you can be of no more trouble for the government.

For the print media democracy has helped a lot, but it has no positive effect whatsoever on the broadcast media. The decisions taken in editorial meetings sometimes do not go anywhere because they say no, you cannot do this, you cannot say this, you cannot [broadcast] this interview.

To the public we have been a sort of support for the government's action. During the [recent] election period we have been identified as government supporters, and some of us have been attacked by the mob. I just want to say that democratic regimes do not like to be criticized, and when they cannot prevent it they really use whatever means they have to [react].

Asked about free airways, the governments said OK, we can have private radio stations, we can have private television stations, but they have [imposed] such difficult and harsh circumstances that nobody has been able, today, to set up a private station because nobody is crazy enough to do it. It is too costly and the measures are so hard. It is in the law that you can do it, but technically it is almost impossible. Just before I came, we had a row with the Prime Minister, who in Parliament, was asked, when is the government going to loosen their hands on the broadcast media? This is what he said: They [the media] work for the govern-

ment, so they have to be loyal to the government. We were really tricked by people who call themselves democrats.

We believe our loyalty is to the audience and not the government. We believe that there is no development without democracy, no democracy without freedom of press and no freedom without freedom of press.

RICHARD STEYN

Editor-in-Chief
Johannesburg Star

I came across a useful definition of democracy the other day. [It] said democracy is a system of government in which there are two institutions, regular and real elections and a body of civil rights and liberties. The first makes sure that periodically we can throw the bastards out of office, and the second ensures there are some things the bastards cannot do when they are in office. Well, measured against that standard, the democratic experience throughout Africa, including my own country, falls well short of what is required. The bastards can do pretty well what they like to journalists; bills of rights do little to protect us.

The broad picture is that since independence there has been an erosion of the power of the privately owned press in Africa and an increase of government control over the newspapers. Radio have become part or most of the security system of virtually every country. As noted recently, often the difference between a successful coup attempt and an unsuccessful coup is who gets control of the radio station. The post-colonial history has demonstrated that free political environment and intentions are not enough to ensure an independent press. A mature, tolerant electorate is needed. Independent media cannot thrive in a vacuum.

Economic circumstances are as important: availability of resources, of newsprint and suitably qualified people. As an article in the latest Nieman Reports puts it, how we get the next issue out is much more pressing than how we stay free. A large measure of financial independence is not having to beg for newsprint or import permits or tax concessions. Advertising does not play a large role in Africa, and people do not have much money in their pockets to buy newspapers. Only if the market economy grows can advertising become an important source of revenue.

If we look at South Africa as a whole, the democratic process such as it has been

has certainly not encouraged the growth of independent media either, because central to the existence of an independent, critical and thriving media is an electorate which understands the meaning of democracy and is prepared to tolerate opposition and dissent and to abide by the rules of civil society and the result of free and fair elections.

That is not the case in South Africa. Years of oppression of black or anti-apartheid opinions and news has created a climate of intolerance in which a younger generation has grown up to believe that if the state could suppress their views they in turn are entitled to suppress the views of others and they are quite ruthless about it as many, many journalists would testify.

Most political parties are culpable. While their leaders proclaim their commitment to free speech, their followers make a mockery of these high-sounding ideals in practice. There is a huge gulf in what leaders say on public platforms and what actually happens on the ground.

Nelson Mandela says some praiseworthy things about free media; Harry Gwala in Natal threatens newspapers that write things he does not like. Gatchi Buthelezi talks about multiparty democracy and the protection of individual rights, and his followers threaten journalists who give expression to ANC views.

Of course on the far white right the situation is just as bad. My old newspaper in Pietermaritzburg, *The Natal Witness*, [is] in the middle of a vicious fight for control of turf between the ANC and Inkatha. Journalists have been threatened, vehicle supplies of the newspaper have been threatened, and the other day former Democratic Party members now in the ANC went so far as to threaten *The Natal Witness* with retribution once the ANC came to power for daring to carry a column written by a right-wing conservative with whose views the paper did not agree but simply published to put forth the other point of view.

What do we do? Very briefly, I think we have to unite behind a set of principles such as the Windhoek Declaration on promoting independence and a pluralistic press. We have to internationalize the problem at conferences like this and make others aware of the problems. Support each other through organizations like the Media Institute of Southern Africa, draw attention to government failures as you have done so successfully in South Africa and has been done in Malawi. One of the reasons after all these years that Malawi

changed was because of outside pressure. Pressure from governments, pressure from newspapers.

I think we need to set similar standards for all countries. This idea of having one set of standards for one country and excusing the performance of others because their levels of education, or whatever, are not up to standard—it must stop. I think we need to encourage new governments to write press freedom into their constitutions.

So the conclusion I come to is that the democratic process has not succeeded in encouraging much freedom of info and opinion. We Africans have a long way to go.

Q. & A.

Willard Meeke, ANC Newspaper Project—

I think the point that seems to have been lost by the presenters is the stage at which the African continent is in, and secondly the diversity of African countries. I think it is important that we recognize that we are still in the process of unraveling the 300 years of foreign domination in Africa, and this has enormous bearing on, for example, the economic question. Richard Steyn made the point that we have problems of economic capacity, which indeed we do have, but underpinning that problem of economic capacity is the domination of African economies by multinationals and foreigners who are draining huge amounts of money from Africa to the West. The question of economic capacity does not just depend on having a market, it depends on the ability of Africa to retain the surplus within Africa. The question of the unraveling of the foreign domination in Africa is an aspect that has very important bearings on both the issue of democracy and the issue of the independent press.

The second issue which I think is important is the question of what we mean by democracy. There seems to be a perception that democracy in the U.S. has always been there or that the American Constitution is a democratic constitution, that the British have democracy and that they have always been democratic and the British constitution is democratic. This is absolutely unfounded. The U.S. has slavery.

The last point I want to make pertains to the Zimbabwe media. Trevor Ncube made the point about an independent press and also Richard [Steyn] made the point about an independent press being independent

of government and party. Well, I am not convinced that this is a pre-condition, and to give you a classic illustration, the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Voice of America, are they independent? They are owned by their governments. The British Broadcasting Corporation plays an intelligence role. I worked for them, they're part of the British intelligence system to monitor the world communication system.

Ncube—

A number of heavyweight questions. In trying to answer them I will start from the bottom and I think you and I will remain in disagreement over the government. I think that it is essential that any vibrant, independent press must be independent from the party and from the government, but I am not precluding or denying government the chance to own the press as long as it does not jeopardize the existence of the independent media. I think experience elsewhere has indicated that the corporate sector has a tendency to want to be associated with government-controlled newspapers, therefore putting into financial jeopardy the existence of an independent press. I still hold the view that the press would be much more free and independent without any party or government involvement. So on that issue I rest my case.

Then the issue of democracy—I agree with you that perhaps in Africa democracy is still evolving, but what we must realize is that it is important for the independent press to be in existence, to make sure that the democratic process which is developing develops and blooms one day.

Fernando Lima, Director, Media Cooperative, Mozambique—

I am always a bit disturbed about all this talk about democracy in Namibia, so I would like to ask you if it is not true that from time to time at NBC you get some phone calls from the Ministry of Information telling you that you should go that way, or the other way, or that The Namibian also gets from time to time some pressures to not cover this issue, or not to raise certain issues like the Walvis Bay issue.

Lister—

Obviously, even where the government is committed to multiparty democracy there will always be pressures on the media anywhere in the world. The Ministry is as entitled to criticize the press as we are to criticize it, so one cannot advocate a

totally hands-off approach or say there is no freedom of the press simply because that happens. There are all sorts of pressures, seen and unseen, and one of the things I wanted to add is that in the case of Namibia, the independent press is incredibly vulnerable. There is in fact one independent newspaper, The Namibian. The rest are party- or government-controlled. That is not a healthy situation, but the situation has been created for the independent press to flourish. So I say on that score, yes to Fernando, it is true there are pressures. There is also the question of self-censorship, where they may choose not to exercise their right to be critical of the government or anyone else. All those factors are in play, I think, in any society, even where there is a free press.

Appolus—

Now, despite those guarantees governments will always try and put pressure on us, try and get you to write things the way they see it. Why they put pressure on me in particular is because of the historical background. Politically I come from the same side as the government, I come from exile, and because I am a party member they feel that they can come to me outside my official duties and say, you know Norah, we think that story really... could you...? But I question it, and unless it can be proven to me that it poses a threat to the security of the country, it goes on the air. If, however, a person who was not from the same political background was in my position, they would not dare come to that person. They would not dare because it would be out in the open and there would be an outcry.

Steyn—

Now in Namibia, I understand that the government actually has a sponsored newspaper, which goes out into the rural areas where people cannot afford newspapers, to inform people on what they are doing. Could I just ask for a comment on whether that paper is still going and how popular it is and what the content is like?

Lister—

Yes, the government has a weekly publication known as New Era, which was started in an atmosphere of some controversy. The argument when they started the newspaper was that the existing media did not penetrate far enough into the far rural communities, but what is interesting—and it is here I think that Namibia has definitely benefited from the democratic experience—is that the people of

Namibia, although one might say they are 86 percent SWAPO supporting, do not buy the government newspaper. They prefer a newspaper that is independent, and The Namibian, despite being independent, is the biggest-selling newspaper. But basically I would say that the future of [New Era] is at the moment in the balance. It is a huge drain on financial resources, which are so scarce at the moment, and could probably be better spent in other areas. I would not be too surprised if the newspaper is closed down in the near future.

Elizabeth Ohene, BBC, South Africa

I understand that the BBC is part of the British Security Services. The BBC has what is called the monitoring service, where it monitors all broadcasts from all parts of the world. I imagine that if you broadcast you want it to be listened to and a broadcast is not a secret thing. For years the ANC's radio got more audience out of the monitoring by the BBC and rebroadcast and transcription and circulation than the ANC radio itself ever got directly.

We always seem to make the mistake to think that independent equals good. They are the good guys and then the government owned are the bad guys. The independent media is owned by whom? It is also owned by interest groups that [have their] own agendas that are not necessarily identical with the interests of the people. It seems to me as if we are too ready to lie down and be rolled over by admitting that this is government owned. What is government owned?

It is owned by the taxpayers. It is [up] to the journalists who work in these organizations to show some professionalism and some integrity so that they can withstand pressures from government.

The fact that some newspaper or some radio station is owned by an independent organization doesn't mean that they necessarily have the interests of the people. We do not say that simply because The Herald is owned by the government, it is owned by the people of Zimbabwe and those who work on it should be made accountable to the people of Zimbabwe, and we shouldn't all just try to go and form our own little newspaper. It is good to have an independent press because it is good that we should have different perspectives. But we should not succumb to this business of "oh, it is owned by the government." It is not owned by the



Gwen Lister of Namibia

government, it is owned by the state and the state means you and I.

Ncube—

It is important to take cognizance of the hard facts of life and those hard facts of life are that if ZBC, which is our broadcasting media, continues to be owned 100 percent by government and if Zimbabwe Newspapers, which has in control a number of papers, more than five, continues to be owned 51 percent by government it is all right and morally justifiable for us to sit here and say those people should have some professional cognizance of that. As long as those institutions are run by people who are appointed by the majority shareholder who happens to be government we have very little room for maneuver. So that is why I am saying if we insist on integrity in those newspapers we will end up with nobody running those newspapers. If they are in existence, we have to accept that we will have second-class professionals running those people, people that will accept being dictated to and that is the reality of life.

Fred M'Membe, Managing Director, Zambian Weekly Post—

We have to be clear why we want an independent press. I think for me the starting principle, it may be foreign, but I think a good contribution by the American people in terms of system of governance [is] separation of power. If we agree that the media does contribute to the democratic system of governance then it becomes an institution whether in quotation marks or not. It has to be separated from other institutions of government or other institutions contributing to the government process. I find it

difficult for whatever reasons to justify government ownership over the media, be it for political expedience or whatsoever. Well, if the government finds a gap in the dissemination of information to rural areas, why can't it help subsidize private individuals to get to those areas, the way other things are subsidized in society?

Anthony Lewis, columnist, The New York Times—

I would just like to follow up Mr. Ncube's reply to Elizabeth Ohene. I have no objection to the idea of public enterprises in broadcasting but it's a very difficult, sophisticated thing to create public broadcasting institutions that will really be independent of pressure. The United States Public Broadcasting System has constantly been in difficulties [with] members of Congress and the government from broadcasting something people do not like. Even the BBC, an institution which I revere, has succumbed to pressure from governments repeatedly to keep, shall we say to ban, broadcasts about the troubles in Northern Ireland. They simply drop programs at the request of the government. It is a hard thing to do and to be a little more explicit than Mr. Ncube was with his wonderful statement about nobody working there, there was a brave editor in this country who explored public corruption. He was the Editor of The Chronicle and he isn't anymore. That is the danger.

Hugh Wetherall, The Financial Gazette, Zimbabwe—

Perhaps for Rehana a question. Newspapers such as South have a reputation for courageous, campaigning journalism against the injustices of a minority government. How alert are progressive South African journalists to the danger posed, not by the outgoing minority regime but by an incompetent government with a successful majority mandate from the people or the heir to a liberation struggle, perhaps?

Rossouw—

In 1990, after the ANC was unbanned, we went through a year-long process of determining the role of South. There was one option that we close shop. The struggle had been won, we had done what we set out to do. After a year of workshops, discussions, entire weekends preoccupied with deliberating on this, we decided that we would continue publishing a paper, independent of a political

organization, which could have stood a good chance in the future of being the government of South Africa.

Personally I look back at some of the stories that are 10 years old. I would not exactly cringe, but I am quite aware that they were extremely one-sided. I do not make any apologies for that. The only problem that I have now is the fact that I can list examples of subtle pressures and direct confrontations with the liberation movements in South Africa which are probably worse than what Norah is experiencing at the NBC today.

It has taken a long time for liberation movements to realize that the publications that a few years ago were prepared to go a little bit over the top in mobilizing people against apartheid are now daring to criticize them. Three weeks after the ANC was unbanned I was howled at at a meeting with people in a certain political party and asked, what the hell are you writing about, what are you doing? They could not understand. Still today I have to explain to people why it is sometimes necessary to criticize liberation movements.

There is a lot of pressure on the independent media in South Africa, and I am very proud to say that we have stood up to that pressure, and we are prepared to write critical and more balanced reports on South Africa. I think our role still is as campaigning newspapers, our role is still acting as journalists, not on the part of politicians but on the part of people who have no voice in South Africa right now.

Just to go further on the question of control of the media, I actually think that everybody has the right to [publish] if they have the financial resources. The new government is going to have so much pressure and financial responsibility to repair the ravages of apartheid, I do not think that a lot of money can be invested in the media in South Africa.

I think the only guarantee of freedom of the media all over the world, not only in Africa, is for there to be diversity, as long as your paper is clearly identified as people pick it up.

There is the thorny debate in South Africa right now whether we are going to allow [publication or broadcast of] racist statements in the new South Africa. It is a very difficult debate for journalists, especially for journalists in my position. It is a debate we have not resolved yet but I believe that as long as there is plurality, as long as somebody knows where you stand and your publication is clearly identified, everybody should be allowed to publish.

Diop—

It has always been the natural tendency of government to control the media because they feel that the power is there and that's how they can perpetuate their existence, but it's important to know that the independent media is there. It's not always perfect. We have experienced private newspapers that have gone to extremes, criticizing the government without the least [respect for] rules of journalism. No newspaper is created in a vacuum; no radio station or television station is created in a vacuum. There is something that lies behind it. But that doesn't mean people don't have the choice, to hear various voices, to read various versions of what's going on. It is difficult, but that's where the struggle is, that's where we have to fight to maintain this freedom even though everything is set to make it difficult for us, and that's the challenge we have. I think we have to take it further because if we have the right to claim we have to be free, we have also the responsibility of giving good news, right news to the public.

Allister Sparks, Director, Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, South Africa—

I want to make two points. The first is to say that I think we should be a little bit careful about the easy labeling of the government media or the government press, on the one hand, and the assumption that anything that is privately owned is by definition independent. The entire mainstream press, English language, in South Africa, every one of them gets their checks ultimately from Larry Oppenheimer. Is that entirely free?

Yes, Geoff Nyarota was fired for courageous journalism in Zimbabwe. I worked for a quote "independent newspaper" company in South Africa, and I was fired, too, one of a succession of three who were dismissed. I'm just saying, let's be careful.

Let's be careful, too, in assuming that broadcasting services such as BBC that are owned by the state or the taxpayer are therefore in bondage. That need not necessarily be so. There is a problem, a serious problem, in broadcasting. I believe that any commercial station, whether it be government owned or privately owned, becomes a captive of the market place and there are serious problems then about whether that station is going to put on the important and serious and expensive documentary on prime

time or whether it's going to push the pop soap opera. When you look around, the very best television services in the world and radio services, are, I would suggest, the BBC, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. They are not the privately owned, privately run channels, which are uniformly catering to the lowest-common denominator of public taste. That is point No. 1.

My second point I want to make in my capacity as a beheaded member of the South African Broadcasting Corporation board. It's a point that I think has been overlooked and a point that does give me some hope about the future of South Africa. The campaign for that new board was put together by an organization called the Campaign for Independent Broadcasting headed by Raymond Louw. However, the Campaign was not itself able to do the negotiating. That negotiating was done on its behalf by the African National Congress.

Now the purpose of its proposal was in fact to seal off the appointment of the South African Broadcasting Corporation board from political interference, to insulate its appointment against government manipulation, government interference, in the appointing of those members. That proposal was negotiated by a political party that is likely to be the next government in South Africa or the major component of the new government. In other words, it was prepared to take a package that would have insulated the public broadcaster against its own ability to interfere with it in the future. It was prepared to negotiate a position to tie its own hands had it won that point. Had it succeeded it would have made it extremely difficult for the future African National Congress government in South Africa to interfere and get its hands on the South African Broadcasting Corporation board.

To his eternal discredit President De Klerk was unable to see that it was in his own interests that that point should have been won, and so he ripped away the insulation and opened the way for a future government to do that.

Hultman—

We have with us some Kenyan colleagues who have just been through an interesting experience of trying to establish an independent television company in Kenya.

Rose Lukalo, Kenyan freelance journalist—

I'm no longer with the particular station but I did work there as a news editor until I was also beheaded. This station started off in very confused circumstances with regard to its ownership, and it started off linked to the ruling party's paper. But this ownership was never quite nailed down and so, for quite a while after it began, it enjoyed some freedom that had never been seen in Kenya. It became very powerful, and I believe it has played a very big role in the move to democracy. We haven't reached there.

It began as a commercial venture and was supposed to be run on a commercial basis, and for this reason in particular we were encouraged to be on the cutting edge of news. It was the news which, I think, sold the station for a very long time. Unfortunately it got very powerful.

It didn't reach very many people. It had a 200-kilometer radius, which isn't very far in terms of Kenya. When attention focused on us we started getting interesting phone calls, and a lot of abuse, which we know how to deal with, but it became worse than that. It became a wrangle over ownership; there were people with different interests. Some were interested in it because it looked like a very good money-making project.

Then politics outweighed everything else. We first had a claim from our chairman that he owned it, but there are no documents to prove this. When he publicly said that, the President now turned round and said, wait a minute, I thought we owned this, and in that confusion the ruling party came in and said they owned it. Then the opposition started asking questions because we were housed in a public building. They said, how can you be in a public building not paying rent if it's a private concern? In short, what happened is they said it is a private concern. We hear rumors now that the President has bought out shares. The news department has been closed down, and they say they are [not] going to reopen because the station without the news is not viable. It's really the only alternative in terms of objective news.

Unidentified Woman—

I just want to say how the news was shut down. He sent us a fax saying that local news was shut down because it was adequately covered by a rival and that that would be our news bulletin at one p.m. that day.

Geoffrey Nyarota, former Editor of The Chronicle and former Editor of The Financial Gazette, Zimbabwe—

I was fired from the first paper, which was government owned, and I was also fired from the second paper, which was privately owned. So I hold a peculiar distinction in that regard. I was dismissed from both papers in my opinion for the sole reason that I perhaps misguidedly put too much belief in the theory that the editor has the final say over what appears in his paper. I do not share my colleague Trevor Ncube's apparent enthusiasm over the so-called independence of the so-called independent press, particularly in the case of Zimbabwe. In fact, I tend to feel sorry for him at times because I used to occupy the exceedingly hot seat which he now sits in, so we've shared some experiences.

To cut a long story short, the problem up here is in our definition of independence. I'm not talking about media independence, but independence of the [print] press, because I have more experience there. In my opinion it does not really matter who owns a newspaper, whether it is a consortium of three well-meaning black businessmen or the government. I think the important issue is whether either of these owners allows the editor to exercise editorial independence over his paper, whether authority over the content of his paper is vested in the person of the editor. I think that is the issue that is at hand.

Whoever owns the paper I think is immaterial. The so-called Willowgate Scandal was published, by the way, in a government-owned newspaper, not a privately owned newspaper.

I'm sure Trevor will confirm that we used to receive memos from the publisher trying to influence the content of the paper and this is why we eventually clashed. I will state one very good example which I will always remember. The Financial Gazette had been at the forefront of the debate [over] the issue of the one-party state in Zimbabwe. The paper was championing the cause against the one-party state, and it became very popular for that reason. Halfway through this campaign we received a memo—can you please put an effective stop to this debate at once? We were both surprised, and this was for the publisher of an independent newspaper. I entirely agree that we tend to make the false assumption that whatever is independent must be good. I do not share that kind of thinking now.

How Are the Media Promoting African Democracy?

CHAIR: BRIAN POTTINGER

Deputy Editor, The Sunday Times, South Africa

I would suggest that what is important is that we look perhaps not so much at our capacity to influence politicians, but at our capacity to inform people because people are after all the real final arbiters of democracy, and it is that unique link between the people and our media that is so crucial. One of the central issues that comes up, obviously, is the question of credibility, integrity, honor and compassion of our media, and through that we will be able to influence and inform people, and through that I would suggest we defend democracy.

CHARLES ONYANGO-OBBO

Editor, The Monitor, Uganda

One of the ways at least I and my colleagues have survived in journalism is really not to take this business of journalism too seriously. For someone to say that the media should be sensitive and educate people, I sort of shudder because I think when someone tunes in the radio or buys the newspaper I don't think that person needs to be sensitized. I think this is partly the problem in Africa. It represents itself in politics as the paternalistic state, and I think in the media some tend to see quite a lot of that paternalism.

One of the greatest political paradoxes in Africa is, I think, [that it is] one of the few places where you will find a country where there is press freedom and there are no corresponding political freedoms. The best example of this is Nigeria. No doubt it has some of the most vibrant media in Africa. At the same time it's battling with military dictatorship. [In] Uganda [where] the media is as free as I would ever want it to be, you still find in places some restrictions on free political activity. So this raises a series of questions. There is one peculiarity in Uganda. Whereas there are restrictions on political activity, they are expressly allowed to publish newspapers. In fact, this is often the justification for muzzling them, because they told them: you cannot

organize freely because you are free to say what you want to say in the newspaper.

There are a series of reasons for this, but one of the ways to understand this is [to note] the distinction between political liberalization and political democratization. Liberalization essentially refers to the freedom that civil society, the trade unions and the media, have to be active, to be participating in the political process and to attempt to influence policy. Political democratization, on the other hand, implies what they call the freedom of political society to participate in the power game.

You are in danger of becoming what is called a ventriloquist journalist. Having worked for [a] pro-democracy newspaper, I could not agree more and from my experience I have the notion of how much a newspaper should foster direct political opposition to a repressive regime in a situation where there is a dictatorship in place. Given my own experiences, and thinking about Africa at length, I think the business of a newspaper which supports freedom should be to foster what I would call a habit of general skepticism and a questioning attitude towards any group which is in power or seeks access to it. To do this the pages of newspapers would have to be much more open to all sorts of points of view.

They should be debating forums for containing points of view rather than the self-righteous partisanship that one tends to see in newspapers which think that they are fighting on the side of freedom. Given this record, I tend to think that the media has done a poor job. If you look at many countries which are in transition or have gone beyond it, most of them have a crisis of how to proceed in the transition stage or they don't know what to do. This is because the newspaper does not equip people with the tools to question critically whatever any group of people who seek to gain power do.

Finally—this is almost too dull and prosaic—I think a newspaper which will have a meaningful role in the political process is the one that is read. In the case of Uganda there are a lot of newspapers which say interesting things, they agitate for freedom, but they are not read and so their message is not heard. This presents a dilemma if you feel that you should be promoting democracy.

My own newspaper is just 11 months old now and we are now the highest circulating newspaper. It's something which has been a real eye-opener to me. Why has it succeeded? I think it has

succeeded because it stays to the center. But not only that. I think to an extent on many issues *The Monitor* is an unpolitical newspaper. Now that presents a problem, because the press has the problem of being viewed as morally ambivalent. You are seen as lacking in conviction and you would think that from that position you would hardly mobilize public opinion.

At least in the case of Uganda we have moved to a state now where government recognizes that high circulation figures are subversive in the sense that even if you do not necessarily oppose the government, the government does not control you. It means that at any given time more people are reading what someone other than the government is saying. That to me would be a model which we would think of as we move to the future, and I think this condition also has the advantage in that it is actually an ultimate protection, because if you are not partisan, then they can still ban you, but it becomes more difficult to sell the case.

ALLISTER SPARKS

Director, Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, South Africa

I'm involved in training because I believe in fundamentals and I believe that press freedom or press independence really begins with professional competence. I think that the journalists themselves ultimately and collectively are the ultimate custodians of press freedom. You [can] have the finest constitutional protections in the world, but in the last resort it is the journalist in the last ditch who is going to save the press or go under. We need both competence and a sense of professional integrity if we are to build up that last line of defense.

If you get it wrong repeatedly and perhaps maliciously, you are going to test the tolerance of the most benign government. Never mind a government taxed with many grave difficulties, as we have in Africa, as we are going to have through the transition in South Africa. If you go on and on getting it wrong you are asking for trouble, you are going to get intervention at the very least, you are going to provide a pretext for press control. That is point number one.

Secondly, going to Norah Appolus's point that she made very well this morning and that Charles has echoed, ultimately the only ally that that last line of defense of journalists has in fighting for press freedom, is the public, and we have

to build up that kind of bondage, that kind of support, that kind of recognition of the press as a defender of freedoms. We are not going to do that if we go on getting it wrong, if we look tatty, inaccurate, uncaring. You have to build up a level of professional competence, otherwise you don't even begin the game and that is why I am in the business of training.

I want to look at it from a different perspective, a perspective that my role as running a training institute has given me because, in effect, I've graduated to the level of becoming a high-class beggar. I now have to go around the world begging money to run an institute. In the course of doing so I have acquired a certain insight into some of the attitudes one encounters—and I'm addressing myself now mostly to Western governments and Western NGO's. There is a view abroad that the press is not really a critical agent of development. There is somehow a view—and it is an understandable view—that what really counts in developing countries are things that are far more primary, like health and housing, education, economic infrastructure. The NGO's and governments very seldom think of the media in the same terms. Somehow it's looked upon as an optional extra, a First World luxury item, rather than a developmental necessity.

I think experience has shown this to be wrong. Where Third World transitions have failed, and particularly here in Africa, this has almost invariably been because of a failure of democratic institutions. Development begins with successful democratic institutions and first among these is an independent media.

THERESE NWEKE

News Agency of Nigeria

A few words on the Nigerian media. It is one of the oldest and most diverse in sub-Saharan Africa. There are more than 35 newspapers, mostly daily, and also some weekly news magazines. The same number of specialist magazines are almost all privately owned. Ten weeklies of the so-called gutter press, more than 30 television and radio stations and a national wire service, the largest in black Africa. Ownership of the electronic media is now being liberalized by privatization.

Foreign cable television is available mainly in the cities and its role in the recent presidential elections was significant. In the almost 33 years of Nigeria's independence from Britain 10 have been

characterized by civilian politics, with the remaining 23 by military politics. It is necessary for us therefore to consider media behavior during these two significant periods.

Civilian governments—this is characterized by four behavior trends. 1) Journalists generally identify with civilian politicians far more readily than they have with military politicians. 2) Civilian politicians generally control the private media and journalists walk a tightrope between exposing the cause of such owners and being professional. 3) Nigerian media practitioners take positions often dictated by their own geo-ethnic considerations. 4) During the 10 years of the first and second republics the willingness of journalists to identify with civilian politicians and be bought and sold by them at the expense of professionalism weakened them as a group. During these years there were few if any restrictions of the press, yet the press failed to use its freedoms responsibly. In other words, journalists did little to nurture, much less promote, democracy, and respect for them was at its lowest.

In military governance there are no in-built checks and balances, and the Nigerian media in its fight against its perceived enemy, the military, is often confrontational and engenders an adversarial journalism which strikes the chord of support among radical groups. This in a sense nurtures the democratic process by sensitizing the populace to government's inadequacies and excesses, thus forcing it to become accountable.

I must state here in passing that [print], the oldest arm of the media, which was the first to be privatized in Nigeria, is generally the most active in the vanguard of affirmative action during military politics. This action rarely extends to government or partially owned government media since these are headed either by government appointees or individuals who accept the system. This group, however, is duly rewarded since Nigerians pay them no attention at this juncture.

During military interregnums the Nigerian media are generally characterized by frankness and irresponsibility, investigative and analytical depth, cynicism, as well as an irreverence and humor unusual in Africa. Most often the cartoons say it all.

It seems to me, however, that despite all this the press can in no way sustain or promote democracy where it does not in fact exist. The Nigerian media, I have tried to show, merely contributes to nurturing democratic activities when they are most threatened.

GWEN LISTER

The Namibian

When I began to think about setting up *The Namibian*, many people said to me, it's useless, how can you challenge the might of the South African empire? Go into exile and try to do what you can from there. You'll be arrested, the place will be bombed.

We were activists in those days and anybody who would have come up to me then and said you must be objective, I would have told straight off, there is no such thing, we're fighting for the self-determination of this country and that's something on which we will not compromise. It was a long and a tough struggle and in the process we were all arrested, detained, our newspaper offices were bombed on a number of occasions and the authorities tried by whatever means possible to silence us. I'm thankful to say that we made it through to independence.

Then we had to suddenly decide what is our role going to be now. Many people said to us the political struggle is over, you've achieved independence, perhaps you have no more role to play.

The staff sat down and discussed this, and came up with a feeling that in many ways this is the most important aspect of our work in Namibia, the second phase of the struggle as we say sometimes. That is economic independence. It's fairly well known that although we are politically independent, Namibia is not economically independent at the moment; it's still almost 100 percent dependent on South Africa. In many ways [it] was much more important to educate, to feed, to clothe the people of Namibia, and we thought the newspaper could play a very vital role apart from informing, which we still feel is our primary task.

We promoted democracy in a sense that we urged for that type of government that would come about at the will of the people and that would bring about human rights for Namibians. Now we have them; we have to not take them for granted and just say they're here. Namibia has an independent constitution [but] it doesn't help just to have the constitutional guarantees.

Namibians have come out of many years of colonial rule. There was an atmosphere of fear in the country; people were still afraid to air their views, to voice their concerns, to voice their criticisms of the new government, feeling in many ways that the same thing might happen as had

happened in the old era, where as soon as they did so they would be arrested and fired from their jobs. So there was a big [need for] educating and teaching people.

It's not been easy because the transition was difficult. We were perceived very much as a SWAPO mouthpiece prior to independence; we still are primarily by the white community, but this [subservience] has never been the case. In fact, we were never a SWAPO newspaper. But in those days our views coincided largely with theirs, largely because of the struggle for self-determination, and now we put ourselves in the position of watchdog, keeping the government accountable to the people.

Namibia has a democracy, but it's a very fragile democracy because *The Namibian* is the only independent newspaper in the country. Were it to disappear then the people of the country would really only have access to political party mouthpieces which tend to propound their own views and, similarly, the government media.

I say we also see ourselves as a bridge, because we have credibility with the people, and, to a large extent, credibility with the government. We communicate the government's views to the people and vice versa, and we feel that our letters page is very, very important.

And finally I'd just like to add that the newspaper is set up as a nonprofit trust. In other words there is nobody who has any commercial clout on the newspaper;

it's not owned by a party. All of us work for our salaries; there's no one getting more out of it than anyone else at the end of the day.

ANDREW RUSINGA

Editor, *The Business Herald*, Zimbabwe

If one of the meanings of democracy is providing our readers with an alternative view, I think we are probably not yet there in Zimbabwe. But we are slowly getting there.

We have for many years been used to one view of events in that the press has generally been either semi-state owned or allied to the state. But over the past year or two we have seen a proliferation of independent newspapers carrying views alternative to what people have been used over the past 10 to 12 years. In the long run that is going to be very helpful in the struggle towards a democratic society.

I would like to speak on a point raised by Allister Sparks, which is professional integrity. While I think it has been very welcome to have independent newspapers in this country existing alongside state-owned papers, I think we now need to move towards quality. There have been too many silly mistakes in our papers—whether state-owned newspapers or the independent media. There have been too many cases of not checking out facts. There have been too many cases of the independent media clos[ing] its eyes to anything good done by the government in their zeal to criticize the government. You look at the state-owned media; they close their eyes to anything bad done by the government. In this country you have papers hammering each other—why did you write this and why did you write that and we are the best we cover the news.

Is that really what we should be doing? I mean we are newspapers, we don't exist to score points against each other; we exist to write about what is happening in our society.

We are probably getting to the point where we are going to have a proliferation of newspapers in our countries after many, many decades of knowing only one view, but I think we have to do ourselves justice by making sure, whatever we put out, we are not just criticizing just for the sake of doing it. Praise where it is due, criticism where it is due, and I think that will keep up our professional integrity.

With the advent of the independent media the government has seen the proliferation of independent papers as a natural extension of opposition parties.



Right to left—Charles Onyango-Obbo of Uganda, Allister Sparks of South Africa and Brian Pottinger of South Africa

The independent media in this country have been accused many times by government officials for propagating opposition views, a point which they have rightly rejected. This is true, because you probably find even the opposition parties very critical of the independent media [on the basis] that they don't cover them. Surely they ought to be doing something right. It does show that they don't exist to cover the opposition parties.

Q. & A.

Rossouw—

We have a weekly voter education page. We were the first newspaper in South Africa to start this voter education, for an election that is only happening next year. I am looking at things, like what is a constitution, why people need to vote, what is the power of the vote—those kinds of things. We have a page every week in our newspaper where we have political debates if there is any issue coming up at the negotiations that even journalists don't understand half of the time. We give political parties space in the paper to explain in simple terms what they are trying to push through.

We have health education in our paper. We have legal and consumer education. We are about to launch an eight-page education supplement where we will be giving a simplified syllabus for the school children and providing aids for teachers to use in classrooms.

These things take up a lot of space in my newspaper. It is space we could sell to advertisers, were they interested in the first place in a paper like mine. Yet when you try and get sponsorship, not outside of South Africa, but inside South Africa, for these kinds of issues, people don't want to know about it.

Charlayne Hunter-Gault, MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour—

I guess my question goes back to the discussion that didn't quite take off this morning and it picks up on the phrase "fragile democracies." What kind of standards, new or different, would obtain when you are trying to shepherd a very new and fragile situation into being? I realize that one of the distinctions we have not made so far is the distinction between the alternative media, which do play a role in it, a very different kind of role, and the independent or mainstream media. But I think the question I am

addressing is more to the independent or mainstream media in those situations.

Lister—

Whereas the media in other parts of the world may merely have the task to inform, to entertain, we feel here that our tasks are so much more broad. The Namibian is in a strange position of being independent, alternative and mainstream. It is the biggest-selling paper. Some of the things we do: we have a weekly supplement which supplements the school curricula, which we give to our readers free of charge. We have a lot of women's rights in AIDS education. Many of these things help the government. One of the ironies [is] that our education supplement is assisting the Ministry of Education in implementing a new school syllabus in the English language, which is the official language now. But we are certainly not a government publication or assisted by the government in any way.

Vera Glaser, columnist, Maturity News Service, U.S.—

Is it possible to give us some idea of really how much influence your publications have in the individual countries? We understand, for example, that there are large rural populations, that many people cannot afford to buy newspapers. Clearly, since you are in a metropolitan area, you must have influence there, but could you give us kind of a country-wide assessment, or an estimate?

Onyango-Obbo—

I can just give you an example. There is a small fishing community somewhere in the eastern part of the country, and a fisherman from there came and he brought a little story about a father that was stealing nets at the landing site. We published that story, and then the next week he brought another one, you know, just those kinds of small things in the village. Now what happened is that after some time we discovered that some person would read it to the village. The whole town would congregate and listen to this. What we basically did—and this is remarkable—we decided that we would allow various people in the countryside to send in their stories. Hardly any of them are journalists. The result is we have about 100 regular people who send stuff from the countryside and they are not even staff, and then we publish these things. I mean to any urban middle-class journalist [this is] the most trivial of stuff. But, you know, we took the view that they

care enough for it, and the result of this is that I think now the circulation of our newspaper in the countryside is almost equivalent to that in the cities, in spite of the fact that most of the people are semi-literate.

Lister—

One of the problems is distribution of a newspaper, when you have limited resources. Our newspaper, a daily, has to be driven to all corners of the country every day by our own people. To the far north, it is a nine-hour drive, so the newspapers leave at three in the morning, to get there that afternoon.

It's not so much because people don't want to read, or they can't read these newspapers; it is simply because it is very difficult to actually get them there. We find that 10-12 people read one copy of the paper; it gets passed around a great deal. It is difficult to determine the extent of influence, but because we are closely in touch with the people and believe we are a people's newspaper, we can thereby set the agenda, often for the government, by saying this is what the people are feeling about any issue and the government are forced to take that up, so we feel that we have quite a strong role.

Wetherall—

I wonder why Andrew Rusinga is so optimistic that the state media can play a useful role in the democratization process when the editors of the state papers are the same men who sold us the one-party state, who sold us the command economy, who sold us the state of emergency. They are still in place, the same people. How structurally capable are they, particularly given their intimacy with ministers? How able are they to serve a useful function in the present climate, and are they not really just opening up because it is required of them and not because they believe in transparency?

Rusinga—

I think my conviction arises from the emergence of the independent media on the scene. Yes, I do agree it is the same editors who sold us the command economy, but then look at Zimbabwe. We are not talking of command economy at the moment; the government has changed its stance on that and we are also a free economy. Yes, it is the same editors who sold us the one-party state idea, but look at Zimbabwe now; the government officially says there is no longer a one-party state, it does tolerate other parties.

Let's look at the state media. The emergence of an independent media has probably changed completely the way the newsrooms of state media are run. There was a time when reporters wrote a story which was controversial about the government and it never saw the light of day because they were required to seek a comment from a minister. As long as the minister did not comment it meant it was not a story. I can assure you this situation has totally changed now. The only official policy on the notice board is: if you get a story and you try and get a minister, if he doesn't comment, forget about it, let him comment after the story is out.

There was a time when the state-owned media held the monopoly on the news; they held the monopoly on employing the best journalists. That is no longer the case. There are a lot more newspapers now. Journalists are freer to move about. In Zimbabwe, for example, you are seeing that even remuneration for journalists has risen to levels unprecedented only a few years ago [when] there was only one newspaper to work for, or only one radio station. Now you can move around and sell your skills. State media now are also scouting around for the best people in the profession, because they realize, as long as you follow the government line, as long as you tell reporters you can't write this story until the minister comments, you are not going to get anywhere. There is a market out there.

The change from a command economy to a free market economy has also affected the media. I'll give you a very good example. We had a case here, where *The Herald* was the only newspaper. There were queues every morning; you could not get *The Herald* on the streets. It was a combination of a fairly low price as well as being the only newspaper on the market. Now, you can buy *The Herald* at two p.m. on the streets. It has been a combination of new newspapers coming onto the market, as well as simple economics.

Even where state-owned newspapers would not like to cover certain issues, they are having to do that, because they know if they don't cover it, there is another paper that is going to cover it. So my conviction about state newspapers contributing to democracy comes from exactly the fact that the emergence of independent newspapers has probably brought a new attitude into the newsrooms of state-owned newspapers. They cannot ignore issues; they cannot ignore stories as long as they know someone else can get onto it and sell a paper.

Sena Gabianu, World Bank—

All that I heard in the last two days is that even the democracy that we are talking about cannot really take root without economic power and independence. My organization is associated now with the economic adjustment which everybody around fears. But I think journalists can look at the problem again and see what positive things need to be told the people to get out of a crisis that we all say we are in. I'm just hoping that the stories you read about adjustment, which is just doom and gloom are everywhere, can change with a little bit more objectivity about what needs to be done and not [about] this big organization that is out there to just make people even poorer in Africa. I've heard those kinds of things.

There isn't money anywhere cheaper than the interest-free loans that we are getting. I would like to see some positive reporting of this. We are giving our young people the impression that you can get everything for nothing and that people are only out to get you. I think we should give them some encouragement and tell them that some things can be done to get us out of the economic morass we are in. This isn't really a question, it's just a message.

Rusinga—

Economic structural adjustment has a lot of positive things, as well as negative things. In this country we are now about halfway through a five-year program of economic structural adjustment. Most of the coverage has been very, very negative, and the reason obviously is that [it] has hit at people's pockets, hit at people's spending power.

We had a situation in this country where we had a lot of monopolies, we had a lot of protection and companies never knew what customer service was. Whatever you produced you sold at any price, at any level of quality. People didn't look at whether I'm producing goods that the market wants because the money was there and people were prepared to buy because that was what was available.

I think one of the issues I have found as a business journalist in this country [is that] government officers who are implementing it don't know what they are doing; businessmen who are supposed to benefit from it, they don't understand it.

Everyone who is feeling the effects is saying, well let's cancel this thing. I think we haven't done much in terms of looking at the positive aspects. Supply of goods—

yes, they are now expensive and there are probably few people who can afford them, but the goods are now there. People now feel there is movement. A busy journalist is running his own little thing somewhere. It could be after work, or it could be he is trying to leave his job and go and do something, set up a business somewhere. That is a spirit that has been brought about because of the opening up of the economy.

Lima—

I'll try to be brief in trying to explain why we cannot be so positive about what the World Bank and IMF are doing to our countries. When I see the streets of my country full of beggars and unemployed people and street kids, one should not look at that as a nice feature. On the other hand, one of the problems we have in our country is the fact that the government tried to portray the U.S. aid program as their own program, saying we created our own economic recovery. We said no way. You are just getting your orders from Washington. So we were called unpatriotic, anti-nationals, anti-Mozambicans, and everything. I could say that this was one of the major clashes we had with the government, because they basically thought they could buy us by promoting the free market, by promoting SAP programs in our country. We are professionals, but we also have families at home. The journalists were not getting the money to feed people. You just don't write with your empty belly. To date I don't think we have ever had a positive story on structural adjustment programs in our country.

Moeletsi Mbeki, Consultant, ANC—

I think the question of the role of the state media in Zimbabwe is not really discussed in its proper complexity, in its proper subtlety. One of the things that has to be put across is that the state media in Zimbabwe, or let me say, the nationalization of the Argus Holding Company in Zimbabwe, makes it possible for a large number of black Zimbabweans to participate in the print media who had been excluded for 90 years by the Argus Company. It is as a result of that nationalization that you today have this free press that we are all so proud of in Zimbabwe. I think we have to stop talking about obstructions and talk about the realities of our own country.

Incidentally, the question about the editors supporting command economics—I was one of the journalists in Zimba-

bween newspapers for several years, and I was very dissatisfied that the editors didn't allow me to advocate enough command economics. It wasn't the editors who supported command economy, it was the journalists who supported command economy.

Where Are the Women in the African Media?

CHAIR: MIRIAM PATSANZA

President, Talent Consortium, South Africa

As the women talk and make their presentations, I would like to challenge you to also be thinking from the [perspective of the] different organizations you are coming from. Where are the women and what roles they are playing, be it in the newsrooms, in your television production teams or in your magazines or in your planning sessions and in your training sessions.

BESSIE TUGWANA

Editor, True Love and Family, South Africa

True Love is one of the two black women's magazines in South Africa. In my attempt to address the issue of women in South African media I asked myself: how many women editors do we have? There are a few around, yes, and most of us are editors in women's magazines. Not one regular newspaper in my country has a woman as an editor. Even a small alternative newspaper like The New Nation does not have a woman as an editor. Not one major newspaper in my country has a woman in any kind of leadership or decision-[making] position. Women, it seems, are supposed to work and get ahead on women's issues or magazines. Unlike many sectors of the economy, women in the media are still being denied access to positions of authority.

In the media, women are ground-floor workers so to speak. We are the reporters, photographers, administrators, receptionists, switchboard operators, secretaries, promotional staff. In essence, we are just the foot soldiers in the struggle that is

being waged in my country. We are everything but the generals, even though we are more than qualified sometimes, more than committed and God knows more than capable enough to manage and run massive publications read by both men and women.

My personal experience relates to the print media, in particular the magazine I work on, True Love. On True Love and increasingly on similar magazines women are at least getting some kind of recognition they deserve. They are being given the space to write what they think is important, not what some male publisher thinks his wife will be interested in without even asking her. This is only a recent development though, and one which seems to have been borrowed from the foreign media.

Women are also paid less than male colleagues despite the fact that they do the same work, and then again there is the clear-cut exploitation of our bodies. It is disgusting the way those who run the mass media use women to increase their sales, increase their profits and increase their grips on our minds. Those pin-up girls whose half-naked bodies they splash across their pages are the stuff of the media's disregard, and not only of its staff but [of] its readers, too.

Yes, we have come a long way but still have much more to do. I think the situation today is an indication that we are moving in the right direction as fast as those in power will let us go. We have reached the stage where many of our women's magazines have become mirrors, and even at time catalysts for changing society and its attitude towards women. We are able to point out that whatever cosmetic changes are made to our country's legislation by those in power we are still treated as minors and second-class citizens.

We need to start demanding both small-scale and large-scale changes; we need to start demanding an end to the sexist language used in our publications, the sexist images and sexist attitudes, but more than that we need to start demanding a say in the decisions that are taken on newspapers and magazines. These publications are produced for all people, not just men. So why, then, must men be the only ones who decide what they say, how they say it and why they say it?

DEDE-ESI AMANOR-WILKS,
Celestial Media, Zimbabwe

I'm a Ghanain-born journalist and am now based in Zimbabwe. My broad impression is that women in the media in Africa seem to be in particular places. Broadly, in the electronic media there seems to be a greater presence of women. In radio they seem to be especially concentrated in the educational programs, in television as newscasters and presenters rather than as producers. They also have a greater presence in specialized or alternative publications. But overall women have very little presence in key management positions and are only well established in the media in very few African countries.

Looking at print journalism, where my main experience is, there's no greater visibility of women in the mainstream print media, and that's exactly where resources are concentrated.

There's a tendency for women journalists to leave the media earlier and to establish their own small enterprise or engage in part-time public relations. If they stay in the mainstream media there's a tendency to occupy a ghetto, focusing on kitchen, recipes, gardening or other issues perceived to be women's issues. Then there are a few of us who operate as freelancers.

These are impressions.

What's the condition of women in the various print media? Well, I think the main issue of concern that has come out of the last few days of deliberations is the lack of support systems for women to pursue areas in which they have competence, the lack of professional information to build up on their skills. Women may lack confidence, and there is a very small pool of women who are organized in Africa and a very narrow base of senior women professionals to turn to.

We've expressed interest in organizing collectively as women to improve on our status in the media. As of now we tend to operate as individuals. In the end our relative strength or weakness will depend on the degree of professionalism. We all recognize this, but we don't have enough data to properly address our problems. It's clear that women are mounting a tremendous challenge but we don't know enough about each other to really map out effective strategies and strengthen our position in the media.

What has really meant a lot to me this week is that this conference has given us a unique opportunity to come to know each other. We've been talking about

networking around specific issues, and I think research about the condition of women in the media in Africa is one very important issue. If we are going to start national associations and build up regional associations, we can start to round out the issue.

CHEMI CHE-MPONDA KADETE

The Daily News, Tanzania

I'm a reporter for the Tanzanian government English-language newspaper, The Daily News. I'm also the publicity secretary of the Tanzania Media Women's Association, TMWA.

Actually I don't know whether we've made progress or whether we've never had progress at all. In 1972 The Daily News had a woman managing editor and since then there have only been men managing the paper. We do have women in high posts, although they're not in management. We've got women in features, subeditors. Women are up there in my office. They can make decisions within the newspaper, but they can't make decisions concerning management of the newspaper. We only have one radio station in Tanzania, and that's Radio Tanzania. They have made progress in my opinion, because the Deputy Controller of programs of that single station is Deborah Mwendu. We have one party newspaper printed in Swahili; there is a woman's feature editor there. Women in my opinion haven't made much progress over there compared to The Daily News.

We in all Tanzania media face the problems of culture—that women are second class; we are supposed to be oppressed; we are supposed to be mothers; we are supposed to be in our roles. We are not supposed to be in the male profession of journalism. So we get the problem of not being promoted because, supposedly, they have to ask your husband's permission—can I promote you? They can't send you on assignment outside of town without your husband's permission. Even I often find myself going home and saying things like that. He says, okay, because without it they won't believe you. It sounds pretty primitive.

And then, they say if your kids get sick, how are you going to get time to take care of them? You are going to be busy, so we cannot promote you. I have been in the position of reporter for nine years, I'm still there hanging on and fighting for the day when I will get something bigger.

There was no listening to us when it came to opportunities. When it came to

advancement the men came first. So we got ourselves together and formed the Tanzania Women's Media Association. We were registered in 1987 and since then we have made a lot of progress. We have helped get some of our members scholarships, and they've trained up to the master's degree level in Britain. Some of them are the top women journalists today.

TWMA has been the rallying force behind women journalists. For example, at one time I couldn't get stories about women or women's issues or things that I liked into the paper. TWMA and its magazine [were] the outlet for me to air those frustrations.

TWMA has become like a pressure group, and we're even being called upon by government officials for opinions. We are being called on to assist with advice on certain campaigns that the government wants to launch, even other private individuals want to launch.

PATIENCE EDREMODA

The Sunday Times, Nigeria

We should first take a look at how women come into the media all over Africa. From my study of women's issues—and I've been doing that for about 11 years—women got into the media to sort of add color to radio, television or print. Then [they] ended up either not doing that well or ended up taking positions such as receptionist, typist, telephonist.

Often the excuse for women not staying as reporters has been because they cannot last; they do not have staying power. A lot of female media practitioners will agree with me that realistically women who have had their voices [on radio or TV] or their by-lines in the newspapers, have disappeared. Let's say after about five years if they do not have staying power; if they have staying power, let's say 10 years. Those that have lasted a little bit longer in the African context have lasted through either one battlefield or the other.

The broad picture is that irrespective of the changing face of the African media, women still remain scarce, with only a few token positions. Women continue to hold decision-making positions that are not really decision-making positions. Therefore, they are not partners with their male colleagues.

In Nigeria, and most other African countries, we are told that the media is open and allows women to compete adequately with the men, but of course we know that this is not so. Often you

find that women are not in management positions. There are more women's features editors, women deputy news editors, women's page editors, consumer page editors, children's page editors. This really throws you back because when I say management, I'm talking about women that decide if you get hired or if you get fired. We don't have them, nowhere in Africa, and I've yet to hear of one woman that can tell me that it does exist.

In Senegal there are, let's say, 300 journalists, and of these there are 30 women. I also know from talking to my Senegalese colleague here, that there is not one female editor, there is not one female manager or controller of a radio or television station. I understand there is only one magazine being published by a woman. She's not even a journalist, she's not a media person; she came into it because she wanted to make some money, and it's not even making any impression because she cannot afford to hire a media person to edit it for her.

Let's go to Uganda. The stories are equally depressing. I understand that in this country, which I have been following for the past 10 years, the women's movement is extremely dynamic, [yet] I understand that the country is still starved of adequate female representation. There are no female media managers; you have one magazine for women and it's being run by Action for Development, a female initiative by a group of women who just got together and decided they had to feed the females in their country with information as it concerns the country.

And Sierra Leone. We have women who we say are right up there on top, women who are doing things, but they're not enough. There's only one woman managing editor in that country. It doesn't work out the way it should. Everybody else sort of comes underneath her, but on top of all of them there is always a man. That is in the whole of the media—broadcast and print. We have one woman news editor in Sierra Leone and she works with the News Agency of Nigeria. I think that is the highest most people can get. After that she has to kill off a few men before she can actually manage the whole news agency herself.

Nigeria is a typical example of what the media should be. I say that not because I'm Nigerian. I speak here as an African. A lot of women are in positions in Nigeria to make change, but we've had problems. A lot of women get right up to the top, and when they get to the top they find that "oh, I'm not going to get any further"

so they drift away. A lot of them have also been gutsy enough to look for funds to set up publishing industries, but of the 30 plus news magazines and other alternative magazines that we have in Nigeria, there are only two being published by women. We do not have one female editor in the country. We have exactly one editor-in-chief in the whole country. She is editor-in-chief because her husband owns the newspaper. So where do we go from here?

Q. & A.

Patsanza—

There are three main points I think have been brought up by the panel: media is power and media is a very powerful industry and to some extent, what the media reflects is the situation of women in other professions. It will be interesting to see those who are looking at new training patterns. Where are you selecting the women? What kind of selection systems are you using? What tends to happen is that people will run training programs and they'll pick a bright woman from university or high school and train her to be an editor. I think we need to look at other possibilities. Is it possible to take women who have made a career in law, in teaching, in academia, in business, so they can be prepared for true management?

Rossouw—

Just an observation, I hope this doesn't sound too militant, but one thing I noticed at the start of this panel. I was sitting in front this morning; these tables were full. It seems as though a lot of men have decided not to come and listen to this discussion. We're going to end up with the fourth day of women discussing women's problems. We need the editors here, we need the managers here, we need the publishers here, the trainers here to answer these questions. I must say that I'm extremely disappointed.

Hunter-Gault—

I think that one of the most disturbing things that came out of our women's session of the last couple of days were the conditions under which women have to work, and that accounts in part for the reason they leave. Not only because they have to take second place to men in assignments and in promotions, but also because of things they have to put up with on a daily basis from their bosses and

from their colleagues. I don't know how the women feel about speaking about this, but they were certainly strong in our sessions, and perhaps maybe just one or two stories because I think that while it's important for women to organize and to fight this, this kind of thing is bigger than that.

Lima—

Recently I was collecting data in our country, and out of 400 journalists or media petitioners, we have only 40 women as journalists, which just shows you what kind of minority our colleagues occupy in Mozambique. In addition to that I would like to give you a number of examples, on this issue of promoting women. It's kind of a tricky issue.

We formed a cooperative last year, and we have all these progressive items that you will have in all these cooperative organizations, like defending women, the environment, national languages, everything. So we felt very embarrassed because we didn't have women in the cooperative. We tried hard to recruit women. One of the problems is [that] the cooperative is being perceived as opposition, as controversial, as subversive. Women tell us, we already have a lot of problems by being journalists, do you want to add another problem by joining you in this very controversial cooperative?

I work for the news agency and in my country there is only one woman photographer, which is quite shameful. I was in the States for a while, and I don't know if I was influenced by affirmative-action policies. When I returned I decided to hire a woman photographer. I felt the opposition of almost all my colleagues. It was only because I had the power to impose that on my colleagues that we were able to recruit this woman. As soon as she started working, and as soon as she went on assignment outside of Maputo, she came to us and said that she could not do that because of family pressures that she [not go] out of Maputo. So she was forced to quit.

One of the points in this debate about hiring a woman photographer was that these were ideas imported from America and these were not real African ideas. When we were debating the new constitution of our country in 1990, a lot of people were trying to raise all the issues related to women's emancipation. Women's rights are in our Constitution, and the basic argument was precisely that these ideas were ensnared in the Constitution out of a Marxist concept, and this

was not African, and these were non-African ideas. It is still a long fight to have women promoted in media in our countries.

Laurie Derek—

My question is a little bit different, because my question is one of coverage. What happens when you're given assignments? Are you given controversial issues, and what happens when you're given issues that are perceived as women's issues, but are still controversial? I'm thinking of something like female circumcision. Do you have any choice, do you want to cover it, is this something you think is better not covered? Or something like refugees. Women are 75 percent [of them] worldwide, 80 odd percent in Africa. Should you be covering that, or should that be something that is just given as a general assignment? Similarly, with AIDS. My second question is, what happens to you as women journalists if there is a change in government? Are you affected, or are you in some way exempted from that?

Grace Fiadjoe, Ghana News Agency—

In Ghana what we notice is that in spite of all that the men have to say about us, whenever there is a coup d'état, it is a woman who is asked to do the coverage. The assumption is that no soldier is going to pull the trigger when he sees a woman. So there are times when, during political instability, the very men who discriminate against us find us invaluable.

I think that the issue of where women are in the media ought to be studied more thoroughly in each country. In Ghana what happened was in 1981 when we formed the Association of Women in the Media the men simply ridiculed the idea. They changed the name to ASWIN, Association of Single Women in the Media, and they said, oh, you are just a bunch of silly little girls trying to cook up a problem of discrimination against women which doesn't exist. They could point to one or two women who had risen to management positions [and] say, look at these women, they've been able to make it. If you are as good as [you say] you are, you can make it.

It got to a point where the association was pushed against the wall. We [did] a study and found that women were grossly underrepresented at all levels. We also realized that women formed less than 10 percent of top management in all media organizations. The study also found that there was discrimination at the level of

recruitment and assignments and promotions and on-the-job training. The study also found that there were fewer women entering the training institutes for journalists and this could be partly accountable for where they were.

Unless you can state clearly what the situation is for women, I don't think we are likely to be able to move forward.

Appolus—

I just want to respond to what my comrade Fernando from Mozambique said regarding the resignation of the female photographer because of family pressure. I think that if the men took equal responsibility for running the home without feeling emasculated, such situations would not arise.

Anna Liamca, Radio Tanzania—

Are the media making the situation of women better or worse? Are the media acting as a force to change social, cultural situations where women are looked down on? Are the media enabling women to have more education and access to land, to decide on matters relating to family and children?

Our population is seven million. Women are 51 percent, but the media now portrays women as liars, as prostitutes, as just sex objects, as people who are restricted to indoors, as people who cannot even make decisions, who cannot own anything. I feel so bad about it, and this is even worse in the changing media. We say if [they are privately owned they] will give women more voice. True development in Africa will not come unless the new media change the situation whereby society looks down upon women. We want women to be presidents, we want women to be prime ministers, we want women to own the media, we want women to change.

Sparks—

I think it was Whoopi Goldberg who described being a black woman as a double whammy; it seems to me that the black African woman suffers from a triple whammy perhaps. I wanted to share with you a statistic from my country that I think might be a candidate for the Guinness Book of Records. I did a count the other day of the top 63 jobs in the South African Broadcasting Corporation. Fifty-three of them are occupied by white Afrikaaner men, one black man in charge of CCV Television—those initials stand for Contemporary Cultural Values—and the remainder are white English-speaking

males. There is not a single woman in that entire lineup in an organization employing 5,500 people. Not a single woman in a decision-making position.

Sarazveke, News Agency of Nigeria—

There is discrimination not just in recruitment, promotion, service conditions, but also in the types of beats you get, and the type of beat you get determines the kind of story you cover or get to write. Assuming you are writing on female circumcision, it is only if you have an educated editor who is also a consummate professional that your story may be sensibly edited and used. Secondly, when a government changes it does not necessarily affect female journalists only.

Edremoda—

I think Charlayne is right. A lot of us here were highly provoked, especially about sexual harassment. Most of our bosses are here, and if they're not here they're friends with our bosses. Let's talk about it. It doesn't matter what it sounds like when we say it, let's just talk about it.

I have been in at least two jobs where I've been sexually harassed. One I'm coming out of right now. I hate talking about it often because sometimes when I do I feel like just launching at the nearest man and just plucking out his eyes.

When this first happened to me the only person I never told the story [to] was my father because I love my father dearly and he loves me too. When he did hear about it he wanted to sue the man—my father's a lawyer—and my boss was the chairman of the organization. He decided the only way I could get to the top was if I submitted to some of his desires. Refusing, [I was] suspended. It cost me the writing of satires in the newspaper. I did not have any regrets.

I went to work on a Saturday to take a look at the pages I had edited in *The Sunday Times*. I was wearing a pair of shorts and this man tells me, hey, I like your shorts, take them off, I'd like to have them. This is supposed to be my chairman and I thought, this is absolutely uncalled for.

I have had other sexual harassment. This man would come and harass me with stories. I would have written the story and he would cover it up and he would start asking me questions.

I used to write on foreign issues, and he never thought I could write them because first, I'm a woman and he just never thought a woman could write on foreign issues, and they were depth issues. This

man would harass me, he would stand in front of me, he would make gestures. I would go home so mad I would just start crying. But then I learned that you don't cry, you either pack your bags and move on, or you fight. So that is why women often do not stay.

Blay-Amihere—

I'd like to say that one way women can advance their struggle is to seek dominant roles in national associations. When there are election times, women go for the lowest—treasurer. In Ghana, of my executive of seven, three are women.

Onyango-Obbo—

One, we have got a very quantitative kind of approach to this thing, but there is also the question of perspective because I do not think that necessarily every woman articulates a vision in favor of emancipation. I want to get from you a sense of this perspective. There is almost a saying like, some women do not believe that men appreciate how hurtful rape is. I watched one television [show] in the U.S. and Ted Koppel was saying, look, some men are husbands and they are parents. So we want to get a sense of the perspective, apart from just the quantitative thing.

Two, there is also, I think, a very narrow focus on what happens inside the newsroom. I think you must just take a social perspective, because often it does not actually matter how many women you employ. Society is structured that when she goes outside she will just not be effective. It's a very, very male environment. No male will talk to her or something of the sort. At least in the Ugandan situation, I want to see whether you really have a sense of how this problem can also be tackled. Beyond the newsroom, what kind of actions can be taken to deal with the wider problem?

Patsanza—

Can I just throw the question back to you? You claim three roles; you are talking as a senior professional in the newsroom, you are sharing empathy as a parent or as a brother. If your own daughter was being treated the way you say women are treated, what would you do to stop that? And why aren't you doing it now?

Onyango-Obbo—

No, you see, I asked a question. You see our sense of this thing. It's that, what Allister was talking about apart from just the problem inside the newsroom, that women have a lot of problems when they

go out because it's a male environment. So I really want to know how you confront that.

Patsanza—

Who defines the male environment?

Edremoda—

I would like to respond to that. I came from an all-female family. I was raised to be a boy. I climbed trees and I did anything a man does. And I tell you another thing. I have worked 11 years, I've been engaged twice and I have delayed marriage because I love my job. And I tell you if I have to delay it another 11 years I'll do it because I love my job.

I don't know those kind of women that you are talking about. Those women that back off don't know what they're after. I know where I'm coming from and I know where I want to get tomorrow. And that's what it's all about really, that's what it should be about.

In the newsroom setup, when I started, any job a man got to do I did it. When Pope John Paul came to Nigeria men were jumping from heights. I wasn't even 21 years old, I jumped, I almost broke a leg, but it didn't matter—I was wearing my shorts. What mattered was the job had to be done.

What we're talking about is the attitude outside. Women are learning to cultivate themselves to do the job. I would never raise my daughter to be a girl. I would raise her to be a woman, to be a human being, and to be better and as good as your son. That is the ultimate, so that's what we're all about right now. It's the men that are beginning to make us feel that we should still be feminine, wearing mini-skirts and high heels.

M'Membe—

I think I have a problem with the approach we take towards women's issues. Both from the women and from the men. When women take it as a confrontational issue, you deter people sympathetic to your problem. I wouldn't like to be brought into a confrontation of which I am not a creator.

Also the articulation of the problem by women. I think we had a good presentation from Chemi Che-Mponda. At least it did look at the other problems which are inherent with women's attitude towards the problem themselves. If you try to shift all the blame to men you will find it's not 100 percent a man's problem. You have to take stock of yourselves. You have to be a bit analytical.



Chemi Che-Mponda Kadete of Tanzania and Patience Edremoda of Nigeria

I had the opportunity to work with women in 1990 on a serious note. When we formed the [political party] MMD I was among some people who wanted more women participation. We had serious problems getting the women to participate.

Wilma Randle, *The Chicago Tribune*—

How do you as reporters who are female, feel that African society is perhaps negatively affected by the lack of participation of women in the media? What types of stories are not being reported, and how do you think that that is holding Africa back or could help move your countries forward if women were there to report those stories?

Che-Mponda Kadete—

We do miss a lot of issues, and having more women in the media, it would help. But another thing would be to sensitize those men who are already there about the issues, and they will take interest in covering them. As is the case that we are seeing now following seminars run by TWMA in Tanzania for men and women journalists. They are coming out and they are helping to report these women's issues. I did personally uncover [a] child molester. No one else wanted to do it, but it was I who did it, and this man is now serving seven years in prison. So yes, it does help.

Edremoda—

Well, from my point of view as a female journalist, I would say that society is negatively affected. Take a session like this. A lot of really strong points have come out here. If I'm sitting here reporting this issue and I take it back to my newsroom I'm probably going to get two columns in the newspaper. The things that have come out here are the things that are of value not only to me, and not

only to my colleagues but also to that newsroom, to that establishment. So those are the kind of things that are missing.

When we go back to the questions of female issues, female circumcision, child rearing, those kind of things, I will give you a typical example. When I first started working there was a young girl in Nigeria. She was eight years old and she was given to this 60-year-old man and was married to him. She died because he harassed her, cut her up and all that. The media gave it five paragraphs. It wasn't until the National Council of Women made so much noise about it [that] media women did big stories on it. We had to fight to get those stories in the papers. Those are the kind of things that society misses.

Amanor-Wilks—

Well, I think Wilma's question relates to the main theme of today's discussion, the plurality of the press. I don't think it's necessarily true that a woman will report so-called women's issues better than a man. In journalism everything depends on your background, your research, your degree of professionalism, how much you are prepared to go into the subject. But in the interest of plurality, we want to have as many perspectives covered as possible, and there's a chance that women might bring a certain sensitivity that would be lacking.

Now the male might also bring another type of sensitivity which a woman might have overlooked or take for granted. So the issue really is to have as many different perspectives, as many different views, represented and people can choose.

Susan King, *WJLA-TV, Washington*—

I'm going to be very quick. It really echoes Wilma's view, and it's to answer also the fellow from Mozambique. We heard this often in the United States during the time of women fighting for better positions, that often women will then quit a job, or leave or say they can't do the job. One thing you have to ask of the 400 journalists that are covering, are they all foreign journalists? Do some have beats where they are able to continue their personal pressures, their home life, as well as do their job? There are different times when you do different jobs. You have to look at the whole question. But I think affirmative action is not just a question of, do we put someone in, how many, numbers. What are quotas? Do our newspapers reflect our readership? Does our television station reflect our viewership? If it's all males, all

blacks, all whites it does not reflect, probably, the community you are trying to reach and it will not be, I don't think, a successful vehicle.

Lukalo—

I wanted to make a comment on what our colleague from Uganda has said, and I'd like to differ with him. Yes, it's true that societal attitudes do work against women, but when those women are sent out of the newsroom with the full backing of the institution, the people out there know that they have to deal with this person; this person represents that institution, and you have to deal with them.

It is not an issue, and I think if we look at the figures in Kenya, we can see where the real problem lies, because many women come into the newsrooms but they often leave to go and join business communications and public relations and the alternative media where the working hours are structured to meet the needs of women.

The controller of radio programs at Kenya Broadcasting was a woman, the head of *The Sunday Standard* is a woman, the managing editor of a very controversial magazine, *The Economic Review*, a political paper, is a woman. These are all areas where the hours are structured to accommodate the other aspects of women's lives. Our main problem in keeping women in mainstream media is dealing with that. Although many organizations are making efforts to increase the number of women coming in, they're not making any effort at all to show sensitivity to the other demands on women's time.

Pottinger—

Ultimately where value and discipline and respect for individuals are built is obviously in the work place. You have to develop a culture which respects individuals, their merits, and their work; but the one thing that is missing in the discussion today is the institutional framework.

Most companies and a lot of newspapers have codes of conduct which deal with things like harassment, intimidation and discrimination. I wonder if somebody could tell me to what extent that is entrenched in newspaper traditions in other countries on the continent. Secondly, if that isn't perhaps the direction to which one goes. To draw up codes of conduct which are then imposed, or forced, or negotiated or consulted or whatever you want to call it, with your managements by which you can actually measure the progress that's made. In other words,

moving away from any generalized complaint about inequality and discrimination, to focus on a charter or whatever. There may well be one. I'd like to know to what extent it's accepted, imposed and is accessible.

Janet Karim, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher, *The Independent*, Malawi—

I'm Editor-in-Chief and also the Publisher of *The Independent*. It's a newspaper that comes out twice a week. I have a woman who's a subeditor of the newspaper. I've spent about six months training her to do her work, as well as designing, on a computer. Her husband was threatening her. She had to make a choice between marriage and raising her two young children or her work, which sometimes involved working until 10 at night.

When I saw the possibility of losing a good subeditor and a woman that was computer literate, I took it upon myself to do the work that she did. We just agreed that she was going to come first thing in the morning, concentrate on her work, reduce her tea break and lunch break so that she could put in the hours and assist me because I was now putting in the late hours. Then I got threats from my husband because he didn't appreciate that I was working up to 12 o'clock at night. I had to tell him that we had put our personal money to start the newspaper, and he was still voicing his discontent—my dinner is cold and the children are sleeping, what are we going to do about it? I decided to start talking about this in the office, to tell the subeditor that I got it hard at night as well. So she went home and started telling her husband about what my husband was now saying. I still continued because I owned the paper. I'm happy to say that because of my determination my husband and her husband now sit outside the office chatting and accepting that we're going to put in those late hours.

Gwendoline Konie, *Women's Exclusive Magazine*, Zambia—

The point that was made by the Ugandan gentleman and then taken up by the Zambian gentleman is important. I will be very brief. First, I think we have to accept that, having the environment in which we live, we have internalized some of the prejudices and the culture of our society. So it may well be to some extent we do contribute ourselves to the problems of communication between males and females. But we also have to accept that we live in a paternalistic society and the

men haven't yet realized that the world is moving much faster.

I would like, for instance, to challenge my colleague from Zambia. I have been on the scene for much longer than he has been, because he is young. I have fought for women's rights for much longer, and I will say honestly I think I'm the best technocrat that Zambia has ever had and this is regardless of gender. I'd like to challenge him.

Now the other thing is, in order for governments to change the position of women they have to bear in mind the needs of women, because they are part and parcel of society. A government does not need to have women protect themselves. If they have actually accepted the principles of democracy, then they should be able to do it, because you'll find that there will be fewer women in government because they haven't had enough education and all sorts of things.

Albert Nolan, *Challenge*, South Africa—

I'm the editor of [this] church magazine. I can assure you that if there's any place where there's discrimination against women, it's in the churches. I'd like to just say that when we started this magazine, we were determined to make it a magazine that would fight against all forms of oppression, and we particularly had in mind the oppression of women. Two issues have come up this afternoon which are very important. The first one is the discrimination against women having power in the world of the media. There is obviously that discrimination you've been talking about.

There is also the issue of the content of the newspaper, of the magazine, whether men or women are doing the reporting or the editing. That is very very important to keep in mind. One of the ways of sidelining women's issues is to leave it to the women. I am white, but our magazine writes about black oppression and I do not feel that only the blacks can write about black oppression. I must write about it as well. In the same way, one of the things that media could learn here is to write about the lack of women's rights and those sorts of problems.

Diop—

We have overlooked somehow the cultural factors in the so-called domination of men by women, especially when it comes to the job and the profession. When we take out the education situation everybody knows women are just as able to do any kind of job as men and they

have proved it in many ways. The only thing is that, especially when it comes to the media, women have to make more sacrifices than the men. Most of the time they have to sacrifice their personal lives. I take the example of my newsroom where three-fourths of the women are divorced; the others have decided to remain single because the men will not take anything from them, [let them come home] late and [have] no food ready.

Hunter-Gault—

I just want to say that some of my best friends are men so I want you to appreciate that, but just two quick interventions. The characterization of this as a session where women are crying, crying, crying. I think that is what women are asked to do, to present their complaints. I think it also must be taken into consideration that this is the first time in the history of this meeting that this representation of women has taken place. We thought it was very important that you hear these things. It was not just a session of crying, crying, crying.

The fact of the matter is that this is a male-dominated profession in Africa, in America, in Europe, Latin America and all over the world. When we talk about having men respond to these issues it is because that is the reality, and I do not think that in the deliberations we have had over the past three days, the prescriptions that we have attempted to come up with have been at all confrontational.

Tugwana—

I would like to respond to Brian's concern of the code of conduct. In South Africa we do not have it. However, we have trade unions that monitor issues like sexual harassment and unfair practices. Since that has happened we [have not had] much sexual harassment.

New African Environments

CHAIR: CARMEL RICKARD

The Sunday Times, South Africa

In Kenya, the media has twice won press freedom, once at independence, once after recent elections. Both times it disappeared quite quickly.

ROSE LUKALO

Freelance, Kenya

The move we had towards press freedom around the elections was largely gained by the pressure of the international media. I am not going to belittle that effort. I hope that it will always continue and grow to strengthen any efforts we have. But I think it is time that we in Kenya begin to take more control of the attainment of press freedom if we eventually hope to call it ours and to maintain respect for the profession. At the moment we look like we are absolutely incapable.

The interlude has taught us with the blossoming of so many publications that the many voices of the media mean nothing to press freedom. We have so many newspapers, so many magazines, so many of everything. I am not talking of electronic—electronic is a different subject—but in print we have very many voices speaking and it has not done anything at all for the media and freedom of the press.

The interlude also highlighted the lack of unity within our profession and how this has weakened the professionals. Our colleagues, I am very sad to say, a lot of them were bought off, bribed. Many of us were thrown into disorganization, and we allowed this to stop us from thinking towards a concerted effort and what we could do to repair our situation. We really have to get together and form a united front rather than leave ourselves hanging where suspicion characterizes our relationship most of the time.

We have also learned that for as long as the media remains economically weak it remains open to compromise. I would cite the specific example of our best respected—it was for a long time one of our best respected—magazines. It was run by a highly acclaimed journalist, but his financial problems have been used to quiet him. He does not speak as boldly as he used to speak and that is a shame, and it all has to do with the economics of his business.

It has been repeated and I will repeat it again, that the written law guarantees nothing so long as the institutions installed to uphold it are not working. A government concession to press freedom, whether it's by force or voluntary, is the key. It is the absolute key to any progress we are going to make in this area. We may have to force them but it is not going to come voluntarily.

We see that the electronic media by its nature is very, very powerful. We have to move to secure this power. I do not have the answer but I know we have to move to secure it.

In the restrictive environment the role of the independent media is often [viewed] as the mouthpiece of the opposition. Left to proliferate, the position of the independent media can be taken to excess, to the point that it threatens the integrity of the profession and demands attention be focused on the issue of balance and integrity. In Kenya it has had the reverse effect also of polarizing the media, often at the expense of consumer confidence in our institutions.

Those who have undermined our situation have done it systematically. It is not planless. I mean we very often underestimate what is being done to us, and if we are going to attain any press freedom we must fight back with intelligence, with a strategy as well. Most important of all, the Kenyan experience has for the third time taught us that the institution we call freedom of the press is very, very fragile and we must protect it. Every single inch gained must be protected at all times. Those of you who claim to have it, bear this in mind.

FRED M'MEMBE

Editor, The Zambian Weekly Post

Minority groupings, political, religious and otherwise, are problems we never used to face before because the government in power was a minority government using state power to suppress everybody. Now we have a popularly elected government suppressing minority groupings. You all know that two or three months ago a state of emergency was endorsed by Parliament to suppress a political minority unit. The general media, which is state owned, went with the government. No proper reasons were advanced for the declaration by the president and as we know states of emergencies in Africa are used invariably to suppress political opponents. That was the situation in Zambia. All the people who were picked up were from an opposition party, a party I detest. But we were forced to come to their defense, and we did.

It is not easy because we have never operated that way. We have always [supported] the majority and we now have to learn to support minority interests whether they are racial, tribal, political or religious. Some of you may agree with me

that majority rule is not necessarily democratic. I cannot call a government democratic where 70 percent in Parliament can use that majority to pass laws which suppress the remaining 30 percent.

We are also facing new challenges from an old problem, the participation of women. There is no advancement in my country on the issue not only in the media but in a lot of things, political and otherwise.

We also have the problem of state media existing side by side with independent media. The state media is heavily subsidized; they can take losses which the state underwrites, therefore giving us a lot of problems in creating an independent media where there was none before.

I think we still have another new challenge, how to deal with the donors in the media. We have to find a way of ensuring that the donor groupings which assist us, assist us in the best way possible without, of course, annoying them. It is a new problem. They have to learn how to support us and we have to learn how to get support from them. We need their support. They should not go away when we disagree, but we should learn to listen to each other and find the best way to tackle the problem other than wasting money on conferences.

JOE THLOLOE

Managing Editor
The Sowetan, Johannesburg

The story in South Africa at the moment is one of violence to the negotiations. We have endemic, criminal violence. Guns are everywhere. You can buy a gun for a few hundred rand, and robberies are a daily thing. Hundreds of lives have been lost. The dilemma facing newspapers at the

moment is: Do you merely report on that violence or do you go beyond reporting on it? Some newspapers have started things that have links with the police. They have columns called Crime Watch where they get information which they pass onto the police. Other publications find it difficult to be associated with a discredited police force. In this interregnum the newspapers have to decide, do we continue operating with the old while we wait for the new or do we wait for the new and refuse to cooperate with the old?

There is another type of violence, inter-party violence, largely between the ANC supporters and [Inkatha] supporters. This is a result of growing intolerance, of people positioning themselves for the elections and as a result of that, the media are suffering because of pressures from various political parties.

We do not have a tradition of tolerance; we do not have a tradition of democracy, both black and white, and it is difficult to get people to accept that they have to be tolerant as they move into a new order.

This violence has led to a third type of violence. I personally believe that there is a sinister third force that is taking advantage of the traditional conflicts in the townships and using these to fan more violence. We have had violence, for example, between township residents and people who live in single-man hostels. We have had stories of people in cars attacking township residents, pretending to be from the hostels. The people in the hostels are then attacked by the people in the township because they believe the attackers were from the hostels. This force seems to be moving around, fanning the violence in all sorts of ways.

The media have not been able to tackle this type of violence, and I believe it is designed to upset the entire reform process.

In the one minute that I have left I will talk of the major story we have in the country, negotiations. One day, we in the media are reporting that there has been a breakthrough in the negotiations and the very next day we will say that there is a deadlock. In fact, colleagues of mine at The Sowetan coined a new word—breaklock—because essentially we do not know what is happening in the negotiating chambers. The reason we do not know is people are negotiating while at the same time electioneering. Even if you are called in for a private briefing—and you will be told it is off the record—you

know in your heart that people are using you for their electioneering.

We have reached a point where, when we talk about negotiations in the townships, people's eyes glaze over. They do not know what is happening, they are not sure whether we are making progress or not, and I think that is one of the reasons the ANC was insistent that a date for elections be announced, because it gives people some hope that we are moving. The media find themselves in a very difficult position of trying to interpret what is happening in the negotiating councils while at the same time trying to look into the future and we have not been able to do this adequately.

FERNANDO LIMA

Director, Media Cooperative,
Mozambique

Mere legislation granting freedom of the press is not enough to ensure that independent press can flourish in countries like ours. In Mozambique the government [a year after the Constitution proclaimed press freedom] published a press law. They said, well, we have done our job so you can start your publications. The problem is that unless we have equal opportunities on the economic and financial side, we cannot succeed and compete with the state-related press.

When we need to import equipment, when we need to rent houses, we are placed in unfavorable conditions compared to the state. When government media import equipment they just do an accounting operation in the Ministry of Finance in order to erase custom duties or other duties. Just two weeks ago, we got the first bill related to the material we imported last December. We imported something like \$10,000 of donated equipment. For that we were charged 48 percent on custom duties. We are about to import \$200,000 of equipment. Equipment donated. It is not coming from the budget, it is not coming from taxpayers' money; it is new money given to us by NGO's and other agencies. We are supposed to pay for that \$90,000.

Two years after the press laws have been published there is not a single newspaper as such in the streets of our cities in Mozambique. We are here talking about a country that ended a war nine months ago. A country that gets every year about \$800,000,000 under IMF structural programs.

We are talking here about a country where we have 15 opposition parties, but



Carmel Rickard and Joe Thloloe of
South Africa

it seems that they are completely dormant. We do not hear about these parties because they do not have money; they do not have economic interests behind these opposition parties; they do not have other interest groups behind them who can support them in their political campaigns.

In order to address these shortcomings last year we stated something that we think we can afford. We were given [a grant] by a group of women [from] peasant cooperatives. Peasants in our county, mainly women, are being dispossessed of their land, and this land is being allocated to government functionaries and helping former Portuguese residents and South Africans in our country, mainly in Southern Mozambique. So we started this publication, someone calls it a newspaper by fax. At least we can afford to run this operation. It made a difference in Mozambique. I think we even managed to improve quality [in the state media] because they at least have this competition that they did not have in the past.

We are also stimulating the debate on salaries and working conditions because despite the fact that we are a small operation we pay much better than state media. I just realized in this conference that our secretary gets triple the salary of an average journalist in state media.

VINCENT CHIKWARI

Chairman,
Zimbabwe Union of Journalists

I must say the promise that Zimbabweans had in 1980 of a model democracy in Africa fell flat, and I am ashamed to say this directly to you because the forces that made that whole hope fade are [from] most of the people we had put our faith in. In Zimbabwe our Constitution guarantees freedom of the press. Freedom of expression has also empowered women to have the relevant backing of the law in terms of equality for equal work, access to jobs, access to other resources. At the same time that process has not been effective.

Much is being said about the state media. Some of them have actually embarked on self-censorship but we all know, behind the scenes they have certain collaboration with some of the big guys. Eventually what happens is that they specifically have to toe a line that is already pre-determined. Whether we have accurate journalists gracing our news rooms and the public media, by the end of the day, all we have is a delayed and unnecessarily questioned [article or one]

simply thrown away on the basis that it will offend a Mr. Somebody, an invisible somebody.

That has actually frustrated a number of journalists in this country to an extent that creativity has nose-dived. Some of our best journalists have been sitting in our newsrooms doing next to nothing. I know for sure [that] one of our best journalists sat in his office for two years without even having produced [any] work.

The quality of our journalists has been dangerously eroded because of high unemployment in this country. If you dare challenge, [the boss] says go join the legion of the unemployed on the streets; so what has emerged is what we call mortgage journalism. Everybody is worried about where they are going to get money to pay their mortgage at the end of the month.

Another phenomenon, corruption, has just seeped down into the entire fabric of our society. The self-perpetuation mechanism of this corrupt system has threatened anybody who dares challenge it. The corrupt element in our society involves many highly placed officers in our government, in our industry, in our churches and in other civic society organizations. I am not exempting anybody; it is just a dangerous across-the-board kind of phenomenon that has crept into Zimbabwean society. Journalists are trying to crack this situation and they are unable to do so because of the lack of a forum.

Our so-called independent media—I am going to be very honest—you have been fine-tuned already, the reason being they are vulnerable [because] they want to get government assistance by the end of the day. If somebody wants to import equipment or newsprint you have to get a foreign currency allocation and to get foreign currency is a favor; it is not a business transaction in this country, so that application can be delayed deliberately and that has sort of softened the alternative media in this country.

TEMBEKA NKAMBA

Manager,
South African Broadcasting Corporation

I just want to start by saying, South African society is going through a transition, and if we listen carefully to what Joe was saying from *The Sowetan*, one would actually imagine that a broadcasting corporation like the SABC would actually play a very leading role in that state of transition and in bringing people together. The reality is that nothing is being

done by the SABC, very little or nothing. What is happening is that the SABC still appears to be a very biased government tool. It still reports the problems from the black communities in a very biased and most of the time in a very inciting way as well.

There is a [code word] that we actually laugh at every [time] we watch the news on Television 1—"meanwhile." When they are reporting the news about violence in the community, they link up things that do not link at all with this [code word], "meanwhile this is what is happening."

In reporting problems in Vistacampers in Soweto they went like this: Vista University is up in flames. Meanwhile, Cape Town leaders vow to continue baring their hackles.... Also the portrayal of black civic mobilization is always negative; it is disorderly and it is violent.

If there is not violence to be reported or if SABC knows beforehand—because they know beforehand in some cases—that violence is going to erupt in such a place, they will not cover the event.

I got a lot of phone calls recently because much was happening in the so-called white communities in Randberg, in Rosebank and all those places, and there were people saying we were going to have a march and we are marching for democracy in South Africa. We as white South Africans are tired of what is going on in our country. The response from SABC was that we do not cover marches in white areas, which is ridiculous because they know that the police are not going to throw tear gas; they know that the police are not going to be provocative to the people. That is not news to the SABC.

What is most disappointing, however, is the fact that even their so-called black channel of the CCV, which has black reporters who are supposed to be reporting positively and using positive terms, they still use very insulting terms on public television. Even if we could do something to try to change the attitudes of the white community, SABC needs something beyond just changing one sector. It has to work towards psyching both the oppressed and the oppressors in terms of changing technology, in terms of bias, in terms of their attitude.

The culture of this company is still Afrikaans and nothing but Afrikaans. Important documents are still written in Afrikaans despite the fact that the majority of the people of the country speak English.

South African Broadcasting Corporation needs to be more responsible than it is at the moment. We need to cut down on these separate channels. We have a television for whites and a television for blacks; we need to have a television for all South Africans.

We need to train our presenters as well in the tone they use. You can actually tell something that they favor from the tone that they use, from their facial expressions. We need to get into SABC, storm it and change it completely.

We need people who stand up on public television and actually say, what is wrong is wrong and do not look at themselves as advantaged South Africans.

There is a new watchdog also emerging. There are critics that are forming themselves into groups and these critics are actually sending feedback in terms of clippings to us. There is a new group of about four young people who are actually sending through their feelings about the bias in SABC and all the things that other people cannot really understand. Previously in my media department, as soon as people received these kinds of faxes, they would put them in the waste paper basket. Now there is a move towards actually looking at these and employing people to look at these and assess what is going on. The situation at the present moment needs to be challenged; it cannot stay as it is.

Q. & A.

Ncube—

I feel compelled to respond to what Vincent [Chikwari] has just said about the independent media in Zimbabwe being fine-tuned. I am not all for praises being heaped on the independent media because I appreciate that we have our own handicaps but I think it must be put on record that if it was not for the existence of a vibrant independent media in this country, we would not be meeting here to begin with. This country would have been a communist state. This country would have been a legislated one-party state, not just creating conditions where other parties can emerge, and I think it must be appreciated that the vibrancy of an independent press forced the Zanu PF Government to go towards a much more democratic dispensation. That is why today the party has not legislated to have a one-party state, that is why the party has dropped its idea of a socialist economy, of a command economy.

I think more than that, the official press today, The Herald, The Chronicle, looks much better because of the competition that is coming from the independent press. We have made the official press sit up and face the competition. The official press today is publishing stories which two years ago would never have been published because they are aware, there is an alternative avenue where these stories can be published. The official press has even gone to the extent of criticizing party and government, things which were never dreamt of two years ago and that is because of the independent press in this country.

The only thing the official press has not as yet done which the independent press has been able to do is to criticize the President when he errs.

But I realize we do have handicaps and one of those handicaps is one which you did point out, the one of a shortage of journalists in this country. Good journalists are nowhere to be found anymore.

Karim—

I thank Tembeka for the very illuminating expose on the SABC but I would just like to ask Tembeka what role she thinks Mr. Mandella and Mr. Buthelezi have in the violence that erupts in South Africa.

Unidentified Woman—

I think a mere question like that shows that SABC has succeeded in [broadcasting] propaganda because the stance that they are taking [is] that the violence is only limited to Mandella and we know that that is not true.

Unidentified Man—

One of the things that frustrates me is that the South African media have not used resources to investigate this third force.



President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe

We are very stretched and we always make excuses, but there always has been this theory that there is a third force and I do not think we are doing enough to try and uproot it.

Robert Mugabe President of Zimbabwe

Following his speech detailing the economic and political situation in Zimbabwe, President Mugabe answered questions. Following are excerpts:

Hunter-Gault—

It would interest this group of media practitioners to know your perspective on the role of the media, and particularly the independent media, in promoting and sustaining democracy in Africa, and most especially what many have circulated as perhaps an obstacle to the media in promoting and sustaining democracy, the prospect that you see in the governments of Africa relinquishing control of the airwaves.

A.—The media are there to inform the people first and foremost of events that are taking place and giving information as an exercise not just of research in regard to the facts as they happen but it is an exercise also in the presentation of those facts. And so one expects that first you can inform the public about the happenings in as true a manner as you can. The truth must be told. Facts, facts, facts. It is sometimes in the search of those facts that we find faults with some journalists, not just our own, but even journalists from Britain and so on from time to time.

The facts must be presented in as objective a manner as possible. The facts can be positive; they can also be negative. You want to maintain a balance, and what we see in the majority of cases is a given bias. But you, the media which we talk about, are not media that are without control. You have made reference to the control by governments and magazines controlled by their own owners.

Perhaps some might be companies with shareholders, and there is policy you will get, as in Britain, The Daily Telegraph charting a conservative line. The Mirror is biased in favor of labor. So you get a pro-

government paper, a pro-opposition paper and what does that mean? It means that in either case they are there to promote the interests of the particular side which they support. So objectivity is a very difficult ideal really to achieve, and if you are a reporter for either paper you are given a task to promote the interest of the particular group or particular party. Your own sense of objectivity and impartiality is ruined to that extent that you are serving the interests of your managers and your supplier of the bread and butter that you feed on.

The government in this country, for example, has parastatals which run definite media. [When we took over the government] we found in being, controlled by the state, radio and television. We have continued that control. We deem that these are very important instruments. More than anybody else the state has the right to champion the direction of development and it must put across the policies, put across the measures for enhancing that developmental trust.

The other members of other organizations, true, must be reported. Now government does not say to the reporters who bring the news to ZBC, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, do not listen to them. We do not say that. They listen to them, but perhaps they realize that they must serve their employer just like those who report for *The Guardian* or *The Daily Telegraph* must serve the cause of their employer. So some will tend to be biased.

We have also criticized some of our own journalists who have reported wrongly about us and in some cases perhaps in a manner we felt was biased against us. So you will have that. But certainly those who have other views must have those views reported on, and you will find that they are reported on.

We have also the same quarrel against the opposition, that their papers do not reflect government policies in the same way as the media under the state does. You will find that the opposition papers in our country go out of the way to try and hunt for those things that damage the party and government. As long as those facts are facts we would have nothing to quarrel about, but it is when they lie or modify the truth, so it can read as not the truth, then we also quarrel with them and say that they are biased against us.

When all is said and done I do not think it is a good thing to expect that a government should have nothing to do with the media and have nothing to do at all with broadcasting, whether it is TV or radio. It

has a function to play and a very important function.

Of course in a democracy the government does not last forever. What is opposition today may become government tomorrow. Then they also will see to it that their policies are being pursued, and by the same media. If the opposition gets that mandate tomorrow, they will also come with their own policies and their own approach and seek to have that approach pronounced as loudly and effectively amongst the people as possible. So giving up what you called airways is not acceptable really.

It should be acceptable to all democratic countries that groups of other people who desire to do so can establish their own papers, run their own magazines even if those are opposed to the government we have now in our country. Quite a spate of newspapers can now be found which report adversely on us and adopt a critical line to government. Well, fine. As long as they do not vitiate the norms and offend against the law of libel and defamation, they are free to criticize the government as strongly as they desire.

Ncube—

From what you are saying it appears to you that the independent press is playing a destructive role in the building of democracy in this country. What role would you want to see them play? Or would you be happier without them?

A.—I said they are critical of us. They are entitled to that criticism because they serve the interest of their own employers who spell out policy to them. If their employers are opposed to government they cannot report otherwise. That is why I gave you the example of *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Daily Mirror*.

It is not all that is reported in *The Financial Gazette* that we disagree with. There is a lot that we think is good material and lots of people read it. I read it every day and you get an enhancement of news items. The papers complement each other. It is in regard to factual reporting where we quarrel with some of these papers. Why not tell the truth? Why choose to tell half truths and in some cases blatant lies? But there has been an improvement in reporting.

No, I do not say we would rather do without you. Why? Doing without you is wishing you R.I.P. and no one wants you to rest in peace. You have a function to play. Play it and in some cases if you elicit facts or you discover happenings which would not have been reported elsewhere

and these are true happenings, it is good for the public to get to know that there is this information which might have been suppressed elsewhere.

I think there have been some reports which the police have pursued of that nature. In that way you complement each other, and in some cases you actually can do the public a great amount of good because if we in government hide certain facts and those facts are then reported on by you, well we will be exposed for what we are: dishonest people who have hidden certain facts. But we do not want you in pursuit of that objective to turn yourselves into dishonest reporters. So please report, continue to live. Viva.

Chikwari—

Our worry here is laws that were made during the previous regimes and have consistently remained on our statutes. The Law and Order Maintenance Act, the wide scope of the Official Secrets Act, the wide scope of the Privileges and Amenities Act and also the monopoly of ZBC, of the airwaves, television and radio.

A.—You have touched more than just the issue of freedom of the press. We have been changing quite a number of laws. The state of emergency—that now has gone. The other laws, well, we might ourselves feel that the law serves a purpose, but if the people feel in a strong way that certain laws are inhibitive to their activities, that they are oppressive, we will certainly have no objection.

The Law and Order Maintenance Act—you do not want law and order? We want law and order. How is it applied in an oppressive or cruel manner, in a manner that inhibits the freedom of an individual?

You do not want ZBC to have a monopoly. Why should they not have a monopoly? They are the only ones that are there. You want to establish another broadcasting station? Well, nobody has appealed to us for another broadcasting station, not that I will encourage it.

Other papers. Well they are there. You know as a journalist that there are lots of papers which have been established and they are running quite smoothly. But the issue of a broadcasting station and a radio system which runs parallel to our own, that is a ticklish point because you do not know what propaganda they are going to run.

Government has a mandate from the people to run certain things. The voluntary broadcasting stations emanate from the fact that the people have the right of freedom of expression and therefore

freedom to carry their own views. Fine, systems like the U.S. have had that tradition, but you will hardly find two or more stations in developing countries. You will say, why not? Purely because they fear sabotage and subversion.

So some things will take time to come even though in principle they may be the correct thing to do, but the practicalities and the fears that go with establishment of those things will have to be over.

Do Media Trusts Work in Africa?

CHAIR: WILMA RANDLE

The Chicago Tribune

I have asked the panelists to talk about the concept of a media trust as it related to their particular operations.

DOUG BAND

Chairman

The Argus Group, South Africa

I am by no means an expert on media trusts. I however do believe that media trusts can play a very constructive and considerable roll in the media mix and ought to play that role in Africa.

I think it is also important to make the point that there are many models of media trusts and distinctions in terms of the way they work, and that media trusts do play a role in the world at large. There are two important examples in the U. K., one being The Economist. There is also

the Scott Trust, the effective controller of the Guardian Group in the U.K., also a very intriguing model which may well have applications in Africa.

The reason I mention these two examples is mainly to make the point that they have worked very admirably for a very long time. They in fact facilitate and contribute to the delicate balance between the necessity for commercial success and of course for editorial independence and editorial integrity.

The two particular areas of my own experience that I have been associated with and involved with during the last couple of years in South Africa are the Independent Media Diversity Trust which came into being during the earlier part of this year. That was a joint venture, essentially between the Newspaper Press Union of South Africa, which for the purposes of this discussion we can regard as the established press, and the Conference of Independent Newspaper Editors, which can be regarded as the representatives of the so-called alternative press in South Africa.

The whole purpose of the Independent Media Diversity Trust is to raise money to encourage press diversity in South Africa, to apply that money in supporting publications that have been supported by overseas NGO's before February 1990. A lot of these publications are finding it extremely difficult to get financial support.

The IMDT was launched in March of this year. Fundraising from the local business community, particularly the establishment press in South Africa, has so far raised about \$1.4 million. There have also been significant contributions from the European Community and there is also encouraging support from overseas NGO's.

One of the important things about the IMDT is that a lot of care and attention went into the formulation of the initial panel, because in general circumstances you find the trusts do become self-perpetuating. It is indeed a representative panel that spans the racial groupings, has important female influence in it and above all, I think, represents a coalition of important influences that can take on the responsibility of leading the trust to its new future.

Briefly, the second trust that I am involved with is the Sowetan Trust. The Argus Group have owned 100 percent of Sowetan publications for a number of years. The company is now being incorporated as a separate company and the Sowetan Trust will be acquiring an initial

49 percent stake in the business. In three years the intention is that the trust will in fact become the majority shareholder.

Again, we have a highly credible panel of people who have assisted us in the process of trying to determine the trustee panel, all of significant credibility in the South African context.

The intention is, not only will the trust own the shares that it will be acquiring in The Sowetan, but also that the trust will play a role in the very delicate issue of editorial appointments and the upholding of an editorial charter which is being put in place for The Sowetan. I am very optimistic that protecting the trust will play a very, very key role in protecting the editorial independence and commercial viability of The Sowetan as the years unfold.

SILOBEZO CHETSE

Business Manager

SADC Press Trust, Zimbabwe

Media trusts can and do work in Africa.

The SADC Press Trust was formed in 1987 with donor funding from CIDA and on resolution by the 10 SADC member states.

The specific purpose for which it was formed was to publish an economics magazine, which it now does as The Southern Africa Economist. The whole idea behind this publication was to encourage economic debate, to forge regional trade links and to reduce economic dependence on South Africa. The Southern Africa Economist has been very successful because there is a provision in [its] constitution for editorial independence and no interference by the recipients of the grant, the 10 SADC member states.

The structure of the Southern Africa Economist is as follows: There is a supervisory board at the top, which is made of nominees from the 10 SADC governments. Reporting to the supervisory board is the SADC Press Trust Management, which is charged with the full responsibility of the publication. The editorial content is dependent on the judgment of the editor-in-chief who is also the chief executive of the trust. He is answerable to the board on matters with exception of the editorial line he chooses to take, provided that all the information so published can be proved and cannot be subjected to any questions as far as correct reporting is concerned.



Doug Band of South Africa

ANTON HARBER

Co-editor, *The Weekly Mail*
South Africa

Media ownership has been in very limited hands, either state or a very small number of businessmen. Only now are trusts being considered and developed as a mechanism for ownership, not unlike the way the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust was intended to deal with what was seen as politically unacceptable domination of the printed media by the Argus Company.

We have a distinct advantage in South Africa which should allow us to avoid the errors of the Zimbabwean experience. The delays in transition allow us to deal voluntarily with the need to change the concentration of media ownership, rather than to wait around and invite a new government to intervene.

Yesterday's debate at one stage was in danger of deteriorating into an argument over whether private ownership is better than state ownership. The point was usefully made that there are as many international examples of good state-owned media as there are of bad privately owned media. The initial point is the relationship between owner, whether private or state, and editor. The distinction [is] between ownership and control, and clearly media trusts, though not perfect, [are] a useful tool for mediating this relationship.

At *The Weekly Mail*, a newspaper whose *raison d'être* is independence from political parties, state and partisan business interests, we protect editorial independence through a trust in quite an unusual way.

About 25 percent of our company is owned by a staff share trust, and we have given that trust a right to veto the hiring and firing of editors. Having just sold about 40 percent of our company to *The Guardian* of London, we have strengthened this protection. The Scott Trust, which wholly owns *The Guardian*, *The Manchester Evening News* and other related operations, has now also been given a veto in the hiring and firing of *The Weekly Mail's* editor. Before action can be taken against an editor or a new editor can be hired there are three bodies that have to agree—the Board of Directors of *The Weekly Mail*, the Scott Trust and *The Weekly Mail Staff Trust*. I do not think one can dispute that there is enough protection of editors.

The Scott Trust does provide an interesting model. It was set up by the man who was *The Guardian* Editor for many years,

C. P. Scott, with the primary purpose of insuring continued existence of *The Guardian* as an independent voice. It's got clearly defined functions. It [has] hired editors, and I am pleased to say that since 1936, when it was formed, it has not fired any. It appoints a board of directors to run the newspaper company. It mediates, acting as a kind of court of appeal in disputes between management and editors. And it acts to ensure its own continuity, finding ways, for example, to deal with financial crises and more recently, interestingly, finding out what to do with the proceeds of *The Guardian's* newly found prosperity. In the words of one chairman of the trust, "The function of the trust was simply to exist and to keep a low profile." I think that is very important in understanding why it has been successful because it has been hands-off, meeting only very occasionally or in times of crises, usually only two or three times a year. Secondly, having appointed editors, [it] instructed them only to carry on and then leaving them to get on with the job.

The first goal of the trust—I think this is very important in what differentiates it from ownership structures in all other British papers except *The Economist*, is not to maximize profit, but to sustain *The Guardian*, and this enables it at times to choose to let *The Guardian* lose money if they feel it is necessary because of the editorial position, as long as it is made up elsewhere in the other activities of the trust. [During] the Suez Crisis when *The Guardian* took a very unpopular position and lost a lot of circulation and advertising, had *The Guardian* had a more conventional ownership, it would have either been closed down or transformed or prevented from expressing costly views.



Left to right, Susan King, Judy Woodruff and Charlayne Hunter-Gault of U.S.

CHEN C. CHIMUTENGWENDE

Deputy Minister of Information
Zimbabwe

Do media trusts work in Africa? I would start by saying that it is very difficult to discuss it because first, Africa is not one entity, one country, it is many countries with different circumstances, certain common features, but also lots of historical features which are not common. Whatever solution we prescribe for one African country, and could actually work in that country, may not necessarily work in the other country. For instance, the level of contradiction between the opposing forces in one country are not the same in another country. So a solution to a political problem comes as a compromise, as a result of the interplay among opposing forces. One dominant force wins, the others lose for the time being and they continue their struggle.

The second problem is that we have different types of trusts. Some are government-created trusts and some are trusts which are NGO's and some are just for people who may want to avoid paying taxes, but they are basically businesses.

The other problem we face is that trusts have a political orientation if they are in the media. They may be pro-government or anti-government. They may be development-oriented; they may be culture-oriented; they may do with sports; they may be completely political.

In Zimbabwe we have all these different trusts. The major trust which most people will be interested in here is the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust. It was government established as a result of the interplay between the opposing forces in this country. At independence, the dominant media on the print side were controlled by South African interests, and they were naturally not in line with our interests or orientation. They were in fact largely opposed to the idea of African independence. Government, which relied on South African-controlled channels of information, became a major problem.

In government we discussed how do we solve this? The idea that became dominant was that we should form a Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust. Nonprofit, but not quite a NGO. The trust was started with a donation—I think it was \$4 million—from the Nigerian government.

So the Mass Media Trust in this country owns or has majority shares in the media, in the dominant media—that is the Zimbabwe Newspapers, that is *The Herald*, *The Bulawayo Chronicle*, *The Manica*

Post and the few others. What has been good is that we also have privately owned media. This Mass Media Trust is only for the Zimpapers Newspapers, for the government-related newspapers. I think that this is an ideal situation at the present stage of our development.

Of course what may be right today or ideal today may not be ideal tomorrow because circumstances are always changing. As you know, there are no permanent solutions to political problems or to national problems. As they say, there are no permanent friends, no permanent enemies in politics. With institutions it is the same.

Q. & A.

Blay-Amihere—

I would like to share with this seminar the Ghanaian experience of how to ensure editorial independence of the state-owned media. As a matter of fact, the concept [of] media trust is very alien and unknown in Ghana. We have set up a media commission. It is a unique experiment.

For most of our history, it has been the Ministry of Information which controlled the state-owned media. It sacks and appoints editors. At any time there is change—and we have witnessed about five changes in our country's history of about 36 years, whether through a coup d'état or constitutional rule—editors are dismissed and new ones appointed.

Now we accept in Ghana that it is very bad to leave this process in the hands of government, so a media commission is to be set up next week. This commission is made up of the following: The Ministry of Public Relation Offices, the Christian Council of Ghana, the President of Ghana can appoint two members, and Parliament can appoint three members and the Association of Teachers have a member. We think we can ensure editorial independence for the state-owned media by this kind of commission.

Nolan—

I would like to say something about the Independent Media Diversity Trust in South Africa. What Doug Band did not mention is that there are also alternative magazines that have been involved in the founding of IMDT. For us this is a matter of life and death. There were eight, but there are now seven, magazines in South Africa that grew up as part of the struggle and received funds, from Europe generally and partly from North America. We



Wilma Randle of U.S. and Chen C. Chimutengwende of Zimbabwe

were totally dependent on funding agencies.

We have now reached a situation where those funds are going to be cut off. I think I can safely say all seven of us, not to mention some of the independent newspapers, are all going to die unless the IMDT somehow is able to provide funding for us. We are not commercially viable. We might, some of us, become commercially viable in the future, but we are not at present. We have always written for the poor and for people who cannot afford to pay high prices. We do not have a very large circulation, but we have played a role.

Unidentified Woman—

I am unclear about how the initial group gets formed and by whom.

Band—

In the selection of the trustees for the Independent Media Diversity Trust, we really bandied around various names trying to establish a balance of races and representation across geographic lines, race and color lines and people of credibility and independence. That is how we came up with that original list. Trustees have limited terms of office and they will retire by rotation. The remaining trustees will have the opportunity of being able to select the new appointees.

In the case of the Sowetan Trust, the selection process is slightly different. Being effectively the party that was establishing this concept, the Argus Company, we did not see it as appropriate for us to be able to dictate the pace as to who would be appointed to that trust, and therefore we established a panel, which we call an eminent persons panel, and essentially they have the responsibility of selecting the first panel of trustees, and incidentally are not as such excluded from

appointing themselves as members of that first panel of trustees.

Harber—

In the case of the IMDT, I think the panel was achieved by long discussion and eventual consensus, and therefore goes in with a great deal of support that makes it non-controversial, but you do put your finger on a problem I highlighted. A potential problem about trusts is the power of trustees to be self-perpetuating. People do change and situations change, and those people or the people they may appoint to replace themselves may not be appropriate in 10 or 20 or 30 or 40 years, but that group of people who at least start off with wide-ranging respect is still a better group of people to make the decisions than one proprietor.

Randle—

I heard very respected [leaders] of the community but I did not hear any grass roots people. Is that not a part of the concern?

Band—

To be honest with you it was not an issue that was discussed in relation to the IMDT. Having said that, the trustees do have wide powers and that is something they certainly would give consideration to. In relation to The Sowetan I again just would like to make a point that essentially this small body of people have an absolute discretion to select a panel, and therefore if they wish to decide to bring people in from the grass roots, they would have that right to do so. I also incidentally totally subscribe to what Anton said. There are dangers of course in the trustee system. One of the most conspicuous dangers which we picked up in the studies we did is that you have jolly well got to have retirement rules, otherwise you end up with panels of trustees that stretch well into their 90's like the Chinese Communist leadership.

Rossouw—

Particularly in the case of the IMDT, one hopes we will not have an IMDT in South Africa in 20, 30 years time. At the moment there is a need for financial support for independent media, there is a need for more plurality, more diversity in the South African media simply because of high levels of intolerance. But I think the bottom line is that a few years down the line if the papers do not have a market, if they do not have circulation, if they do not have advertising, we are going to look

long and hard at whether there is a need for them to exist.

Harber—

I would have thought that trustees would never support a publication indefinitely and would put definite time limits on the period they give people. But I hope IMDT lasts and grows because the need for media diversity does not go away and there is never enough media diversity so even if we have completely different ownership, the more the merrier.

Lima—

Just a matter of clarification. It seems to me that the main purpose is to channel some money or funds for a different range of publications, like in the case of South Africa. Kabral mentioned something that I do not think really is a media trust.

Randle—

The question as I heard it is that you wanted to make sure we were talking about two different concepts that have been proposed here. One is the model in Ghana which is much more of a media watchdog-type organization versus a media trust which is a nonprofit, supposedly nonpartisan funder of media operations.

Band—

I think you are absolutely right, there is a clear distinction between those two. Having said that, again there is a very definite distinction between the IMDT concept or the concept that was referred to here, and the concept of The Sowetan Trust. In that case there is actual ownership of the shares, and that is not a charitable act. There those trustees will have a discretion to use those monies to effectively work in terms of black empowerment, so that they can use those monies to build up a media stable, or any other stable of any other businesses they wish to. I think it is entirely foreseeable that over a period of time that trust or company set up by that trust may expand into the media business. We are looking forward to an expansion in private broadcast in South Africa, so there are very, very many possibilities when you are talking about trusts.

Unidentified Man—

Recently there have been revelations that executives of Zimbabwe Newspapers and in the Mass Media Trust have swindled millions of dollars from the organization and some have been suspended. Are there

any ideas about how the Mass Media Trust can be reformed?

Chimutengwende—

I don't know about the millions, because it's a case which is still to go before the court, but it will certainly come out what has actually happened. That can happen in any company or organization whether it is independent or not. In fact, we have lots of examples of millions of dollars being swindled in all types of companies, or in government departments, internationally and locally. So that is not an issue for or against Mass Media Trust. The Mass Media Trust as such doesn't actually manage the media, they oversee the management of the media in the sense that the chief executive and maybe the most senior executives of a newspaper [are] appointed by the trust. Once they are appointed they have autonomy to run that newspaper.

The Mass Media Trust at the moment has no intention of selling its shares in the Zimpapers. We are not very clear why some of our friends are very concerned about that, because you never hear them say BBC must be privatized, but they are very keen to get us to privatize.

In the same way they say you must not protect inefficient companies, let them collapse and start efficient ones. But in their own countries they are protecting inefficient ones on the grounds that they want to protect employment. And they keep on saying devalue your currency but their currency is not to be devalued. Some of the worries of our friends are very suspicious to us. Of course we know that some of them want to buy our media when we privatize because they know that our own people don't have the funds to buy them.

Wetherall, The Financial Gazette, Zimbabwe—

There has certainly been intentional interference with the operation of Zimpapers, and the state media emanating perhaps from the Ministry of Information. I think of the removal of one of our most distinguished editors. I would like to know why he was removed in the mid-1980's. Was it because he was too outspoken, or a member of the wrong party?

What about the removal of Henry Muradzikwa because he referred to the expulsion of Zimbabwean students from Cuba? I think we should know about that.

I do accept there's probably less direct government intervention in the affairs of

Zimpapers now. I think it's probably because there are editors who can be relied upon not to rock the boat too much. But certainly Mrs. Chitepo conceded before her recent retirement that she had directly intervened in the appointment of a director general of the ZBC. And I would put it to the Minister, is it not in your interests to have greater public respect for ZBC as an institution? If it is perceived merely as a voice for the ruling party, it's not going to enjoy widespread public respect and support. Is it really in your Ministry's interests to intervene so persistently and directly in the day-to-day affairs? Why don't you appoint a ZBC Board of men of caliber who will themselves appoint a director general?

Chimutengwende—

Well, first on the ZBC. We don't interfere in the appointment of a director general of ZBC. We don't interfere at all. We actually appoint. Is that clear? That's one question. We appoint under the Broadcasting Act; the director general is appointed by the President of this country. I think it will happen in due course.

There have been a lot of problems at ZBC, as you know, but these problems [are] found in a lot of other institutions. We are grappling with them, trying to see how we can solve them.

About Muradzikwa, you could say in a way he was fired from his position and then got promoted. He is now the Editor-in-Chief of ZIANA, and that's a very important position in this country.

Amanor-Wilks—

There is one media project which has been initiated by women in this country. It's the Development Through Radio project under Radio 4.

Recently, I was privileged to participate in a seminar to evaluate the success of the project. There was a concern pointed out by UNESCO that radio listening clubs all over Africa and actually all over the world have failed after their initial pilot phase because of a lack of funding and that the only way that it can continue is to form the basis for a community radio. UNESCO has expressed interest in funding it. This seminar [brought] about 10 women from the rural areas to discuss their participation in the radio listening club, and it was stunning to just see how these women had been transformed, had felt empowered by this club. Some come to discuss how they had lost their property when their husbands died and through discuss-

ing their problems on the radio, because the women were encouraged to make their own programs, then the ZBC programs take it to the relevant ministry, relevant expert, NGO, whatever, get the minister or whoever to answer the women directly on the radio, and talk about how to resolve problems.

Women have got back their property, got birth certificates for their children when they didn't know how to, they've managed to get maize through the drought-relief program when it wasn't reaching some of the remote areas. All kinds of practical problems were resolved. It would be such a terrible tragedy if a successful project like that, which is such a good example of media helping in the development of this country, were to die.

Now you've said a lot today about the government being unwilling to relinquish its monopoly on broadcasting. How amenable would the government be to relaxing the Broadcasting Act to allow the entry of community radio? What would it take and how long would it take to establish such a thing?

Chimutengwende—

Send us up a proposal and we'll discuss it. The problem with a lot of people is that they suggest their ideas through the media or through a conference like this, they actually never come to our office to say we have this proposal and so on. It may easily be acceptable, there may be a way of doing it even without changing the law of Parliament; it's very possible.

Amanor-Wilks—

What ways?

Chimutengwende—

Produce a proposal, a written proposal, and come and discuss it with us. Then we can see whether there are any problems with it or not. Maybe there are not problems with it.

The Electronic Media—Is There a Model for Africa?

CHAIR: JUDY WOODRUFF

MacNeill/Lehrer NewsHour

President Mugabe said among other things that the broadcast media serve an

important function and the government in power has a right, a mandate from the people I think he said, to use the broadcast media to get their message across. He said when governments change new leaders will have a different message. The implication being it's all right for one government to do this, to use the media this way, because the next one would use it differently.

Another point—President Mugabe said the issue of making a channel or frequency available to individuals outside of government is, as he put it—We don't know what they will air. He said you typically don't find two or more broadcast channels in developing countries because they fear sabotage and subversion.

And he concluded by saying some things will take time even if they are the correct things to do.

I want to ask the panelists to just first respond. Did Mr. Mugabe have a point, was his answer in any circumstances satisfactory?

Roman Betru, Ministry of Education, Ethiopia—

In a way President Mugabe is right when he said that the government has to take hold of the media. Especially in my country, we have now got a new transition period. So if the government will not take the media, then there are many opposition parties who want that radio just to oppose and to give comments against the other parties. The new government must be responsible for everything that is going on. So in that case I agree with President Mugabe. If they give the media to outsiders, well in that case I do not agree.

Louw—

I would think that the answer seems to be self-evident. That I wouldn't agree with it, both parts.

I must say that when I was listening to the Deputy Minister this morning and President Mugabe, I thought for a moment that I was back in South Africa listening to our rather more authoritarian ministers about how the press should be conducted and about how the media should operate within the country.

I think that simply the government has no right to expect to use the media to get its message across. It has got to compete for the space in the media the same way that everybody else has to. And the fact that if it's the government and if it is able to express views which are worthy of

publication then they will get the attention in the media that they deserve.

I think also one of the problems about that kind of philosophy is that governments then try to stop others from getting their views across which are contrary to those of the government. And so I think it's a very dangerous philosophy.

The same answer applies obviously to the second point you made about the channels outside the government. Sure, the government doesn't know what channels outside the government are going to say, and I think that's a damn good thing. I think it leads to a more vibrant, a more informed and a more aware society and that's what it's all about.

One of the points that occurred to me this morning when President Mugabe was saying these things was that there have been quite a lot of revolutions in Africa over the last 30 or 40 years and I can't recall that any of them occurred in a country where there was free broadcasting or media, where in fact media wasn't controlled in some way by government. And I think in fact that is the ultimate answer to President Mugabe's view.

Hunter-Gault—

I don't know how it could be said more eloquently. I was concerned about bringing my Western values into the answer because in America we believe that the airways belong to the people.

The program I work for, the MacNeill/Lehrer, has been successful in America. It's the first hour-long news program on television, and the philosophy of it is that an informed public is the bedrock of a democracy, and quite contrary to what the President had to say—his concerns about sabotage and subversion—it seems to me that it is the public and the public opinion that guarantee the health of a democracy and the way you arrive at that is through an informed public that is engaged in public debate about the issues. So I just respectfully but totally disagree with his excellency.

Betru—

I'll go back to the military government when [it] was just dehoistered. The media was working a great thing for the Ethiopian people. We have only one station, don't forget that. So that one station tells everything to the people, and they were waiting, they were holding the radio to their ears just following it. For 24 hours the radio was on, and for the last 13 hours it was saying just be calm, be calm. And

then the morning came and there was no radio. Everybody was shocked. We were at our house and they said now the EPRDF took the place of the government. And then some people were happy, some people were crying.

Now if this station was independent, if they say something against the new one or the old one, then there will be slaughter and killing in Ethiopia. That's why I said I agree with President Mugabe because in my country we are not ready to fight or to settle. In the future I agree with the other two, because we need independent media, but now is not the time for the Ethiopian people to have it.

Raymond Louw—

I can't help feeling that there is never a time when it's appropriate to allow the media complete freedom. Every government feels that they need some sort of special consideration, particularly a new government coming into power. They always need some special consideration. I believe that it will always be never appropriate and so that I think in fact the only answer is an open media.

Hunter-Gault—

Can I just underscore something that Raymond Louw said which I think our experience in America certainly speaks to, and that is any time the government wants to they can get on the air. Our President can announce a major address and although the networks of late have been balking somewhat, [if] the President wants to make a major address on any issue he's going to get air time. If ministers, cabinet officials have something to say, they're going to get air time. If anything, we who are critics as well as media practitioners sometimes feel that the way in which the government goes about presenting its case and so on, often tends to create a situation in which we become almost captives of the government in allowing them to set the agenda.

Lydia Mavengere, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corp.—

I'm not particularly agreeing with any of the views expressed so far, but I think one thing we must look out for, especially at independence, is that when African governments come into power they have a very weak economic base. We mustn't forget that their resources are still very limited. We mustn't forget the fact that if you look at the parties in existence, a lot of them are still more ethnic than national in a lot of senses. So what happens when

an African government comes into power, they are faced with all those problems, and it becomes very difficult for them to say let us free the media....It just breaks down into various factions and you don't know who is going to take over at the end of the day. So I think it's still very difficult. We can easily say that we do not need an independent media, but I think it's more practical in a developed country. In a developing country it's still very difficult. I'm not exactly agreeing that our media should be controlled.

Louw—

Well, I can believe that people feel that that should be the way things should happen in a developing country, in an area where in fact there is a degree of flexibility. I don't know what the situation was like in regard to the media before the Somalian thing blew up. Was it a free press? I don't think that it was a free press. And I think that's possibly the reason why there is a great need for a free press. I think you've just got to bite on the bullet, and if the government that is coming into power has got the support of the majority of the people behind it, I would think that the media, without the government having to say you shall do things the way we do it, will in fact show a degree of support for the government. And be sensitive to the fact that they don't want to incite people into actions against the government.

I think that was in fact the situation here in Zimbabwe, when despite the Mass Media Trust and its own control of the issues, the journalists themselves felt the new-found independence in this country in 1980 required them to be sympathetic. It was only 10 years or so later that they discovered that they had been exploited by the government, and they started to revolt. So now we hear the kind of opposition that is being extended towards the government in the media. It's because the journalists feel that they've been taken for a ride. I believe that you just have to bite on the bullet and it's going to be tough, but I think that it works.

Tami Hultman—

I haven't yet heard a substantive response. I don't think, to the particular problem that was being pointed out here. I'm absolutely committed to freedom of the press and the development of a free press, but I also think that we have to recognize that it's a very complicated question—how to develop a press like that in countries where independent doesn't necessar-

ily mean there's no tradition of a nonpartisan press. I lived in Cote d'Ivoire during the period when the number of newspapers went from a couple of government-owned papers which nobody believed to 25 or 30 independent papers which nobody believed because they were all perceived as hawking a particular point of view. And in Cote d'Ivoire there were lots of rumors going around in the press, and people talking about all sorts of things all the time.

But the situation was not as volatile as in Ethiopia, in the situation that has been described to us. What in fact does one do, what position does one take, how does one help to encourage the development of a media that is responsible? When our African colleagues talk about responsible press, I don't think it's necessarily a code word for government control. I think that the real issue [is] when there's no tradition of a press that sees itself as not taking any side, but simply trying to ferret out the truth, because there can be incitement, there can be as you were saying violence instigated by media that is not responsible.

Anthony Lewis, The New York Times—

Just to say to Tami in a sentence, your picture of 25 small independent newspapers that nobody believed is exactly what Jefferson and Madison knew when they wrote the First Amendment. That's what we have and they decided they should be free.

Lima—

I would agree with what Ray was saying, but I guess there's a need to put things in a historical context. And I'm coming from a country with a revolutionary background.

At the time of independence, with 90 something percent illiteracy, when Frelimo took over in fact, the Lusaka Agreement was a declaration of surrender by the Portuguese authorities in Mozambique. It would be very difficult for us, and when I say for us [I mean those] supporting Frelimo at the time, to have Radio Mozambique and whatever being controlled by Portuguese settlers. We took over these newspapers and radio—not the government, not Frelimo party, but the journalists working inside—we took over these different media.

Of course a year later, despite the fact we were still supporting revolutionary power, we discovered that we didn't have the freedom that we thought we should enjoy in exercising our profession. And so

since then, we have had disagreements and clashes with the government because we don't agree on party control of the press; we don't agree on government control of the press. But if you look around, all the factories were controlled by the Portuguese. They were leaving the country and they were taking their spare parts, and everything with them. What should we have done? Just say, well we don't care about those things? We needed the control, and I think that this perception of subversion, violence, all these theories—there is some ground for that. We were at the time spreading the word of revolution in Southern Africa, in Zimbabwe, Namibia, everywhere.

So we think that we should have some kind of message being spread around. On the other hand we feel very heavily betrayed by foreign media, by South African media. We feel this foreign aggression. In that regard we feel very close to the purpose of our government. Of course that's not the problem these days and we don't think the Mozambiquan government represents the Mozambiquan people any more. They represent a segment but not all the people.

Hunter-Gault—

If you accept the notion that you need this control in the beginning because of the concern about the fragility of the new governments, etc.—Zimbabwe is celebrating its 13th birthday—the question is when do you take off these controls, and who decides when they are taken off? Because once they go on it seems to be the case in point, they tend to self-perpetuate and it becomes comfortable.

M'Membe—

I think we have to be very careful with the principles we want to advance at every stage. That's why we've been swinging like a pendulum from one extreme to another. At the time of independence, communist economic ideas prevailed. We never critically examined them. Even now we are still moving with fashion. In the 60's it was fashionable to have a totally controlled economy, a totally controlled political situation, a totally controlled media. The media was a liberated organ for the ruling party, for the vanguard party. We have moved from that fashion.

In 1990 in this country, in fact, the ruling party, still advocated a one-party state. The international scenario had started to change. That idea was abandoned out of fashion. And now we are talking about the independent media. To

a lot of us here it's still part of the fashion movement, no different from putting on a pair of bell-bottom trousers [instead] of piped trousers. And I think we really have to establish why we want something.

You have heard arguments from the representatives of the Zimbabwean government. [The media] is a political tool. It's almost an army. You can't transfer an army into private hands. They still want to have an army.

Louw—

I'm quite old fashioned about fashions, and I rather like that fashion that I was announcing because I don't think that belief in a free press is something that you just flog at the street corner, because somebody else is offering a nice price for it, because that's the implication behind what you are saying. That this is something like a political tool, a tool for sale, it's up for manipulation. That's what I read into your speech. I think there's a basic principle that you can't in fact conduct your society unless you have a free press.

I come from a society that had a relatively free press for a certain section of the people and we saw that dismantled and severely curtailed by the government in order to preserve its position of power. There was only a small section of the press that tried down the years to combat these clubs on the press. I think they did reasonably well considering the forces that ranged against them, but that wasn't a fashion, that was something that was vitally important.

M'Membe—

I think I've been grossly misunderstood. I'm not saying that independent press is a fashion. But what I'm saying is that people are moving towards a fashionable thing. Following the two or three days of discussions here you can clearly see that there is a big, big gap in the understanding of an independent media. A serious gap that even though one thought they appreciated it, when it comes to the nitty-gritty you'll realize that they really don't appreciate it and you sometimes wonder why they are moving with the concept, or why they are moving with the idea. That's the fashionable aspect of it that I am talking about, not on that the ideas are fashionable. I totally agree with what you have said.

Woodruff—

Remember that we are here to talk about a model of the broadcast media for Africa.

Ncube—

When does the opportune time come for somebody to decide that you should hand over control of television or the media to independent people? One minister said to me, we can't allow you people to just unleash all sorts of information, because the people are gullible, we must protect them from people like you. Basically when a politician, or people in authority, say we are not yet ready for an independent media or to hand over power for somebody else to control the media, what they are saying is, we feel insecure. [The] time will never arrive when to give you that power.

By saying that Ethiopia is in a fragile state and therefore has the right to control all forms of media, we are actually denying media institutions an opportunity to develop at the same time democracy is developing.

Edremoda—

I come from a country where just about a week and a half ago they gave out 20 licenses to individuals and companies, all of them nongovernmental, to set up free broadcast media, radio and television. Listening to all this I'm really quite excited. What happens ultimately with the transitional process that we're battling with right now [is that] you just make an attempt to say anything against the government and government clamps down on you. I am one that believes very strongly in free media because I believe that my views should be heard, and I believe that the media, the airwaves, and the newspapers, whatever, belong to the people.

Nolan—

What is becoming clearer and clearer surely is that there is no one model we can use throughout Africa, or anywhere else for that matter. Models that might work in the U.S.A., will not necessarily work in South Africa, or Africa generally. We have a common principle of freedom of the press which we all agree about. We have to promote that in very concrete, historical, political circumstances and there is no way in which you can promote it in the abstract.

The promotion of freedom of the press is a political actuality; it is going to be part of the politics of that country. What happens to work at a particular time and a particular place is not necessarily what will work everywhere else. Principle will remain the same; what we are striving for remains the same, but at any particular

time or place or circumstances, different things may be necessary.

For example, about Zimbabwe, in order to get the press out of the hands of Argus they thought it was necessary only for the government to take over. The problem is they hang on to it. That is part of political struggle but that is not the process necessarily that one might have to go through in another country. There is no way in the abstract you can say when the government must hand over the radio or television. It is going to hand it over when we struggle enough to make them hand it over. That is the kind of thing we need to be talking about, how to conduct a struggle, not a model.

Lima—

Three years ago the government of Mozambique had almost the same position as the Zimbabwean government position expressed here today. We pushed for legislation two years ago in order to define television and radio as public sector. The government [said] yes, the government controlled radio and television. We said no, public sector means the people control their own radio and television. We are still into that kind of fight, but at last we have this commission that our Ghanaian fellow refers here to control the independence of this media. The directors in radio and television are people in government that believe they should have some hand on radio and television. But we are moving quite successfully in defining that this is not government control, it is public-controlled media, and we need to have these boards with independent people to rule these two media, radio and television.

Hunter-Gault—

Before this other point was lost, the gentleman from Challenge—you talked about the necessity to continue to struggle because there were no models in America perhaps or whatever, that could be applied to African situations, but we are trying to get at something specific here. When you say we have to continue the struggle, what does that translate into, in terms of trying to get these governments to give up some of the airways? Are you talking about going in, sit-in demonstrations? What do you mean by struggle?

Nolan—

That again, is where it depends on the circumstances. In the U.S.A. the general method as far as I can understand it is lobbying. In South Africa, you do other things. In some other countries, I imagine

Ethiopia, you could not solve the problem by lobbying. We have to look for the method of struggle in a particular country. What we are doing here, this alone is contributing. Many of the things that people have spoken about, of what they do in their countries in order to fight and get greater freedom of the press where it is required, of the things that were done in Zimbabwe that we heard about and of the new independent newspapers, all of that is part of it. Writing articles can be part of the struggle, all these things.

Woodruff

I want to come back to the question of [whether there is a model] for broadcast media in Africa.

Louw—

Let me go straight into what we tried to do in South Africa, and we have partially succeeded. That is, to take control of broadcasting out of the hands of the government and turn it [over to] the public. We thought about this for about two years as to how to set about it and we came up with this kind of formula. A body of people who would not be party members but who would be eminent persons from the civil society would form a panel. They would be headed by a couple of judges who would always keep them in order. They would then receive the nominations for the board of the South African BC. [They would hold] public hearings of the kind you have in America [where] those people would be tested. The names of 25 people would be published, including the chairman and vice chairman. The state president would then appoint them. That was the theory. In practice, the president introduced a mechanism whereby he could [send back] to the panel [the names of those he] disagreed with. Well he not only sent them back, he had a big haggling match, and he had three meetings with the panel which we thought was improper in [that] he exceeded his authority. Anyway the final list of names was appointed, and we succeeded partially in what we set out to achieve.

We are still having a scrap with the government over getting the thing done properly.

There were over 700 nominations for the 25 positions and I think that gives you an indication of the great interest that was stimulated among the public. Eighteen [of] the 25 people were in fact uncontested by the state president and so their legitimacy is intact. It is the remaining seven that we have a problem with.

That process will enable people from civil society to control the policy of the SABC. That is a remarkable change from the previous procedure, whereby the president obviously appointed people who were going to follow his political policy.

That is a model that should be investigated for Africa because what it amounts to is this, making your point Mr. Nolan, that the circumstances of each particular society should dictate to some extent the manner in which people free their media from control of the government.

That will operate, because the people elected will be the people from that society and will act in accordance with the mores of that society and the values of that society.

We believe that the one criteria which was above all else of paramount importance in the process was that the people who were to be appointed should have one qualification among many other qualifications. That is, that they would act in the public interest. They will be called to account by the public through the other media, through letters to newspapers, etc., if they are seen not to be acting in the public interest.

Now this particular process has got to succeed because it is going to be used to appoint various other bodies which are coming up for appointment in the process [leading up] to the first multiparty general elections—at least not multiparty, non-racial general elections.

Our present system of broadcasting is totally lopsided. We have a national public broadcast in the SABC which has 23 [radio] stations and three TV stations. [One TV station is newspaper-owned] and it is a purely entertainment channel. There are two independent radio stations. So you can see that, despite the much vaunted impression that the media is free in South Africa, broadcast, the most important media in the country, is in fact controlled by the government.

Why did the government concede? The government conceded because the majority was on our side, the majority being the ANC. Among our members of the Campaign for Independent Broadcasting, we have got something like 33 organizations. One was the ANC, another was the Democratic Party and then there was a whole range of civil organizations like Kasatu, the trade union, the journalist trade union, the people with direct interest in broadcasting, etc.

I cannot do anything else but commend that system to you.

Unidentified Woman—

You mentioned the fact that of the parties that were lobbying for this independent broadcasting, the majority was the ANC. But if you look at South African politics there are a lot of other parties. How are you going to ensure that in all this the ANC does not end up having the tendency to have more say than everybody else? They can always assume that they are talking for the majority, but what about all the other parties, how are you going to ensure that the ANC does not have it?

Louw—

The answer to that lies in the fact that the government accepted that the ANC was in the majority and the government made the concessions because it had to make the concessions. I take the point that there was Inkatha, and there is a Conservative Party, and there is the Pan-Africanist Congress. We did think of approaching the PAC though we did not get very far with them. We had one of the trade union federations which is aligned to the PAC. Conservative party—we did actually consider asking them whether they would like to join in with us, but since they do not believe in freedom of expression we did not think in fact that they would join us.

But how do you prevent the ANC from usurping the position that the National Party had? The answer is that you have got to be vigilant to prevent that from happening. You have got to ensure right away that you do not do what was done in 1948 when the National Party came into power and grabbed the SABC and started subverting it to its own use.

Woodruff—

That raises a question of how were the 700 nominations that you received put forward, and how were they acted on? And by whom?

Louw—

The nominations were invited by the panel. And all the names were sent to the panel by various people who wanted to nominate. They were individuals, but nominations came from organizations. We in the CIB nominated 25 people actually. We went through a list of people who we thought were desirable, and I think seven or eight of our names actually got into the final list. Political parties nominated, ANC nominated, Democratic Party nominated, the CP nominated, the National Party nominated. Various organizations,

women's organizations, civil society organizations, the black civil rights organizations, they all put forward nominations.

Unidentified Man—

Could I please correct an impression about the Zimbabwean model? I think what is important to appreciate about Zimbabwe and the Mass Media Trust is that the government at independence did not buy the Argus share in Zimbabwe newspapers for the people of Zimbabwe. They did it for their own interests, for their own selfish interests.

Thloloe—

There has been talk of deregulation of the airwaves, so that people could start their own radio stations. To what extent will this help keep power in the hands that already have power? Because they have the money to start their own stations and the people who do not have [the money] will continue without [stations].

Louw—

That is a very real danger. There is another danger, that the SABC may wish to unbundle to the extent that they create a so-called independent radio [service] of the existing 23 radio services and turn these into independent radio stations, acting in, shall we say, the public interest, but in fact acting in the National Party interest. We have not developed a formula as to how the historically or traditionally deprived people will have access to the airwaves because we do not know quite how to get the money or where to find the money. That is a problem that will arise as soon as we have got the independent telecommunication authority appointed and the rules for the selection of stations and the allocation of frequencies are in fact made and published.

Elizabeth Ohene, BBC, South Africa—

I was wondering whether this carefully selected, politically correct board, whether it is going to have the power to interfere with the setup of the SABC in terms of who holds editorial power, how decisions are made about firing and hiring in the sensitive editorial sections. What would be the point in having a board that is good and a work force that does not know any better or that has only been brought up in a certain method of broadcasting? And they would not do it any different, and if you then started firing those people or appointing new ones, wouldn't you then be seen as interfering

politically? I wonder whether that is a worry.

Louw—

The idea is that the board is only a starting point. The board is the controlling mechanism of the SABC which decides on policy, and its first job would be to consider a new chief executive officer of the SABC. There is a person in that position at the moment, but we do not think that he has the credibility to be able to run the SABC since he served the National Party government so well.

In East Germany they fired all 30,000 employees of the East German Broadcasting Service when the amalgamation took place and they started rehiring selectively. Well that could be done in South Africa, too, except I do not think we have sufficient alternative people to be brought in.

But the board does not interfere in the news programs. The way that is going to be done is for a person who is independent, professionally recognized and has credibility to be appointed head of the TV and radio news services at the SABC. That has got to be done by the new CEO and those are the people who will then run the news programs, in the same way hopefully that the BBC runs their news and current affairs programs, [as does] the Australia Broadcasting Corporation.

Diop—

Just one statement. This model could be working in many of our countries, but I have just realized that most of these African governments or parties believe that they represent the public. They are the state because they have been elected and they have the mandate to conduct a certain policy, and I am sure that they are convinced that their voice is the voice of the majority. We heard President Mugabe saying this morning that okay, we are here, we carry out our policy. They believe that it is the people's policy, so how would they give in to civilian society?

Louw—

You have got some examples that are floating around Africa at the moment which shows in fact that the power of civil society is in fact enormously strong. In this country, for instance, President Mugabe has decided not to go forward with his plans to institute a one-party state because of the opposition that came from civil society, despite the fact that he has got a large majority in Parliament and the opposition parties here are in disarray.

You have just seen what has happened in Malawi which I think is a fantastic



Vivian Derryck
of the African-American Institute

situation. And of course only a couple of years ago in Zambia, and that was all as a result of civil society saying no, we are not going to put up with it. That is your strength, that you are going to say no, we are not going to put up with it, we want something different. That is the thing to bear in mind.

Summary of Conference

SUSAN KING

WJLA-TV, Washington—

Just putting a few facts down. Five days in Zimbabwe with 58 women, three days with more than 30 members of the Nieman family, 210,000 different opinions. Do I dare choose two words to sum it up? I'll dare. Career-changing. I think all of us go back without thinking of things the way we thought before we walked into these rooms.

VIVIAN DERRYCK

President, African-American Institute—

Some next steps that I think that we could reasonably take:

The first thing is for the networking to continue both among women and in these integrated groups.

Second, we did not talk about this much this year, but there is a need still for programs that focus on professional

training and on substantive updates for journalists.

Third, this point has been made again and again, that journalists should work to protest these large import duties that make it difficult in most countries to do your work.

Fourth, that there should be support for the rest of democratization.

Fifth, that journalists should work with regional organizations such as SADC. There is no reason that those important organizations do not have a working relationship with the press.

Sixth, journalists should ally themselves with human rights activities. If you establish freedom of expression as a human right, you have got a natural constituency and an ally.

The seventh one is addressed to women. We have talked about the need to be more involved in multilateral and other conferences. There will be a regional conference before the Beijing conference in 1995. You as journalists should be present, both men and women. It does not do any good for only women to cover the women's conference and those activities.

Lastly—This was a point that someone made; she gave a very moving discussion about what happens to children who watch what happens to their parents. She talked about a person, a mother being stabbed with the siblings watching. I would think that you as journalists would want to make sure that those kinds of stories, no matter how awful that they are, get out, so that citizens get upset. It is only when citizens have that feeling that this is so heinous and so wrong that you see movement.

BILL KOVACH

Curator, Nieman Foundation—

There are two questions that remain on the table. One came up throughout the conference—how can we underpin the economic health of our newspapers in a radically changing political and economic environment? The other was, how can an independent media flourish in the face of government hostility and political intolerance?

Those are the two questions that are being discussed and debated by journalists all over the world, all day every day just as we were here at this conference. There are no answers ever. Journalists in the U.S. have found that an independent press can find that the profit margin can be as corrosive to a free press as a government. There is never an end to the need for vigilant struggle and new ideas, and

new ways to continue to keep people informed on their own behalf and on no one else's.

I think we have established here the basic principle, networking. Networking has to continue between conventions. Conferences and conventions where we reinforce one another, we may pick up an idea or two, but it is not an ongoing thing. There is in this new world that is changing the way we do our business, a new world of communication that should be open to us, that we should be taking advantage of. Computers have not gotten in to every democracy yet, but they will be there soon. The first computer in the door should be a computer that is signed on to one of the bulletin boards, and the bulletin boards should connect journalists all over the world. I am hoping to make the Nieman Society all over the world a network that will help us communicate with each other, into which other journalists can plug. I would urge you to spend some time looking for opportunities to stay in touch with just the people you have met here this week.

MIRIAM PATSANZA

Talent Consortium, South Africa—

We should leave here celebrating the fact that we are living in a world that is beginning to question cultural hierarchy, social hierarchy, sexism and everything else. Because we are here as journalists, we have been trusted with the work of protecting the weak in our society, those who are not heard and the stories that the world has ignored for a long, long time. We will leave here celebrating the things that we have gained, because we have managed to achieve a lot of things. We have taught each other a lot of things, and I hope that as we report issues from our different countries we begin to ignore the boundaries that are imposed on us and do the things that we all feel we must do.

Also, really seek what is an independent voice, so that when the echo of those different voices is heard we as media people can walk proud and say we chose the right profession and we will carry on doing it. That includes demanding training, making sure that when we are involved in selection systems we are really giving space to people who need space, and also that as older people, as people who have had more experience, we are monitoring younger journalists so that they are not left alone. When we share with leaders who claim they are taking care of our interests we still know that in different countries there are people who need voices. ■

FALL READING

How Bush Lost the Election—Two Reports

Mad As Hell:

Revolt at the Ballot Box, 1992.

Jack W. Germond and Jules Witcover
Warner Books. 534 pages. \$24.95.

Strange Bedfellows:

**How Television and the Presidential
Candidates Changed American Politics**

Tom Rosenstiel. Hyperion. 356 pages. \$24.95

BY DAVID NYHAN

The best elections to write about are when the White House changes hands.

Great hurricanes of change pound the defenses of the In Crowd. As happens during violent storms, things begin giving way. The Good Ship Incumbency threatens to succumb to events. The weather, be it economic, political, or media-induced, turns foul. The odd officer deemed expendable is tossed over the side. The crew grumbles about indecisiveness (Ed Rollins), bad judgment, failure to seize opportunity. The enemy's cannonades go unanswered.

The attention of even the inattentive among our 254 million citizens turns to the wreck that is about to occur. The rocks loom close. Disaster is etched in the countenance of the skipper. The recriminations leak from the navigators and communications officers.

Election Day dawns. The iceberg emerges from below. The sound of the hull being rent, as state after state falls, fills the airwaves. Pennsylvania's gone. Illinois looks bad. We managed to save Florida. But Ohio's going; God, we can't lose Ohio! Mayday, Mayday! Abruptly, like a whale sounding, so swiftly it's

hard to believe your eyes, the vessel that carried the White House treasure sinks into the timeless seas.

It happened that way to the Democrats in '68. In '80. In '92 it was the Republicans' turn. The Wreck of the GOP, G. Bush commanding, is more the yarn of Bush losing than of Bill Clinton winning. If I'd snared a book contract for the '92 hunting season, my title would have been "Swamped." How and why is the tale of '92 spun in two anecdote-charged books.

"Mad as Hell" by Jack Germond and Jules Witcover is what we've come to expect from these redoubtable veterans. They paired on four previous campaign histories. This one, with Bush as Ahab, the captain of the Kennebunkport cigarette boat, is probably the best story, simply because it's the first time the underdog has won in the last four.

Their method is simple, and this is the old journalism at work: they report the hell out of it. They begin about two years out, interview everyone they can think of with any role to play in the drama. They sink their teeth into the primaries. They commence chewing, and they don't stop till the last player

JACK W. GERMOND AND
JULES WITCOVER

MAD
★ AS ★
HELL
Revolt at the
Ballot Box,
1992



coughs up what he or she has to offer.

I have run with, or chased behind, these two fellows for 20 years. More times than I can remember, one or the other has squeezed me into their rental car, shoved over to make room in the press box, whispered the hotel room number of the key backgrounder, or swiped a bar tab as I listened intently on a juicy bit of backstage political business from some source they turned up. The tyro who makes a friend of either of these two wins access to a mother lode of fills, perspective, and what-to-watch-for-in-coming-weeks.

Germond and Witcover do the thing from soup to nuts, from Bush's high of Desert Storm victory, to Bush's low when the overmatched President was caught looking at his wristwatch as Clinton took him to the cleaners in a televised debate.

Whereas "Strange Bedfellows," by Tom Rosenstiel, scrutinizes the role network television played in the Clinton victory, the Jack & Jules Show tries to penetrate the perceptions and go backstage in the campaign efforts of all the major players. The loser's locker room is always the better story.

And politics being the strange sort of survival game it is, there are plenty of losers to interview. Germond and Witcover begin with a prosaic phone call to a Virginia farmhouse: would Kimberly Usry, 28, asks the Gallup opinion-seeker at the other end, like to be in the audience for a presidential debate the next night? You will? Fine. Kim Usry, who'd just been laid off from her job, was the woman who dropped the bomb after ABC's Carole Simpson, the moderator, called on her. Addressing Bush, Clinton and Ross Perot, Usry scored all three for wasting time "trashing their opponents's character... why can't your discussions and proposals reflect the genuine complexity and the difficulty of the issues...?"

Ooops. A voter, intruding on the prerogatives of the professional politicians? Perot promised to abjure "mud-wrestling." Bush seized his turn to resume his attack on Clinton: "...I am deeply troubled by someone who demonstrates and organizes demonstrations in a foreign land when his country's at war..." Clinton croaked Bush: "I'm not interested in his character. I want to change the character of the presidency."

When the next audience member piled on, Bush was hung out to dry. The man who had won the White House by making Willie Horton a household name was in the process of losing it by trying to portray Young Lochinvar Clinton as a hairy commie-symp kid protester in London a quarter-century ago.

By book's end, Bush pollster Bob Teeter is explaining how this persistent white-collar recession, which vaporized jobs from not just the blue-collar peasantry, had shaken the electorate's faith in Bush. And Mandy Grunwald, the Clinton spin-meister, read the same tea leaves from the victor's side of the saucer. The election reflected "just how scared people were about the fate of the country." As a result, the Jennifer Flowers business, or Clinton's tangled history of shying away from military service, each became a "luxury issue," spurned this time around, while 1988's "luxury issues," Willie Horton and Boston polluted harbor, worked for Bush.

The Bush men never understood the depth of voter concern about economic

What you collect with convincing authority from this pair of books is what seems in retrospect to be almost the inevitability of a Bush crash.

insecurity. Even in August, they were convinced their tarnished chief would carry the veterans' vote. He didn't. The oldest rule in politics—absent a war, elections swing on economic hinges—held sway. The GOP's decade-long infatuation with social issues as the wedge to divide and conquer the majority Democrats proved fatal.

Germond and Witcover go deep into the Perot phenomenon. The cranky billionaire comes off as a man who should not have become president. But the authors nail Bush for his willingness to have his hired hands try to hornswoggle the jug-eared wild-card. "In other words, it was the same old George Bush, holding his nose while others did something he said was distasteful to him—but not distasteful enough for him to call off the dogs." Neat.

One of the great advantages of doing a campaign in retrospect is tracing back threads to their origin. The Clinton-Gore bus trip after the convention was hatched in a brace of memos written in April, separately and five days apart, one by a DNC staffer named Steve Rosenthal and another by a Clinton aide buried deep in the conservative heartland of Indiana, Carter Wilkie. What took place, under the skilled advance work of Hollywood impresario Mort Engelberg, was a kind of dreamy Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer heartland homecoming, replete with Hillary and Tipper playing miniature golf while the boys licked ice cream cones and jawed with truckers. That trip solidified the lead Clinton never lost.

The care and feeding of the polls, and how Clinton's lead mesmerized the Bush team, and eventually left them impotent, gets a lot of attention in "Strange Bedfellows." Television coverage is dictated by polls, no matter how the TV journalists try to wrestle with

alternative means of explaining American politics to Americans who don't want to hear all that much about it.

I generally share the newspaper reporter's suspicion of television's glitz and gloss and gossamer. I am uncomfortable with sound bites, and minute-thirty picture-driven summaries of complicated matters, and all the rest of the clinkers and burrs-under-electronic-saddles that academics collect every four years.

But Tom Rosenstiel strings together a nifty and readable account of the campaign through the eyes of ABC. He makes backstage television *interesting*, no mean feat. With admirable courage, or careless hubris, colossal naiveté, or possibly crass commercial intent (it makes no difference) the network opened a lot of its meetings and the thoughts of some of its principal players to The Los Angeles Times's media writer.

Rosenstiel does to the network what Teddy White did to the Kennedy and Nixon campaigns of 1960, which opened a whole line of well-paid work for all of us hacks: he goes behind, inside, around, the various players, puts their personalities and personal agendas in the context of the overall war, and explains what we thought we already knew in a different light.

Taken together, at a combined 890 pages and fifty bucks, plus tax, the books tell you just about all you need to know.

What you collect with convincing authority from this pair of books is what seems in retrospect to be almost the inevitability of a Bush crash. Since nobody thought Ross Perot was going to become president, after the way he conducted himself over the spring and summer, we were down to the last two possibilities out of 254 million Americans. And George Bush was not going to be the last man standing. ■

David Nyhan is one of many columnists, and many associate editors, at The Boston Globe.

The Soviet Union's Death Writhings

Lenin's Tomb:

The Last Days of the Soviet Empire

David Remnick

Random House. 530 pages. \$25.

BY STEVE BOUSER

A time may come, David Remnick dares believe, when something remarkable—something so far unimaginable—will happen in Russia

"Perhaps one day," he writes, "Russia might even become somehow ordinary, a country of problems rather than catastrophes, a place that develops rather than explodes. That would be something to see."

The Russia of 1988-91 was something to see, too. And Remnick, as a Russian-speaking correspondent for *The Washington Post*, saw it. Knew most of the key people involved. Got them to give him incredibly candid interviews. Stood at barricades in the rain. Traveled all over the Soviet Union on cramped Aeroflot planes to track down people who could impart unique insights—including Mikhail Gorbachev's high school sweetheart.

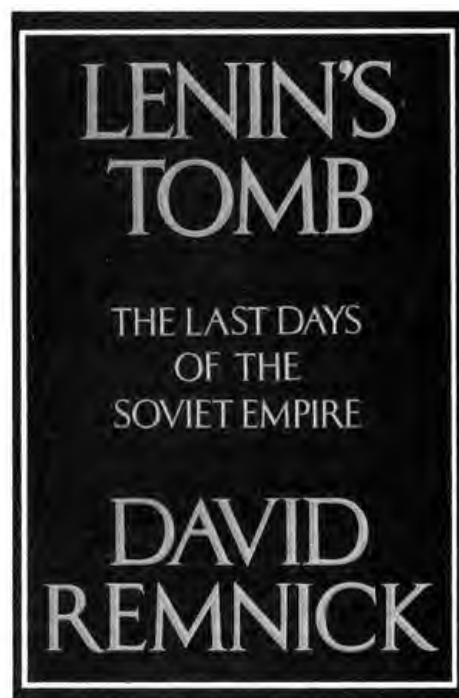
The result is "Lenin's Tomb." This is a big book and a brilliant book. And though there are ways it could have been even more brilliant, this is THE book about the most dramatic and staggeringly important events since World War II.

This is a big book and a brilliant book. And though there are ways it could have been even more brilliant, this is THE book about the most dramatic and staggeringly important events since World War II.

The Soviet Union of the 1980's was like a sleepwalker gradually awakening to the horrifying realization that he has committed hideous crimes in his sleep. A person in that wretched position would have a couple of choices. First, he could seek the redemptive healing to be found in openly confronting what he has done and seeking to change. This is the course Gorbachev chose, calling it glasnost. But other powerful forces desperately preferred the second option: to roll over and bury one's head under the comforters of denial.

Gorbachev, thank goodness, won that titanic battle. But in the process, he personally somehow managed to lose the war. "Lenin's Tomb," if it does no other services—and it performs plenty—helps the reader understand this troublingly unsatisfactory outcome.

As portrayed by Remnick, Gorbachev's Churchillian fate—summary rejection by the very people he had saved—emerges as a tragedy in the true, Shakespearean sense of that over-worked word: the epic of a great man brought low by a fundamental flaw of character. Gorbachev's fatal defect was that he ultimately lacked the imagination or courage to follow through fully on the forces he had unleashed. He could imagine Communism without Orwellian rigidity, but he couldn't imagine Russia without Communism. At a crucial moment, he lost his nerve. Others, most notably Boris Yeltsin, were only too happy to seize the reins and gallop away, leaving him coughing in the dust of history.



One writer interviewed by Remnick compares Gorbachev to Valentina Tereshkova, the first female cosmonaut

"She fainted right away and was dangling in orbit," he says, "but still managed to press the right buttons at the right time just because she was dangling in the exact right place. She took off, she dangled, and she didn't die. That was her triumph. The same with Gorbachev."

Remnick's former colleagues among the international press corps here in Moscow still speak of his writing prowess in tones of awe. Read "Lenin's Tomb" and you understand why. Telling about a meeting of restive workers, he has the nervous plant boss looking like "a game-

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Helping Us Remember How Easily We Forget

The Fifties

David Halberstam

Villard Books. 800 pages. \$27.50

BY JOHN SEIGENTHALER

The young reporter, visibly awed in the presence of David Halberstam, the celebrity journalist and author, asked him a question that must have seemed appropriately profound.

"Would you give us your philosophy as a journalist?" he said as Halberstam sat, sipping on a beer in a crowded hotel suite. "I'm looking for a sort of guide for my own career."

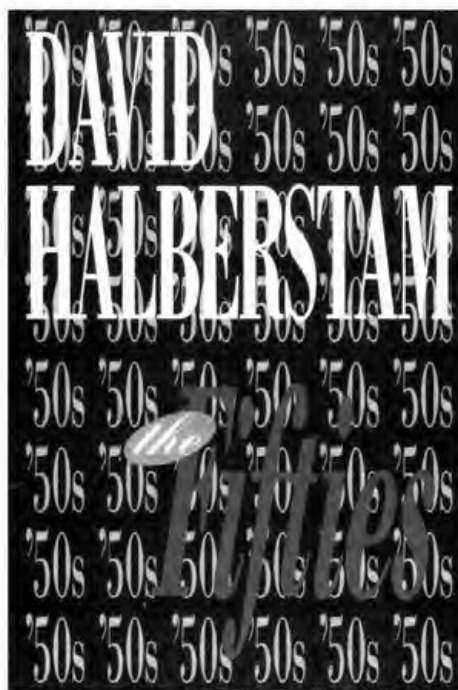
There was a flicker of a smile as Halberstam flirted with a flip response.

"A serious question deserves a serious answer," he said: "The truth is that I can't ever remember being asked before about my philosophy. And I'm not sure I want to get philosophical. But I will tell you this. I think too many reporters betray themselves, their editors and their newspapers by failing to ask the next obvious question. You must always ask the next question. And then the next. And the next."

He let that sink in, then added. "Sometimes when a reporter gets a pithy quote, he quits. The real story is in the answer to the question that wasn't asked."

He paraphrased Ernest Hemingway who contended that if a writer omits something because he doesn't know it, a hole is created in the story.

"Hemingway was young when he said it and may have forgotten it later on when he became famous," he said. "But those of us who call ourselves journalists should never forget it. You should know more about the subject of your story than anybody else in the world. The journalist who ignores that deserves to lose credibility. That's the



downside.

"But there is an upside," he continued, "and it's this: There is a wonderful sense of pride that comes with writing a story that tells people what they need to know and at the same time enlightens and perhaps even entertains them.

"That self-pride will remind you that you owe more to yourself and your own integrity than you owe to anybody else—your sources, your editors, your readers, your newspaper. And when we fail to get the whole story, or tell the whole story, we betray ourselves."

As I read Halberstam's "The Fifties," I remembered that beer-and-bullshit session two decades ago because he remains true to his "philosophy." It is strikingly obvious in this book. He immersed himself in pools of research and recollection of that 10-year period many of us recall as "the dull decade." As a result, readers of "The Fifties" find themselves swimming in streams of nostalgia and discovery, realizing that passing time and ensuing turmoil have deadened our perceptions of reality.

Yes, there is value in this book for those who did not live it. But to me, "The Fifties" is written for those who, like the author, experienced it. And because his story relied so often for its substance on press reports and interviews with working reporters, the book has special appeal for journalists.

"The Fifties" helps us remember how easily we forget.

How easily we forget how Joe McCarthy scared us out of our wits with the Red scare; or how shaken we were by the Russian space sputniks; or how frustrated we were with the seemingly endless "conflict" we came to call the Korean War; or how taken we were with Marilyn Monroe as her images shimmered across the screen; or how threatened we were by the bellicosity of Nikita Khrushchev; or how disturbed we were when we discovered that Fidel Castro was hatching a Marxist egg 90 miles south of Miami Beach; or how awed we were by the detonation of the hydrogen bomb; or how puzzled we were by the furor in Montgomery, Ala., when a Negro woman (as the press then identified her) named Rosa Parks refused to obey Jim Crow law, to move to "her place" in the back of the bus; or how upset we were when federal troops were sent to Little Rock as black students integrated Central High School; or how unprepared we were when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

We forget what blind faith we had in our government in every crisis, and how pacified we were by the often inarticulate platitudes of President Eisenhower and the officious certitudes of FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. Together they wrapped us in a security blanket of the status quo, convincing us, whatever the danger, foreign or domestic, we had the grit and morality to persevere.

Oh! And how we howled at Milton Berle. And laughed at Lucy and Desi.

How we cheered without inhibition as Bill Russell and Willie Mays and Jim Brown gave us a glimpse of the dominance black athletes would come to hold in popular sports.

How titillated we were by Grace Metalious's "Peyton Place" and Hugh Hefner's Playboy; how fascinated by Marlon Brando and James Dean.

And, oh again! How disturbed (certainly never aroused) we were by the undulating hips and unkempt haircut of Elvis. Surely, he was a passing fad.

Throughout it all, the news media's work is woven into the fabric of the story. It was a time when print was the pervasive source of news for most Americans but the impact of television was beginning to put a decisive imprint on the coverage of politics and race relations.

Halberstam recounts how Lloyd Berkner, an American scientist, attending an international gathering of his colleagues at a Russian embassy cocktail party, announced to them the launch of sputnik. "I am informed by The New York Times..." he began.

From the journalist's perspective,

He is, as Yogi Bera would say, two-fifths story teller, two-fifths investigative reporter and two-fifths interpreter.

there is an irony in that announcement. Walter Sullivan, of The Times, had been sitting on the sputnik story. Attending the gathering, he had just heard from his office that a wire service report out of Moscow announced the launch. He had been beaten on the story. To the 50 scientists at the embassy, however, it was Sullivan's scoop.

At the same time, a few in television already were realizing that the time of the tube was on us. Halberstam credits Reuven Frank of NBC as the visionary who understood that there was a potential to TV news to "create a mosaic of the country—its humanity, its diversity, its tension points." As for television's dark side, there was the TV-Quiz scan-

dal, best understood by the corruption of Charles VanDoren, heir to a distinguished academic legacy and the more prominently disgraced of the "contestants" in the fraudulent fixed shows.

Because he "knows more than anybody" about these 10 years Halberstam has helped us understand more. More about the time's politics and government. More about the corporate culture. More about the worlds of music and movies and sports and literature and the news media. More about the trends and tragedies and triumphs that touched the lives of citizens. More about the players on stage for the drama of that decade.

In 736 narrative pages loaded with interviews, anecdotes, profiles, portraits, sketches and recollections, he exhumes facts, exhausts sources and fills the holes that once worried Hemingway. He has become what he once said Theodore H. White was: "Arguably our best in-depth journalist."

And at this point a disclaimer: The author of this review has known the author of the book since the Fifties. We worked together as reporters on The Nashville Tennessean and have been friends since the last half of the decade. For some, then, this will be no more than a friendly review for an old friend. The author of the book knows, of course, that if the author of the review had loathed his work he would have trashed it here. But Halberstam won't plank down \$27.50 for a copy of it as his readers will. And so the disclaimer.

Other reviewers could have approached this assignment with more objectivity, but none with more awareness of the world of the author. I may be the only living American, including his wife, who has read all 13 of David Halberstam's books. After his first one, a novel called "The Noblest Roman," which was hard to get through, I have read him with interest and varying degrees of enthusiasm.

Since "The Best and the Brightest," Halberstam has been marked in the reading public's mind, if not in his own, as one of the rare, skilled and honest chroniclers of the times, who writes about subjects of great import and interest to the society.

In fact, he writes about subjects that grab and hold his, not society's, interest. The ghosts that haunted him after his acclaimed and controversial work as a war correspondent in Vietnam could not be exorcised until there were three books on the subject, in addition to "The Best and the Brightest."

He is not haunted by the 1950's. But he is infatuated with the time. It was, as he tells us in an author's note, the period that molded him for a professional career even as it was molding the nation for the turbulent decades to come. He is, as he says, "a child of the Fifties." It was the time of high school, college and his early formative work as a reporter in Mississippi and Tennessee.

There are those in journalism who find David Halberstam intellectually arrogant. Like John Kenneth Galbraith among economists, or Eugene McCarthy among politicians, he may have earned the honor. I mention it here because I find in that same author's note uncommon glimpses of humility. Part of the pull of the magnet that draws him back to the Fifties, he admits, is that events of great moment were upon them then—and he failed to understand their magnitude.

Thus, he revisits, researches, and re-discovers. Those, combined with his recall, work together to give us his best book. He is, as Yogi Bera would say, two-fifths story teller, two-fifths investigative reporter and two-fifths interpreter.

It is the interpreter who provides the two happenings that defined the decade's sharp departure between staid past and tumultuous future. They were, he says, the 1954 Supreme Court decision on school desegregation and Elvis Presley.

Presley? Presley! He quotes Leonard Bernstein who called Elvis "the greatest cultural force in the Twentieth Century."

Music, language, clothes all changed with Presley, Bernstein said. So, not incidentally, did our children.

Race is a rampant theme in "The Fifties." The nation had blinked for decades at lynchings of blacks by whites in

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A Flawed, but Genuine, Southern Hero

Hodding Carter:

The Reconstruction of a Racist

Ann Waldron

Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill. \$23.95.

BY BRANDT AYERS

It is personally risky to enter the time machine of biography and go back home to view your father's time with naked honesty. The place is familiar, yet strange. The crises and controversies of the time seem simultaneously antique and immediate. Long-dead heroes spring back to life—not as giants, but as flawed and vulnerable human beings who are more real and, thus, more genuinely heroic.

Newspapermen reading "Hodding Carter, Jr.: The Reconstruction of a Racist," by Ann Waldron, a Birmingham native, shouldn't go through the time warp in search of an icon to worship. The legendary editor and publisher of *The Delta Democrat Times* in Greenville, Miss., was a charming companion and a gifted writer but he wasn't perfect. He drank too much, especially in his later years. He was too quick to fight, uncompromising about his enemies of the day—failing even to acknowledge their obvious virtues.

No, the journey isn't in search of a saint but to discover the answer to a mystery. In the whole universe of Southern journalism in those days—little planets populated by pale, tepid, mannerly but frightened, flinching men—what made a handful of men like Hodding Carter, Jr., question the status quo?

Unavoidably, the journey is a personal one for this reporter. "Big" Hodding's son, Hodding Carter III, the commentator, and I were born only hours apart in the same year. Our friendship is as close and forgiving as brothers because my father, the late Col. Harry

M. Ayers, was also a Southern publisher who was considered "liberal" in the context of his times.

But these two men, Carter and Ayers, born with all the myths and prejudices that their segregated society could invent—why were they among a tiny handful of Southern publishers who didn't break and run with the mob, who spoke out for fair and equal treatment of black Southerners and, when the law changed, counseled calm obedience?

What made these small town men different?

All the essential facts of Carter's career are there, including the answer to the intriguing title, "Reconstruction of a Racist." When the Hammond, La., boy entered Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine as a 16-year-old freshman in 1923, he took with him the prejudices of his place and time. He would not speak to or even live in the same dormitory with the school's only black student.

Time and experience eventually wore away those adolescent prejudices. He lit up the sky for a couple of decades but was a spent volcano by his late 50's. The significant facts are these: marriage to the bright and beautiful Betty Werlein of New Orleans; bucking the Depression, Huey Long and the odds, the couple started daily newspapers in Hammond (pop. 6,000) and in the slightly larger small town, Greenville, Miss., which became the celebrated *Delta Democrat Times*; 1939, Nieman Fellow at Harvard; Pulitzer Prize, 1946; Honorary degree from Harvard, 1947; Through the 1950's and early 1960's, he persistently stood for common sense and fairness and bore the spiritual

What made a very few Southern publishers in that time stick it out—more than stick it out, actually love the towns and states that often hated and hurt them?

wounds inflicted by the enmity of friends and neighbors.

Ms. Waldron has delivered a good read in the fluid style she cultivated as a reporter in Atlanta, St. Petersburg, Houston and Trenton, and in several children's books. Because Mrs. Carter cooperated with the author, the book does convey some sense of a great love story, the lifelong romance of a bright, lovely and adventurous woman and a handsome, slightly dangerous, talented and strong man. If the author had worked harder at gaining the confidence of the Carters' first-born, Hodding III, she might have produced a book with stronger insights. She can be forgiven, however, for not having the intuitive understanding that would come from growing up in a publishing household like the Carters.

Consequently, she tells us everything but the answer to the mystery. What made a very few Southern publishers in that time stick it out—more than stick it out, actually love the towns and states that often hated and hurt them?

The answer may have been provided by another Southern writer, Thomas Wolfe, who wrote, "You Can't Go Home Again." What he meant in his novel was

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An 'Old Seg,' Deserving of More National Attention

Strom Thurmond & The Politics of Southern Change

Nadine Cohodas

Simon & Schuster. 574 pages, \$27.50.

BY JACK BASS

Nadine Cohodas first saw Strom Thurmond in 1979 while covering a Senate Judiciary Committee meeting for *The Congressional Quarterly*. He was almost 77 and she knew him only as an "old seg." She soon learned he is far more complex—a fact that has escaped most political reporters.

Although detractors may characterize him as a political opportunist, Thurmond emerges as a consummate politician whose closeness to his constituency allows him intuitively to make early detection of shifting political winds and act with dramatic boldness.

The book tells Thurmond's political life well, beginning with Pitchfork Ben Tillman's teaching him at age six how to shake hands. Well-researched and historically valuable, it tells of Thurmond's political odyssey from symbol of segregationist resistance to his voting in the 1980's for extension of the Voting Rights Act and for making Martin Luther King's birthday a national holiday.

The author avoids delving into the salacious lore that in South Carolina is part of the Thurmond mystique. She accepts at face value Thurmond's denial of "colored offspring," as a weekly newspaper editor headlined it while running in 1972 as a write-in candidate against Thurmond. His reputed daughter, whose special treatment at a state-supported all-black college while Thurmond was governor was well-known among her peers but goes untreated in the book, remains his "friend."

The reader learns little about the influence on him of his two young wives, his religion, or his World War II combat experience. The political story is there,

but as biography it is a less than a full portrait of the American South's most enduring politician of the 20th Century. Except for occasional glimpses contrasting Thurmond and Fritz Hollings, South Carolina's Democratic Senator since 1966, the author unfortunately fails to capture the political flavor of a state that chose a path of accommodation rather than confrontation in dealing with the civil rights revolution.

The final chapter, which covers Thurmond's acceptance of the political fruits of the civil rights struggle and the peak of his influence, as Judiciary Committee chairman from 1981-85, is the book's best. Cohodas also excellently recounts his 1948 Dixiecrat campaign, which allowed Thurmond to emerge from political obscurity. She fully records the decades of his strident rhetoric against civil rights issues and leaders. Thurmond vehemently denies that this record reflects any racism on his part.

He was elected governor in 1946 as a liberal Democrat, an irony the book captures well in a single passage. In the fall of 1947, a month before the President's Committee on Civil Rights issued its report, "To Secure These Rights," Thurmond delivered a radio address called "Let's Look at '48." He said, "We who believe in a liberal politi-

Thurmond's determined career based on ambition, energy and bold political instinct will leave a permanent mark on history.

cal philosophy, in the importance of human rights as well as property rights, in the preservation and strengthening of the economic and social gains brought about by the efforts of the Democratic Party...will vote for the election of Harry Truman and the restoration of Congress to the control of the Democratic Party, and I believe we will win."

Once committed as outspoken defender of white supremacy as the 1948 Dixiecrat Presidential candidate, however, Thurmond forever insisted his defense of Southern "customs and tradition" was a principled adherence to a legitimate constitutional doctrine of states' rights.

In 1948, however, he had declared, "There's not enough troops in the army to force the Southern people to break down segregation and admit the Negro race into our theaters, into our swimming pools, into our homes, and into our churches." Four decades later, when that statement was read back to him, he responded, "If I had to run that race again...I would word it differently."

As Cohodas says, Thurmond's attempt to portray his 1948 campaign as an "intellectual notion of states' rights" was blunted by the very statement of principles he had promised to uphold and his own words tying states' rights to the South's right to preserve segregation. As practiced, it was not separate but equal, but white supremacy."

His unrestrained rhetoric for more than three decades reinforces her analysis. In 1957 he set the Senate's all-time filibuster record, protesting a civil rights bill. In 1963, as President John Kennedy proposed to end discrimination in pub-

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He Cut Back on Fishing to Save Alaska

Extreme Conditions:

Big Oil and the Transformation of Alaska

John Strohmeier

Simon & Schuster. 287 pages. \$23

BY MATTHEW ZENCEY

Alaska is a place that taxes a writer's supply of superlatives. Not only is it the nation's largest, coldest and most sparsely settled state, it also has the nation's largest collection of national parks and wilderness, the largest number of aboriginal people who still live as hunter-gatherers and the largest supplies of oil.

When land claims by Alaska Natives stood in the way of exploiting that oil, they won the nation's largest Indian land settlement. Getting the oil from Alaska's hinterlands to market produced the largest private construction project in the world at the time, the \$8 billion trans-Alaska oil pipeline. Twelve years after the pipeline started running, Alaska suffered the nation's largest oil spill.

Thanks to oil, Alaska has the country's wealthiest state government. There is no state income or state sales tax; the state has a \$15 billion savings account—about \$26,000 for every citizen. Interest from the account allows the state to send each bona fide one-year Alaska resident an annual check for more than \$900. Senior citizens collect an extra \$3,000 a year just for sticking around.

Throw together oilmen, environmentalists and 70,000 Natives, toss \$35 billion of public money on the table, and

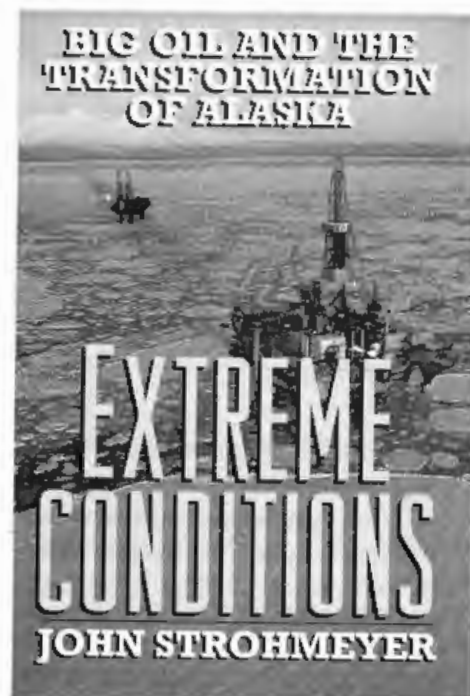
He has the veteran journalist's knack for using real people to enliven his story. Alas, he also has the veteran's fondness for the well-worn phrase.

you get some fascinating, high-stakes politics. Of Alaska's last three governors, one was nearly impeached, the second was a sometimes hot-tempered loner with nickname "High Plains Drifter" and the most recent was elected on a third-party ticket whose official platform called for seceding from the United States.

It's the kind of head-on politics that encourages rubbernecking. People who are just passing through the state slow down, gawk in disbelief and find themselves sucked in. So it was for veteran journalist John Strohmeier, Nieman class of 1953. He'd quit a crusading career as a daily journalist and come north to teach journalism and fulfill his life's dream of fishing Alaska's famed waters. After two years, he quit teaching, cut back on his fishing and launched one last crusade, exposing how Alaska's oil boom has come dangerously close to ruining what he loves about his adopted state.

Strohmeier's account is impressively researched (although he gets a few of the details wrong) and highly readable. He moves quickly across the major events (the text is an agreeably slim 269 pages), yet offers enough to substantiate his points without sinking general readers in minutia. He has the veteran journalist's knack for using real people to enliven his story. Alas, he also has the veteran's fondness for the well-worn phrase. Strohmeier is a hard-digging crusader; he does not have the feature writer's sometimes literary touch.

"Extreme Conditions" goes into great detail on the state's two big oil discoveries. In somewhat less depth, Strohmeier covers the Native land claims settle-



ment, which left Natives struggling to succeed as capitalists while preserving their traditional culture.

Strohmeier also recaps more recent stories that made national news. Most notable are the impeachment case against Governor William Sheffield in 1985 and the Exxon oil spill. Strohmeier details the mind-boggling bungling before and after the Exxon Valdez went aground and assesses the controversial multi-year cleanup.

Strohmeier's catalogue of outrages also includes less well-known, but no less interesting, stories.

Alaska's richest oil field lies within the North Slope Borough, a local government the size of Minnesota, that has only about 7,800 people, mostly Inupiat Eskimos. Not only is it the nation's largest local government in land area, it's also possibly the richest and was for a time among the most corrupt.

The borough built a high school in Barrow that cost \$80 million, or \$320,000 per student. In one year alone, the borough's capital budget amounted to nearly \$40,000 per citizen. This vortex of money attracted two of the state's most powerful lobbyists, who ingratiated themselves with borough leaders and pocketed some \$22 million in corrupt income.

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Were Reporters Just Patsies in Vietnam?

Paper Soldiers:

The American Press and the Vietnam War

Clarence R. Wyatt

W.W. Norton. 221 Pages. \$22.95.

BY JACK FOISIE

The performance of the press during the Vietnam War remains a controversy that historians continue to appraise in their efforts to determine why the bitter conflict was lost.

Author Clarence Wyatt, who teaches history at Centre College, in Danville, KY, takes a different tack from other critics of the Saigon-based correspondents.

He doesn't blame the media so much for its negative reporting which, some say, fueled the unpopularity of the war on the home front.

Instead, Wyatt blames newspaper, radio and TV reporters for abjectly submitting to "thought control" directed from the White House, State Department and the Pentagon, which fogged the true situation in Vietnam.

Thus his title, "Paper Soldiers." Wyatt believes that the press was conned by flattery, blandishment and "guidance" from the generals and diplomats and their press officers. His conclusion is that the press was sufficiently "manageable" so that formal censorship—usually a requirement in wartime—was never needed.

It is indeed a variation of the usual complaint that the press in Vietnam was anti-war. The author has focused his research on more obscure facets of the sparring between media and military to support his theme that the press was a patsy.

In fact, the author says, political-military management of the news really began during the Eisenhower Administration and developed like a cancer. He contends, and is probably correct, that the presence of nuclear weapons in the camps of the major Cold War adversaries necessitated more secrecy in the

Wyatt believes that the press was conned by flattery, blandishment and "guidance" from the generals and diplomats and their press officers.

executive branch about sensitive matters.

It was during the time when President Kennedy was in the White House that making calculated use of the press as a channel for issuing false or misleading statements was honed into art form, Wyatt states. "Disinformation," the technique was labeled.

He quotes President Kennedy as saying: "In time of war the government and the press have customarily joined in an effort, based largely on self-discipline, to prevent unauthorized disclosure to the enemy," and further defended the practice by adding: "In times of clear and present danger the courts have held that even the privileged rights of the First Amendment must yield."

By the time the Vietnam War was warring, military security, sensitive foreign policy and political sugar-coating were so intermingled in Washington that the public's right to be told the facts rather than half-truths were all but gone, Wyatt asserts. He argues that the press could not, or chose not, to challenge this serious alteration in our democratic tradition.

He acknowledges and, to his credit, details the times when reporting in Vietnam was aggressive, hard-hitting and on target, and there was bitter distrust and antagonism between journalists and

American officials. That era was mostly in the earlier years of the war.

The adversary relationship became tame when reporters got cooperation—up to a point—from the military and the American embassy. The softening-up orchestrated by the spin doctors was at the behest of President Johnson. By then there were half-a-million GIs in Vietnam and the reporter's task was to tell their story.

Army helicopters flew the reporters almost anywhere they wanted to go. Story material and ideas were crafted and distributed by the military or the U.S. Information Agency. There was the daily briefing. Many reporters "got on the team," Wyatt contends.

As one who was reporting in Vietnam through much of the war, what Wyatt says was true to a degree. But one item which was never swallowed was the daily body count figure of enemy killed. It was devised by General Westmoreland as a yardstick to show that the war was being won, that the North Vietnam soldier and the South Vietnam guerrilla were being defeated.

Body count was more fiction than fact; what company commander will risk his troops to scout a battlefield for enemy dead while enemy snipers are still active? How can bomber crewmen even estimate their victims?

"We lost two good guys and they're worth ten of those ginks," I recall a platoon sergeant saying as he messaged in his "enemy body count" for the day. By the time the total reached the Pentagon, it had been massively inflated.

Besides, what war has ever been won without driving the enemy back and occupying the new territory taken? In World War II, one more island in the Pacific wrestled from the Japanese meant a final reckoning was closer. In Europe, one more German strong point captured brought us that much closer to Berlin. That is how wars are won! It was never possible in Vietnam.

Under the political and military restraints imposed by President Johnson (and he was right: who wanted to risk that the conflict would grow into World War III?) the fighting in Vietnam could

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Feeling Good About America's Common Folk

A Sense of Place: Listening to Americans

David Lamb

Times Books. 290 pages. \$22.

BY CASSANDRA TATE

An odd thing about books that purport to depict the "real" America is that so many of them ignore the places where most Americans live: the cities. Typically, the author travels to the hinterland, where he confronts the past—personal as well as national—and celebrates the triumph of traditional values.

David Lamb doesn't depart much from the formula. In "A Sense of Place," he shuns the cities in favor of "the towns and ranches and factories where everyday Americans are living everyday lives." He muses at some length about his own background, noting that although he was born into "a life of privilege," he greatly admires "the heroism of everyday life." His encounters with the common folk have taught him that there is "a lot to feel good about in America."

Lamb describes his book as a "deliberately selective and personalized portrait of America and some of her people." It is so selective it largely ignores the 80 percent of Americans who live in urban areas. Whatever the qualities that characterize the American spirit, they apparently do not flourish among the citified. Lamb is as suspicious of city life as any 19th Century fundamentalist preacher.

The book is a collection of essays based on Lamb's travels as a correspondent for The Los Angeles Times during the last 20 years. The essays combine elements of travelogue, discourse on American history, and personal memoir. The focus is on people who live lives of Walton-esque contentment, as typified by the proprietor of a business that had been by-passed by the interstate: "Complaints? Not really. You may not make a lot of money, but you still



eat, you have a bed, you have warmth. All in all I don't know that a man needs much more than that."

Lamb is a self-described "shameless romantic" whose view of small-town life is clouded by sentimentalism. Sitting at a bar in Elko, Nevada, he decided the conversations around him were "simple, honest, unembellished" and somehow more American than the "murmurings of the city." I lived in Elko for three years, and I can personally testify that the habitués of that particular bar are no more free of posturing and pretense than the denizens of any Hollywood watering hole. This is the same town Lamb described as a place where no one takes his ten-gallon hat off at the dinner table. I never saw anyone sit at a dinner table in Elko in a ten-gallon hat. In fact, the only people I ever saw wearing ten-gallon hats were tourists.

Lamb is more clear-eyed in looking at the history of some of the places he visited. He makes particularly effective use of historical themes in writing about Tombstone, Arizona—home of the O.K. Corral. He notes that Tombstone survives today by selling the violence of its

past to people who decry the violence of the present. Thousands of tourists visit Tombstone every year, "pausing to read historical markers that tell who got killed where, and while they may damn the lawlessness that grips their own hometowns, they commemorate what happened in Tombstone as confirmation of the daring and toughness in the American spirit." Lamb also points out that revisionist historians believe the so-called Wild West was less violent than the cities of industrializing America.

For the most part, Lamb works carefully to separate historical myth from reality. In "Lewis and Clark Revisited," however, he depicts Sacajawea as a heroic figure who "guided the explorers from North Dakota to the Pacific and

Lamb is a self-described "shameless romantic" whose view of small-town life is clouded by sentimentalism.

back." Although this view was common in the school books of the 1950's, it greatly exaggerates Sacajawea's contributions to the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Some of the most interesting essays in the book are grouped under the heading "Lessons of History." The topics include the Nez Perce Indian War of 1877, the forced evacuation of 881 natives of the Aleutian islands during World War II and the little-known execution of 14 German prisoners of war at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, near the end of the war.

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A Funny, Sad Look at a Black Reporter's Uneasy Role

**Volunteer Slavery:
My Authentic Negro Experience**

Jill Nelson

Noble Press. 243 pages. \$21.95.

BY RENEÉ GRAHAM

My friend tells the story this way:

Six years ago, he interviewed for a reporter's position on the metro desk of *The Washington Post*. It was the only job he ever talked about, the only place he ever wanted to work. When he arrived, he endured a rugged round of meetings with editors, running a gauntlet of glass offices and power suits. At the end of a grueling day, he was invited out by a group of black women reporters for drinks and inside dish about *The Post*.

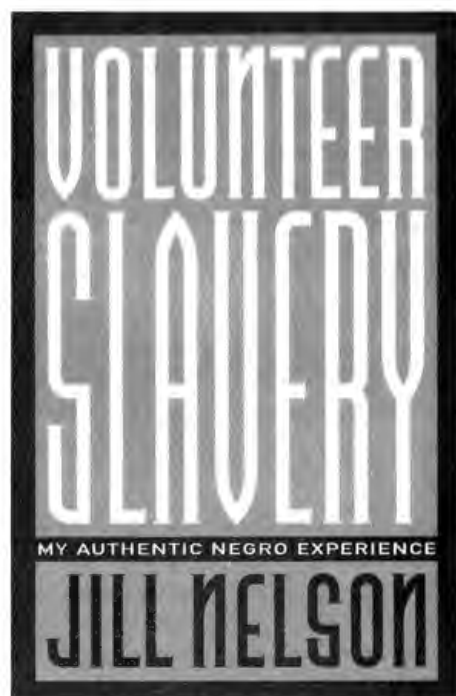
Even before the first round was ordered, the women, all veteran journalists, ripped into a litany of horrors about life at *The Post*. Accept the title "Washington Post Staff Writer" they warned, and be prepared to relinquish your soul as an African American. One of the women was particularly adamant. Placing a hand on top of my friend's for emphasis, she stared directly into his eyes and hissed, "Don't come here!"

The woman was Jill Nelson, and perhaps this was advice she should have heeded when she accepted a job at *The*

Post just a year before. It would have saved Nelson a lot of anger and irritation, but would have made impossible "Volunteer Slavery: My Authentic Negro Experience," her bitter, brilliant book about her years at *The Washington Post*. She changes no names to protect the innocent, because in Nelson's world, there are no innocents. Yet "Volunteer Slavery" is more than a snippy swipe at a former employer. At turns laugh-out-loud funny and painfully sad, it is a thought-provoking, disquieting look at the uneasy place of African-Americans in the corporate world.

Nelson, now 41, worked for *The Post* for four tumultuous years, mainly for the newspaper's Sunday magazine, before quitting in 1990. She was recruited by the paper after 12 years as an award-winning freelance writer for other publications, a career choice that gave Nelson much satisfaction, but little financial security. The year before Nelson joined *The Post*, she earned \$20,000—hardly sufficient for her daughter Misu, whose patience had grown thin living in "culturally rich and genteel poverty." Tired of bohemian life, Misu wanted to be bourgeois, a Cosby kid (or more accurately, a Huxtable), replete with fancy clothes, big house and a car.

Nelson could sympathize with her daughter. Nelson herself was raised on Manhattan's tony Upper West Side, the daughter of a dentist and a librarian. But Nelson was never sold on *The Post*. Everyone, including retired editor Ben Bradlee (whom Nelson describes as "a short, gray, wrinkled gnome") seemed



more interested in Nelson than her work. Her interview felt like a popularity contest. To Nelson, Bradlee only seemed impressed when she mentioned spending summers at Martha's Vineyard. Such an association, Nelson concluded, anointed her acceptable in the white world, i.e. a good Negro. As Nelson writes, "Simply by evoking residence on Martha's Vineyard, I have separated wheat from chaff, belongers from aspirers, rebellious chip-on-the-shoulder Negroes from middle-class, responsible ones."

Few emerge unscathed in Nelson's 243-page memoir, including the author herself and her family. Such unvarnished honesty helps give the book its veracity. She does not polish recollections of her parents' divorce, her father's infidelity, siblings' drug problems or her own bouts with substance abuse. She is frank about her discomfort with being privileged and solidly middle class, as well as her misguided attempts through dress, manner, speech and politics to be more "authentically black." She details a bizarre sexual encounter with a mortician-boyfriend in a funeral home—next to a corpse with a Jheri Kurl.

She is on target when she calls the National Association of Black Journalists' annual convention "a mass psychotic episode, in which over a thou-

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Her lament rings familiar for many blacks in predominantly white organizations, wedged between the community and their careers in corporations, which want them to be black so long as they're not too black.

An Ornerly Small Town Editor's Revels

The Hard Way:

The Odyssey of a Weekly Newspaper Editor

Alexander B. Brook

Bridge Works Publishing Co. 305 pages. \$19.95

BY LOREN GHIGLIONE

In the animal kingdom of humanity—defense lawyers as preening peacocks, bankers as cold-blooded boa constrictors—journalists qualify as dogs. Lapdogs, watchdogs and, in the case of editor-owners of weekly newspapers, underdogs.

One especially ornerly, anti-establishment underdog, Alexander B. Brook, purchased in 1958 with a \$30,000 loan the broken-down 1,254-circulation Kennebunk (Maine) Star.

Brook left behind the life of a Wall Street business executive not to play Norman Rockwell-style country editor, the beloved Rotarian who has a friendly word for children and chicaners alike, but to create a crusading weekly, eventually judged one of the best community newspapers in the country.

He crusaded regularly and relentlessly against—the country's spendthrift Community Action Program, for dredging the estuary harbor of the Kennebunk River, against building a motel on the undeveloped portion of the harbor.

As an antidote, perhaps, to loans called by banks, to advertising withheld by angry merchants and to harrumphs muttered by long-time subscribers, Brook reveled in (b)rash confrontations.

To editors at a press association convention, he advanced the novel notion of subjective, not objective, news stories "carefully dressed, like Huck, to make themselves look harmless." He labeled objective reporting a myth, a "eunuchorn."

To a minister who requested a "spiritual page for press releases," like religion pages in other weeklies, Brook

said no. "We never seemed to have enough room for all the stories of more general interest," he explained to the minister. "I'd continue to do my best according to my editorial judgment, but I doubted that my best was going to satisfy him. He didn't challenge me there."

To a wealthy woman who insisted on publication of a press release about her pug winning best of breed at a Connecticut dog show, Brook responded that he was "best of bunch, bananawise" and hung up the telephone.

Friends of the mutt matron called to cancel their subscriptions in retaliation. Brook then began publishing on the front page the initials T.H.W.T.B., which stood for "The Hard Way's The Best."

A survivor of a tiny, impoverished daily—wags call our News a weakly—has to applaud Brook's candor about the hardscrabble business of community newspapering. long-overdue payables, years without libel insurance, dependence on job printing, staffers who, about the time they learn the craft, leave. "The Hard Way" is the perfect antidote for those who dream of dropping out of the urban rat race and then of publishing a paper in Podunk and living happily ever after.

Brook, a storyteller who hates formula writing, occasionally revels in the fun of language. Dependent on a newly installed Premier, he watches with satisfaction as the second-hand press runs The Star for the first time. "Beauty was in the eye of the beholder." Elsewhere he writes, "We walked a business typerope."

But Brook's writing also disappoints. Too often he relies on lengthy regurgitations of Star editorials and articles. He peppers his prose with \$10 words—chthonian, caparisoned, palimpsest, dithyrambic and lepidopteran. He focuses on himself, virtually ignoring the other members of the team that made The Star such a success.

The strengths of Brook's subjective journalism also raise ethical questions that would have benefited from more thorough discussion. Brook made the news—as a local powerbroker who, for example, chaired the local Harbor Committee—and then reported the news. He also plumped for pols. "Within three years," Brook writes, "it would become virtually impossible to gain local office without Star backing."

Brook rightly contrasts the weekly's thorough coverage of Yorkers to the coverage of New Yorkers by that city's newspaper of record: "If The Times had recorded the doings of New Yorkers in as great a detail... each day it would have contained about 2,000 pages and weighed more than 25 pounds."

Brook describes himself after 20 years of community journalism as "54, divorced, without a home." He decides to sell one of his few assets, his stock in The Star. The paper goes for \$1.6 million and eventually winds up in The New York Times chain. But "The Hard Way" makes clear that readers of small-town newspapers would best be served by independent editor-owners. ■

Loren Ghiglione is Editor of The News, Southbridge, MA.

Lenin's Tomb

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show host in a bad suit." Describing the spring thaw in muddy Moscow, he quotes a Russian friend as comparing the bleak spectacle to the sight of "an old whore disrobing." And to anyone who has ever been there, his description of a visit to a party secretary's office rings like a bell: "There was the overpowering smell of disinfectant, bad tobacco, and wet wool. This was the winter smell of Russia indoors, the smell of the woman in front of you on line, the smell of every elevator. Near an abandoned newsstand, dozens of overcoats hung on long rows of pegs, somber and dark, lightly steaming, like nags in a stable."

Remnick can toss off these jewels with such seeming effortlessness that you wonder why there aren't more of them. Instead the reader has to content himself with happening onto one only every now and then, like the last few Easter eggs in a hunt.

The author's subject is so big that it sometimes gets away from him. There are too many biographical digressions about too many dissidents, whom the reader despairs of keeping straight. The book as a whole is too episodic and too much like a collection of feature stories and character sketches—which, in part, it is. There are also too much damaging evidence of careless editing. A crack about the Soviet Union as "Upper Volta with missiles," for example, amuses on the first mention but not on the fourth.

But once those nits have been duly picked, what remains is absolutely compelling reading: the death writhings of a mighty empire as vividly captured by a master journalist. "Lenin's Tomb" is must reading for anyone attempting to understand this amazing country, which still shows no signs of growing even remotely ordinary. ■

Steve Bouser, editor of The Salisbury (NC) Post, wrote this review while in Russia on a six-week consultancy arranged by the Center for Foreign Journalists.

Fifties

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the segregated South, but the murder of young Emmett Till and acquittal of his killers were a momentous shock. Once they were judged not guilty, the murderers told their story for money to a national magazine. There was widespread outrage.

It was then that Halberstam went to Mississippi to begin his career as a reporter. His book provides a vivid reflection on the contrasting conduct of a brutal, bumbling rural sheriff, H. C. Strider, and a savvy, sensitive Southern-born journalist, John Popham of *The New York Times*.

Then came the emergence of Martin Luther King, Jr. as a national figure with the Montgomery bus boycott. A young broadcast reporter named Frank McGee, later to become NBC's prime anchor and the popular host of the "Today Show," distinguished himself. And Grover Hall, the editor of *The Montgomery Advertiser*, disgraced himself.

Later, at Little Rock's Central High School, President Eisenhower ordered in federal troops after Governor Orval Faubus had led his state into a posture of violent defiance. Once more media coverage depicted the portent of change. Harry Ashmore, the resident editor of *The Arkansas Gazette*, whose talent and courage won a Pulitzer Prize, represented the very best of what local print journalism could offer in the face of community crisis. Some of the nation's best reporters rushed to Little Rock to cover events. John Popham and Claude Sitton for *The Times*, Wallace Westfeldt, Halberstam's colleague at *The Tennessean*, Karl Fleming of *Newsweek*, Bob Bird of *The Chicago Tribune* and Bob Baker of *The Washington Post*.

But it was a relatively junior NBC television correspondent, John Chancellor, whose work had the most impact. And of all the reporters there, Chancellor, the most easily identified because his face was on television every night, was most often the target of racist hostility.

On the night Walter Sullivan, *The*

Times science writer, was in Washington whispering about sputnik in the ear of Berkner, Chancellor and Ashmore were in the latter's newspaper office at *The Gazette*, when the wire report from Moscow came in. Chancellor realized the significance of the story—men would go to the moon. "Yes," replied Ashmore, "and here we are in Little Rock fighting the Civil War again."

As the time warp of racism and the transition in the news media in the fifties were to set the scene for the years ahead, so was there prologue in virtually every field of endeavor and enterprise: in the politics that produced John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon and the age of televised elections; in government where McCarthyism, though finally repudiated, continued to influence a national Cold War mentality; in entertainment where guilt was beginning to give way to a period of permissiveness; in international affairs where Korea gave no lessons on preventing Vietnam; in business where entrepreneurs like Kimmons Wilson of Holiday Inn, the MacDonald Brothers and Ray Kroc of McDonald's, William Levitt of Levittown, Eugene Ferkauf of Korvettes were at work, even the stirrings of the feminist movement are to be found when it dawned on a young woman named Betty Goldstein Friedan that she was a victim of discrimination. It all had roots in the Fifties.

In "The Fifties," Halberstam uncovers the roots. The book is marred, however, by the failure of the publisher, Villard Books, to hire an editor who can spell or to provide a computer program that can correct spelling. The typos are often enough to get on a reader's nerves. And after about page 400 the index is a mess.

With this book Halberstam, the journalist, established credentials as a historian. If Lord Acton, who had one word—"don't"—for those who would write history, had read "The Fifties" it would have been a different word. "Do," he would have told Halberstam. ■

John Seigenthaler is chairman, Freedom Forum First Amendment Center in Nashville.

Hodding Carter

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that, after having seen the wider world, you can still love the unique virtues of your hometown while being honest about its narrow loyalties and petty prejudices.

My Dad first saw the wider world in 1901 as a teenager, the son of a medical missionary in China, Dr. T. W. Ayers. Witnessing a father ministering to the souls and bodies of what Americans at the time considered an inferior race must have profoundly influenced the character development of the son.

Like Dad, Hodding Carter developed a wider world-view through international travel. He lived in Cairo during World War II as editor of *Yank*, an armed forces magazine. In 1952, on a State Department tour of Southeast Asia, he wrote his wife, Betty, "This is for your information only, but I have lost whatever color consciousness I brought along with me."

The two men were from different generations (Dad was 22 years older). Having managed the successful campaign of a fellow townsman, the progressive Gov. Thomas E. Kilby, Dad was an established figure in Alabama before Hodding Carter graduated from Bowdoin College.

But Carter was the more gifted and prolific writer—energetic, poetic, often pyrotechnically combative—a 1946 Pulitzer Prize winner for editorials. One, headlined, "Our Honor Roll Is a Monument to Intolerance and Timidity," was inspired by white objections to listing black veterans on the town's World War II honor roll.

He was a national figure, thrust into that orbit by a furious explosion of 20 books, countless articles in national magazines and speeches all over the nation. Yet, nothing touched him or my Dad more than the people and events close to home. They loved the people of Alabama and Mississippi, eccentricities and all; and they despaired of the cruelty and prejudice of which their people were also capable.

Carter attracted meaner enemies, and thus had to become a hard counter-puncher. A stunning example was a front-page editorial answering a vote in the state legislature denouncing him for a 1955 article on the White Citizens' Councils in *Look* magazine. Informed of the legislative action while on a hunting trip, he dictated this editorial on the spot:

"By a vote of 89 to 19 the Mississippi House of Representatives has resolved the editor of this newspaper into a liar because of an article I wrote... If this charge were true it would make me well qualified to serve with that body. It is not true. So... I herewith resolve by a vote of 1 to 0 that there are 89 liars in the State Legislature, beginning with Speaker Silvers and working way on down to Rep. Eck Windham of Prentiss whose name is fittingly made up of the words 'wind' and 'ham...' Meanwhile, those 89 character mobbers can go to hell collectively or singly and wait there until I back down. They needn't plan on returning."

To be a small-town editor at a time when the social axis was turning upside down took a special brand of courage.

As this reporter wrote on April 7, 1972, the birthday of Hodding III and two days after Hodding Jr.'s death:

"It is easy to export moral concern, visiting scorn on people the editor will never meet and upon conditions he will never experience. Carter's views were expressed in the context of a small Delta town, Greenville. He was close enough for his enemies to reach. He had something to lose but never flinched from his duty."

Yet, both men were happy to be active citizens of the towns they loved, doing their civic chores. As the planter-poet, William Alexander Percy, Hodding Carter's patron, put it, "It isn't national leaders we need as much as men of goodwill in each of the little towns of America. So try to keep Greenville a decent place... The total of all the Greenvilles will make the kind of country we want or don't want." ■

H. Brandt Ayers is Editor and Publisher of The Anniston Star in Anniston, Al. He is a 1968 Nieman Fellow.

Paper Soldiers

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have been stalemated for longer than it was.

But there never could have been victory.

Politically, neither President Johnson nor President Nixon could have made a substantially larger commitment of military might. And our ally in Saigon, the South Vietnam government, never demonstrated a desire to accept the sacrifices needed to win; indeed, its rival leaders, political and military, sabotaged each other's efforts throughout the struggle.

As for Wyatt's suggestion that the press overall was too puny to need to be censored, there were ground rules that reporters agreed to observe, although some were vague and subject to interpretation—as much for news managers as for reporters. The primary reason for not instituting formal censorship during the Vietnam war was the concern of Washington that the Saigon government would insist that it provide the censors, and thus gain control over the foreign press as well as its own newspapers, which already were submissive.

Author Wyatt's warning of the trend within the executive branch to wrap foreign policy and political sensitivity into military security requirements is the value of this book.

As Herbert Mitgang of *The New York Times* has written in his own review of "Paper Soldiers," "the strongest reporters did manage to get most of the military (if not the political) facts out to their readers and listeners, far more so in Vietnam than later in the news-controlled battle areas in Panama, Grenada and the Persian Gulf." ■

Jack Foisie, a Stars and Stripes combat correspondent in World War II, opened the Saigon Bureau of The Los Angeles Times in 1964. Later he covered South East Asia from Bangkok, with much of his time spent in Saigon. He is a 1947 Nieman Fellow and lives in retirement on an Oregon farm.

'Old Seg'

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lic accommodations after viewing the dogs and fire hoses used against civil rights demonstrators in Birmingham, Thurmond called it "dictatorship over American business...to appease the Negro vote bloc."

When Congress passed the Civil Rights Act in 1964, Thurmond said, "This is a tragic day for America, when Negro agitators, spurred on by Communist enticements to promote racial strife, can cause the United States Senate to be steam-rolled into passing the worst, most unreasonable and unconstitutional legislation that has ever been considered by the Congress."

Thurmond said in 1965 that passage of the Voting Rights Act "shows that [Martin Luther] King must always have an agitation objective lest he end up in the street one day without a drum to beat or a headline to make." When the Voting Rights Act came up for renewal in 1974, Thurmond called it "unfortunate that the Congress ever enacted such an unconstitutional piece of legislation."

On another level, however, Thurmond's determined career based on ambition, energy, and bold political instinct will leave a permanent mark on history. As "Dixiecrat" candidate for President (Cohodas traces the origin of the term to a telegraph editor in Charlotte who couldn't squeeze "States Rights Democrats" into a headline), Thurmond in 1948 broke loose the Democratic "solid South." He won four states—South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana—that had voted for every Democratic Presidential candidate since the compromise of 1877 had ended Reconstruction.

Although he lost a Senate race in 1950, Thurmond became in 1954 the only person ever elected to the Senate as a write-in candidate. Ten years later he led the Deep South's Dixiecrat element into the Republican ranks, switching parties to support Barry Goldwater after his vote against the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

In 1968 Thurmond played kingmaker in Miami to nominate Richard Nixon, then led the charge in the South to blunt George Wallace's third-party effort. With the help of former key aides Harry Dent under President Nixon and Lee Atwater under Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush, Thurmond played a critical role in developing and shaping the Republican Southern strategy.

After his protégé, U.S. Representative Albert Watson, lost a 1970 campaign for governor that even some Republicans characterized as "racist," Thurmond recognized the changed political reality at home and became the first South Carolina congressman to hire a black aide. He hired the South Carolina director of the Voter Education Project, publicized grants he got for black mayors who subsequently endorsed him for reelection, and extended his legendary record of constituent service to black citizens.

On the Senate Judiciary Committee, Thurmond led the assault that resulted in the resignation of Abe Fortas from the Supreme Court after President Lyndon Johnson had picked him to succeed Earl Warren as chief justice. As Judiciary chairman for four years, Thurmond presided over Reagan's conservative revamping of the federal judiciary.

The author doesn't get to the essence of Thurmond's aura in South Carolina. As a political reporter there two decades ago, I got insight from a textile worker who told me he was voting in 1972 for Strom Thurmond "because he stands up for what he believes in, even when he's wrong."

In the end, Thurmond says, "...Times change. When I grew up the black people were just all servants. Now they've developed and developed and come up and we've got to acknowledge people when they deserve to be acknowledged, and the black people deserve to be acknowledged."

The overall story suggests Thurmond deserves more attention than the national press has given him. As Cohodas demonstrates, he is much more than an "old seg," the image created by cover-

age that focused on him as an ultraconservative senator shaped by his Dixiecrat past.

Thurmond's story contains two seemingly conflicting elements of consequence that the press essentially has ignored. One is his ultimate acceptance of an accommodation to the South's racial and political transformation in the last quarter century. The other element is Thurmond's role as a major actor in shaping the politics not only of the region, but also of the nation. Failure to cover these elements contributes to a flawed national perception of the impact made by forces of change in the South and a blurred understanding of the historical roots of the Republican Party's abandonment of Abraham Lincoln's heritage. ■

Jack Bass, 1966 Nieman Fellow, is Professor of Journalism at the University of Mississippi. His most recent book, "Taming the Storm: The Life and Times of Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr.," was published in January by Doubleday.

Sense of Place

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However, this section also includes an essay about Lamb's experiences as a prep student at Exeter, culminating with his expulsion for gambling during the last half of his senior year. It's not really clear what "lessons of history" can be gleaned from all this: Cultivate vices when you are young? Always remember whether three of a kind beats a straight?

The book is entertaining and even illuminating at times, but it ultimately fails in its mission to capture the "sense of place" that defines the American experience. In the end, the reader learns more about David Lamb than about whatever it is that makes Americans different from people of other nationalities. ■

Cassandra Tate, Nieman Fellow 1977, is a born-again academic, completing a doctorate in American history at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Extreme Conditions

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In this richly detailed account of Alaska's politics, Strohmeyer gets some details wrong. He refers to North Pole as a borough (it's a city). He pegs the cost of research and studies on the Susitna dams, a mega-hydro boondoggle that was never built, at \$350 million; press reports when the project was canceled said \$145 million.

He credits the most successful Native corporation with good luck for having oil and gas on the lands it selected under the land claims act. In fact, much of the firm's oil and gas income came via a shrewd land trade in which it gained rights to already-producing fields from a bumbling state agency.

Strohmeyer also jabs unnamed environmentalists for ignoring ruinous logging practices by Native corporations. The greens might have come late, but they didn't ignore the abuses. The Southeast Alaska Conservation Council spent a good deal of time in the late 1980's campaigning for a tougher state law to regulate Native logging.

It's a credit to Strohmeyer that his message is so contrary to that of the patron whose generosity brought him to Alaska. When he was still publisher of *The Anchorage Times*, Robert Atwood endowed the journalism chair Strohmeyer held at the University of Alaska Anchorage. For much of his 50 year career, Atwood was the pre-eminent pro-development voice in Alaska. Like any good journalist, though, Strohmeyer calls 'em as he sees 'em—and he's clearly sympathetic to the conservation values that never held much sway with Atwood.

Is Alaska as badly run as Strohmeyer suggests?

I'd say there's plenty of reason to worry, but things are not as desperate as someone who read only "Extreme Conditions" might conclude.

The book passes quickly over two of the state's big success stories, the Alaska Lands Act, which Congress passed in 1980, and the state's oil money savings account, the Permanent Fund. The lands act created or expanded nearly 30 na-

Who Come First, Tourists or Natives?

At the Hand of Man: Peril and Hope for Africa's Wildlife

Raymond Bonner

Alfred A. Knopf. 322 pages. \$24.

Raymond Bonner's inquiry into programs to save Africa's wild life, especially the elephant, should give environmental reporters pause.

Instead of accepting the words of wildlife organizations—as environmental reporters tend to do—Bonner weighed their actions and found neo-colonialism. With scarcely any attempt to hear from native Africans, these organizations, controlled by elite wealthy Americans, such as Russell E. Train, and Britons, such as Prince Philip, have succeeded in establishing programs that favor tourists over Africa's people.

Underlying this policy is the belief that Africa's wildlife belongs to the en-

tire world, not to the countries where they live, and that Africans would not preserve the animals even though they are a valuable resource.

Bonner questions this belief by pointing to successful preservation programs in southern Africa in which people and animals are integrated. Animal population is maintained, farmers are protected, poaching is drastically reduced and native craft industries are encouraged.

The reader may not be persuaded by Bonner but cannot help being moved by a young Maasai warrior who, after reading a sign in a lodge in the Serengeti asking for help to save wild dogs, says: "They care only about the animals; they say nothing about the people. They could have said there are also people, the Maasai, who were living here for many years. They are living outside now and they are suffering. They don't have water. Even they need help. Not just the wild animals." ■ —rhp

tional parks and refuges, much to the consternation of the pro-development crowd that worries Strohmeyer. He does give the state credit for creating the Permanent Fund, now worth \$15 billion, but it plays only a cameo role in his narrative. As is natural for a journalist, Strohmeyer has devoted his energy to exposing failures, not reporting successes.

He's right to worry that Alaska's state government is now run by people with an almost mystical affection for resource development. Their vision of development often includes a public subsidy, and often excludes comparable enthusiasm for serious environmental safeguards.

But the current governor, Walter Hickel, represents a minority within Alaska; he was elected with only 39% of the vote. And the federal government, which is the state's largest landowner by far, is now run by people at the other end of the spectrum. This doesn't sit well with the Hickel types, who generally view the federal government as a

nefarious absentee landlord. They complain that the feds pander to environmentalists in the Lower 48 who want to see the state reduced to some cutesy tourist theme park.

As an Alaskan, I view this tension between the two levels of government as healthy. Alaska is a state, and within the state sphere, it has the right to make its own decisions, much as I disagree with many of them. As to the supposedly heavy hand of the feds, I have no problem with the idea that all Americans can have a major say over much of Alaska's future.

But here in Alaska, that puts me in the minority—which is one of the things John Strohmeyer is worried about. ■

Matt Zencey, Nieman Fellow 1993, is Assistant Editorial Page Editor of The Anchorage Daily News.

Three Lessons From le Carré

The Night Manager

John le Carré

Alfred A. Knopf. 429 pages \$24.

Journalists can learn three important lessons from that master of the spy novel, John le Carré.

The first lesson is that an effective way to hold a reader is through narration. Like his previous spy thrillers, "The Night Manager" keeps the reader's nose riveted in the book. Somewhere along the line, in dealing with momentous affairs of state, reporters and editors seem to have forgotten where the word "story" in the journalistic jargon came from. If we would be more alert to the possibilities of narration we would find that understanding, as well as readership, would rise.

The second lesson is that a writer need not tell all the first time around. "The Night Manager" does not really end the story. Le Carré stops on Page

429 but you can bet that we will hear more about the hero, Jonathan Pine, and the villain, Richard Onslow Roper. If a fiction writer can tell a story in pieces, why should a journalist complain about the necessity of telling a story as it unfolds, day by day?

The third lesson from le Carré is that a writer should know when a subject is dead. With the Cold War over, le Carré has turned to drug smuggling and illegal arms sales, without abandoning his knowledge of British intelligence. Lazy editors and reporters should take note. The old way of approaching the news risks turning the reader off.

Of course there are vast differences between writing a novel and a news article; nevertheless, the lessons are sound. ■ —rhp

Nelson addresses the same issue: "Once inside, with our good jobs, professional profiles and tennis racquets, most of us still could not be trusted. We were, after all, black first, members of the corporate family second. Anything less than perfect behavior was construed as proof that as people of African descent, we just would never fit in, didn't have the intellectual equipment to ever fully integrate into the corporate culture, were basically subversive and thus should be viewed with suspicion."

Nelson never really fit in. Many of her stories were either butchered, buried or exiled to an uncertain computer hell, a bottomless pit for stories that will never see print. Nelson contends she was barred from doing her best work, and certainly her leadership of the newspaper's union certainly didn't endear her to management. She eventually wound up on the metro desk, covering the drug trial of former Mayor Marion Barry. She was the only black reporter assigned to the story, but was relegated to off-the-news features, "the colored writer writing 'color' pieces," Nelson writes.

Granted, some of Nelson's problems at The Post were likely caused by her transition from independent freelancer to staff reporter. And she is definitely a woman with an attitude, one not to be trifled with or regarded lightly. But, one comes away from "Volunteer Slavery"—a condition Nelson describes as "any job that is oppressive as opposed to freeing, limiting as opposed to expanding"—with the unsettling feeling that Nelson's experiences were not unique at The Post, or, for that matter, many other corporations. Shortly before Nelson quit The Post, she told a therapist, "If I don't get away I'll go berserk, get a machine gun, go into the office, and go off."

With "Volunteer Slavery," Nelson does indeed go off—with eloquence, humor and aching truths about the fierce tax many blacks pay to play the corporate game. ■

Renée Graham is a staff writer for the Living! Arts section of the Boston Globe.

Volunteer Slavery

continued from page 73

sand African-Americans meet annually to purge our collective repressed rage and to affirm one another's visibility," and does not hesitate to zap the incessant posturing, posing and preening of the yearly get-together.

But Nelson rightly reserves a good portion of her firepower for The Post. Shortly after Nelson joined the newspaper, the magazine's first revamped issue featured a cover story about a brutally violent young black male. In Washington, a city overwhelmingly black, the reaction was swift condemnation. As the only black writer at the magazine, Nelson was torn between the newspaper and the black community's ire.

For three months, black protesters marched outside The Post. In the streets, Nelson was chastised for working for "those racist dogs," as one angry black man screamed. In the news-

room, white colleagues insisted she answer for the "whining" black community, without considering whether the article may have been insensitive or fueled stereotypes.

Three months into her tenure, Nelson found herself caught between unyielding sides.

Her lament rings familiar for many blacks in predominately white organizations, wedged between the community and their careers in corporations, which want them to be black so long as they're not too black. At times, "Volunteer Slavery" recalls Zora Neale Hurston's essay "What White Publishers Won't Print." More than 50 years ago, commenting on the plight of educated blacks in a predominately white world, Hurston wrote, "A college-bred Negro still is not a person like other folks, but an interesting problem, more or less."

OMBUDSMAN

Reports from 5 Newspapers On Coverage of Gays

1. Are There Two Reasonable Views Or Is There Just One?

HENRY McNULTY
Reader Representative
The Hartford Courant

When President Clinton threw open the White House to ordinary Americans on the day after his inauguration, most of the hundreds of visitors took the opportunity to speak a few words to him. According to *The New York Times*, he "heard again and again about AIDS and gay rights, more than any other issues."

That's just one bit of evidence that the gay story is an important one for the media. And Clinton's open house took place even before the issue of gays in the military led to a strident national debate, or the April 25 march in Washington drew hundreds of thousands of gay-rights protesters.

With the new focus on gays, editors and reporters are discovering that in terms of reader reaction, covering this subject is unlike any other type of news reporting.

To be sure, readers find some of the same problems with stories involving gay and lesbian issues as they do with any other reporting: unfairness, inaccuracy, incompleteness, insensitivity, and all the rest. But in some ways, this topic

is unique.

One of the primary problems has to do with reader complaints that gay issues are reported at all.

Some people who would not object to full, prominent reporting on the other hot-button topics of our time—abortion, gun control, and racial matters, for instance—draw the line at coverage of gay-rights rallies, AIDS demonstrations, and features involving the lifestyles of homosexual couples.

As John Silber, president of Boston University, told a *Newsday* columnist in late 1992, "Decent parents don't even discuss [with their children] the possibility that there are homosexuals"—and, by extension, decent newspapers don't discuss gay issues with their readers. News stories, even those with balance and apparently without bias, are therefore seen by some as taking a point of view: merely to report about gays is to promote the homosexual cause.

Often, complaints from readers have to do with photographs, rather than text reporting. In part, this has to do with the "one-picture" nature of much news photography. Photographers and their editors always look for the single telling image, the one photo that sums up an issue or event. When it comes to

gays and lesbians, this often turns out to be a picture of two men or two women hugging, kissing, or holding hands—in other words, photos that say "gay." These are images that more than a few readers say they find offensive.

Much of the time, readers voice concern about the effect such coverage will have on children. As John Silber noted, some of these simply believe that discussions of homosexuality have no place either in the family or in the family newspaper.

But for others, the real issues are timing and control. I have heard from scores of parents who say they do want to discuss gay issues with their children, but perhaps at age 9, not at age 6, and certainly not at 8 o'clock on a Sunday morning when the child holds up the newspaper and asks, "Mommy, why are these two men kissing?"

That was the case in late June 1992, when my newspaper, *The Hartford Courant*, profiled an openly gay state legislator in the Sunday roto magazine Northeast. Hundreds of readers complained. Many found the entire story distasteful, but what generated most of the calls and letters was Northeast's cover. It was a photograph of the legislator, who had just publicly announced his homosexuality, kissing a former lover on the mouth.

This picture showed an obviously homosexual act. But readers also com-

plain about newspaper pictures of gays and lesbians when the context is made clear only in the caption. For example, on April 26, 1993, The Courant ran a photo of two men hugging during the gay rights demonstration in Washington. Were it not for the caption, a reader might think these were friends mourning the death of a loved one or brothers embracing after a long separation (that is, non-controversial subjects). But readers complained just the same.

As important as these issues are, the coverage of gays and lesbians is influenced most of all by an unanswered question: what kind of story are we dealing with?

Although the details of individual news items may vary greatly, almost all reporting involves following a series of patterns or models—that is, predictable ways of approaching a story.

For instance, most stories about airplane crashes are, at their core, essentially similar, because they fit the “plane-crash story” model. Ditto with coverage of ball games, elections, urban unrest, Congressional hearings, cases of product tampering, the deaths of prominent people and almost everything else that may cross an editor’s desk. Although reporters don’t tend to think of their craft this way, the assignment boils down to: find the model and plug in the newest facts.

Social-issues stories broadly follow two models. One, involving such concerns as abortion and gun control, may be called the Two-Reasonable-Arguments model. The goal is to be utterly nonjudgmental, and to give roughly equal ink to the pros and the cons, on the theory that it’s proper to let each side have its say.

The other pattern is used for covering civil rights stories, and may be called the One-Reasonable-Argument model. We do not give equal ink to the NAACP and the Ku Klux Klan, because it is widely believed that the two groups are not morally equivalent; one represents truth and justice, the other hatred and bigotry.

A sticky problem with coverage of the gay story is that journalism hasn’t decided which model is appropriate.

Are there two reasonable arguments?

Bad Medicine: Destroying the remedies in the rain forest
The Wise Guide: There’s money in your marbles

THE HARTFORD COURANT, JUNE 1993



The Hartford Courant Sunday magazine

Can moral, fair, sensible people disagree on whether a homosexual lifestyle is acceptable? Or does this story fit the civil-rights model, with rational, public-spirited people on one side and bigots on the other? That hasn’t been determined, and therein lies the difficulty.

Gay and lesbian groups have lobbied hard for acceptance of the latter model. The question of gays in the military, for instance, has frequently been compared with the post-World-War II moves to racially integrate the armed services. Other groups—notably, but not exclusively, the religious right—have fought

equally hard in the other direction. They often use the “hate the sin, love the sinner” argument—that is to say, it is not homosexuality *per se* that is objectionable, but rather homosexual behavior. And of course, it is the behavior that is most often shown in news photos and written about in news stories.

As with most social issues, the question of choosing the proper model won’t be answered overnight. Indeed, insofar as that is concerned I feel we are nearer the beginning than the end of the debate.

2. Gay Column Leads To 475 Cancellations

BY LOUIS I. GELFAND

Reader Representative
The Star Tribune, Twin Cities

Gays and those who dislike their life styles are making community journalism stand up to be counted. Gays want time and space to stake their legitimacy. Detractors fear their surroundings will be polluted. At the Star Tribune in Minneapolis, reader opinion has moved from ho-hum to a subscription revolt by those who believe a gay column contains mind-altering venom.

In 1978 The Minneapolis Star published a week-long series "intended to examine common beliefs about gays and to present an accurate depiction of homosexuality."

It "was ground breaking" journalism for Minnesota "at the beginning of gay liberation," remembers Deborah Howell, then executive editor, now chief of the Newhouse Washington bureau. Reader reaction was "mixed," she said, but there was "nothing out of the ordinary" in cancellations. Nor does the series' author, John Carman, now TV columnist at the San Francisco Chronicle, recall any unusual reader response.

Fifteen years later the merged Star Tribune introduced a Wednesday column about gay life by Deb Price, a lesbian. The column had been initiated by the Detroit News and made available to the other 82 Gannett papers and to the 30 members of the Gannett News Service. Estimates vary on how many of the those 112 papers use the column, but a guess is about a quarter. It also is sold by the Los Angeles Times Syndicate, which says it has 30 to 40 subscribers.

In his note to readers introducing the column, Star Tribune assistant managing editor Arnie Robbins acknowledged: "We recognize that this new weekly column will generate contro-

versy."

Appealing to reason, he added: "We believe it offers a personal perspective on gay and lesbian issues that readers will find insightful."

After 10 weeks 475 subscribers (out of an audited 410,920) canceled. That's three times the number who said "good-bye" when stock quotation listings were reduced in September 1991 from 5,500 to 1,800, and, in the memory of old-timers, a new high, or low, depending on your point of view.

Compare that with the "one or two" cancellations an official of a large Gannett paper in the so-called "Bible belt" said were received after the paper began using the Price column on an occasional basis.

The Star Tribune constituents who canceled were not kind and gentle. Many quoted Leviticus 20:13 from the Bible: "If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable." That was followed by First Corinthians 6:9 that categorizes "homosexual offender" with prostitutes, adulterers, thieves and other undesirables.

The newspaper received copies of a handout that asked, quizzically, "Can it be that we have closed our minds to only granting the homosexuals whatever they want at the expense of others' religious freedom?" Absent was an explanation of whose freedom was being expensed.

Many asked: Can the paper be delivered every day except Wednesday? I avoided responding that technology soon will make that possible by assigning a special zip code to complainers.

The circulation department sent me a report of every cancellation with the reader's reason. One from a Rick Jass

was typical: "The reader does not feel that gays should be given the respect due other minorities since they are only 1 percent of the population"

In the frenzy of their resentment, readers did not ask: Can the column educate non-gays as well as comfort gays? Is it possible to address both audiences simultaneously?

Robert Giles, The Detroit News publisher, who gave Price her entrée, believes that the religious bias against the column "convince me even more deeply that the column's educational value is more and more needed." And he says he has had support from other newspaper editors who believe "the column has great value because it presents a perspective on gay and homosexual issues that is thoughtful and educational rather than in your face."

Giles says he's also heard from some editors "that they are not quite sure they have the courage to present this to their readers."

The Star Tribune's Editor, Tim McGuire, visualizes the Price readership as mostly gay. He says, "The column has a cathartic potential for gays, telling them to have the courage to live their life style. The column is not part of a campaign to push or profess a life style," but appears "because gays are a significant part of our community who need to be covered."

From Carman's 1978 series until 1986 the subject of equality for gays in the daily Minneapolis press was dormant. Then the AIDS story quickened coverage. The number of staff-written articles on homosexual topics increased from 21 in 1986 to 44 in the first six months of 1993. An emphasis on AIDS changed in 1987 to articles about domestic-partners legislation, support groups and legal rights.

Non-gays complained in 1987 when the newspaper reported that a former president of Dayton's, the region's mercantile leader, had died of AIDS and quoted the editor of a Twin Cities gay newspaper saying, "There were two secrets involved—gayness and AIDS."

Friends of the executive's family questioned the newspaper's integrity and said the family's privacy had been wrecked. The newspaper's editorial described the gay editor's statement as

"heartless prying into a heartbreaking matter," but did not criticize newsroom colleagues for publishing the quotation.

Similarly, when the director of the Minneapolis Public Works Department, a closet gay, died in 1990, the newspaper in a compilation of local items included the medical examiner's report that the death was AIDS-related.

After the City of Minneapolis passed a domestic-partners ordinance in March, 1991, the newspaper announced it would accept celebrations want ads from gays to appear with anniversaries, engagements, and weddings in the classified advertising section.

Scores of callers told me they'd never announce their anniversary in *The Star Tribune* because "I don't want to be with queers." By July, 1993 fewer than 10 gay celebrations had appeared among the several thousand announcements.

In December of 1992 a 12-page special Sunday section titled, "Growing Up Gay/A Crisis in Hiding," got a tepid response. It was the idea of staff photographer Rita Reed, whose pictures accompanied the articles.

I anticipated reader fortissimo because Reed, at her request, was identified in a sidebar as a lesbian.

comfortable about suggesting the "Growing Up Gay" special section.

She said she brought "awareness, understanding, knowledge and a sensitivity to the subject that I think helped us get and tell the story. I questioned myself ruthlessly and felt I had done my best." She said she wanted to be identified as a lesbian for two reasons:

"I felt that the ultimate honesty was to state my possible bias so the readers had the information to judge for themselves. Second, [our sources] were ever fearful that the main-stream media was seeking to exploit and sensationalize gays. They challenged me as to whether or not I would be willing to be as out in this article as I was seeking the teenagers to be. My willingness was part of easing their fears."

Ron Meador, in charge of special projects, and investigative reporter Lou Kilzer initiated talks with gay employees to read a controversial article on AIDS. "They helped us avoid some phrasing that seemed callous," Meador said. "And they helped us with lots of nuances, writing bobbles—although they weren't trained editors, they were very careful readers."

How does the ombudsman respond to the callers who cite the Bible as proof

help build informed perceptions of gays in others?"

"The first column ladled advice on how to label ex-partners. Mundane, but no better or worse than the Miss Manners column. The second one was Price's observations about the gay rights rally in Washington. It had no advice; it belonged on the Commentary page.

"To callers who said the Price column taints the whole newspaper, that seems no more logical than declaring that George Will's conservative outlook, printed on the editorial page, taints entire newspapers.

"I respect those who object to homosexuality on religious grounds. But a newspaper should not attempt to deny reality. There are millions of American gays. Promoting understanding among members of the community fulfills an important part of the newspaper's mission."

No ombudsman, or executive editor, can convince the homophobic there are tiers of authority other than the Bible. There is only one interpretation, and they care not that the winds of time erode glaciers and change minds, nor that medical and scientific knowledge constantly reshapes reality.

Ten weeks into the column's life in *The Star Tribune*, it seems to be honed for the gay audience. That's also how Timothy Rose of the Minnesota Gay and Lesbian Community Action Council, views it.

Price projects just enough soap-box advocacy with subtle exhortation to alienate non-gays.

She doesn't accept my analysis. "Never in all the time I have talked with anyone has it been characterized that way. What I'm trying to do is talk about the diversity of gay life."

Price's unwillingness to consider the possibility that the exhortation in her column dilutes its educational impact is all too characteristic of those who believe they are on a crusade. What it also says is that appealing to two disparate audiences at the same time may be as difficult as capturing a ring of smoke. But don't ship to Bosnia those editors using the Price column. They are leading journalists in the right direction.

In the frenzy of their resentment, readers did not ask: Can the column educate non-gays as well as comfort gays? Is it possible to address both audiences simultaneously?

But cancelations were few and a score or more of callers were supportive. Typical was the man who said, "If this had been published 20 years ago when I was growing up, my life would have been happier."

Similarly, when the comic strip, "For Better or For Worse," in April of this year told the story of a 17-year-old's coming out, the reaction was mild. About 35 subscribers quit, a whimper contrasted with the 842 who abandoned *The Rocky Mountain News* in Denver for the same reason.

Management decisions are reflected in newsroom relations between it and staff members who are open about being gay. Photographer Reed said she felt

that publishing the Price column is a repudiation of God?

You do it differently on the phone than in print. First, analyze the complainant. Maniacal in tone—listen briefly and note you have a call waiting. A view anchored in granite—listen and be gentle. Firm and articulate—gingerly explain the newspaper's wish to inform without advocating. Firm, articulate and open-minded—sympathetically outline the newspaper's desire to serve an eclectic audience.

In print confront the issue. After Price's first two columns, I wrote:

"The primary question is journalistic, not religious. Does it offer sensible advice for gays and, at the same time,

3. St. Louis Reacts Vociferously

BY LARRY FIQUETTE
Reader's Advocate
The St. Louis Post-Dispatch

On Mother's Day this year, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch stirred the fires under a leading, long-simmering issue of the 1990's: homosexual rights. On that day, the paper printed a page one "trend" story, with a color photograph, about two men, a homosexual couple, who had been inspired to come out of the closet by the recent gay rights march in Washington.

The story described them as a home-loving, monogamous, stable twosome who had spent eight years in the closet before going public to their bosses, their friends and the world.

Reader reaction was vociferous. Primarily, it was women and mothers who objected. They had expected to read a traditional tribute to motherhood on page one on "their day."

Why did editors deliberately choose that story for such prominent display, they asked, both in anger and sorrow. One put her finger on a sore spot: "Those two aren't going to produce any mothers."

My siding with them in my column the following week—on the basis of journalistic sensitivity—brought a contrary outpouring of support for gays and their rights. Several were members of PFLAG—Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

"As the mother of a gay son, I know what turmoil and torment gay people go through when they are trying to come to terms with their sexuality," one mother said.

Had that story run any other day, much of the controversy would likely have been averted.

The episode was further evidence

that in these "Gay Nineties" we are seeing the heat that once was generated by the abortion issue shift to the issue of acceptance of homosexuality. The battle lines seem mainly to pit Biblical literalists against homosexual activists.

Emotional intransigence on both sides results in an outpouring of phone calls and letters to newspapers whenever the issue hits subscribers' doorsteps. And St. Louis has felt its share of the crossfire.

It was the comic strip "For Better Or For Worse" that brought the greatest number of complaints, with its week-long series last spring about a teen-age boy's anguish in coming out. That brought scores of calls from outraged readers who didn't want to see this subject cropping up, of all places, in the comics "where the kids will see it."

Threats and cancelations of subscriptions poured in. The message, in a nutshell: "That doesn't belong in the funnies. I'm canceling the paper until that strip has been taken out."

The objections centered on Biblical proscriptions—the rejection of sodomy

"Lesbian And Gay Pridefest," a gay-rights march, rally and picnic in St. Louis's West End, with about 2,500 taking part, was covered by a story and two photos. Two weeks earlier, the newspaper ignored a Christian march downtown with about 10,000 people from all denominations, praying and singing.

(as in Sodom)—and on the threat of AIDS, the forced acceptance of homosexual behavior, and the "capture" of America's youth by predatory gays.

Because they believe homosexuality to be a choice, these readers want to bar the doors to gay teachers, coaches, counselors, the clergy and others who they're sure would convert young men and women to their "lifestyle."

It's a subject not allowed for discussion in their homes, many readers said, taking some pride in conceding that they had never known a homosexual.

My column noting the angry objections to the comic strip stirred an equal avalanche of calls supporting it, along with the paper's decision to continue it.

The final tally came close to a stand-off.

A more recent point of contention for St. Louis readers came just after Father's Day, when The Post-Dispatch gave unequal treatment to demonstrations by gays and Christians.

"Lesbian And Gay Pridefest," a gay-rights march, rally and picnic in St. Louis's West End, with about 2,500 taking part, was covered by a story and two photos. Two weeks earlier, the newspaper ignored a Christian march downtown with about 10,000 people from all denominations, praying and singing. Many Christian readers decried the apparent snub.

Other news events of recent months that have kept this issue in the arena of public dispute include the following:

The beating of a group of white gays by several black St. Louisans in the city's Forest Park in July 1992; the appointment in June of Laura Moore, a 47-year-old lesbian, by St. Louis Mayor Freeman Bosley Jr. to the city's civil rights commission; and the earlier appointment of another lesbian, Carmen Garcia Ruiz, 37, to St. Louis County's civil rights commission.

There was more: the spreading of the AIDS quilt in Washington, discrimination against gays at Cracker Barrel restaurants, President Clinton's support for gays in the military, and the Catholic Church's opposition to legal protections for homosexual rights.

Strong objections also have come from readers upset by The Post-

4. Hostility High In Jacksonville

BY MIKE CLARK
Reader Advocate
The Florida Times-Union

When gays and lesbians are in the news, even the most routine stories are prone to generate controversy in Jacksonville.

In five years as the reader advocate of The Florida Times-Union, I have encountered no other issue that carries so much hostility. Though it is rare for a caller to admit to being racist, many callers have no compunctions about expressing their extreme disapproval of gays.

For instance, a story and photo about a gay pride picnic last June produced both condemnation and praise, simply because the event appeared in the newspaper.

The role of the reader advocate at The Times-Union is to listen to both sides. From this vantage point, the positions of both camps could be summed up this way:

One side feels that the news media is forcing a perverse lifestyle on them.

Simply by covering gays and lesbians, the media are presenting gays as if they were morally equivalent to heterosexuals. These readers are offended by this presentation. For these readers, "liberal media" is redundant.

The other side feels that the news media have ignored gays and lesbians largely through ignorance and insensitivity. Therefore, myths, intolerance, discrimination and hate crimes run rampant. Gays and lesbians ask only for the same level of concern and coverage that the media give to other minority groups. For these readers, the media reflect the homophobia of society.

Both sides were represented in April. Angry readers demanded righteously that the newspaper drop the "For Better or Worse" comic strip last April because it presented the story of a gay teenager who was revealing his orientation to friends and family. Some complained after receiving directions to do so from the pulpit.

About 300 callers protested the strip and 83 canceled their subscriptions. Typical of the comments was this letter:

Dispatch's having taken on a lesbian as an op-ed columnist to write occasionally in behalf of homosexual rights.

The spokeswoman, Amy Adams Squire Strongheart, has challenged, among other things, the religious right's opposition to gay rights. She denounced an organized effort by the Amendment Coalition, a group comprising "religious and social fundamentalists" seeking to put on the ballot in 1994 a state constitutional amendment that would, in effect, keep gays from obtaining redress

for discrimination.

She wrote: "OK, St. Louis, the time has come for me to come out of the closet... I'm a Christian. And as both a Christian and a lesbian, I find myself in a very curious position."

Her dilemma: "I am directed [by my faith] to turn the other cheek when I'm struck and pray for those who persecute me."

Taking note of anti-gay sentiment stemming from ignorance, she added: "Many people who oppose justice for

"I've already dropped your paper Monday through Friday because of your editors' promotion of the gays and lesbians. If you continue to promote the perverts such as your comic strip 'For Better or Worse,' I will have to drop my weekend paper."

Leaders of the local gay community association would be startled to hear someone say the newspaper promotes gays and lesbians. In their view, gays are lucky to receive any coverage at all, and too often it includes negative and stereotypical comments that the newspaper wouldn't allow when covering other minority groups.

During the same week that I was being deluged with angry calls regarding "For Better or Worse," I was listening to the calls of gay activists regarding the newspaper's lack of balance on the op-ed page.

A column by Cal Thomas quoted the Bible to support his view that homosexuality is opposed to God's law. Thomas was rebutting a column by author James Michener in The New York Times. Since the Michener column was not printed in The Times-Union, Jacksonville readers saw only the rebuttal by Thomas. So readers were not receiving balance in the opinion columns.

The controversies continue. A statewide vote on banning gay civil or special rights is looming. I cope with them by grasping the lifeline of the journalistic basics: accuracy, balance and comprehensive coverage.

sexual minorities believe that they don't know anyone who is lesbian or gay. It is easier, I suppose, to trample beneath our feet that which we cannot see."

Such are the battle lines now being deeply drawn. Further entrenchment seems to lie ahead. It's a dispute that could prove, in the long run, to be more acrid and longer-lasting than the 20-year battle over abortion.

5. San Diego Sees Change in Play

BY GINA LUBRANO
Reader's Representative
The San Diego Union-Tribune

It's predictable. At The San Diego Union-Tribune, articles and features about gays and lesbians more often than not result in unhappy readers.

Complaints come from three camps. Some readers are so opposed to homosexuality on religious grounds that they do not want to read anything about it in the newspaper; they accuse the newspaper of promoting the lifestyle. Others complain they are weary of reading about gays; they account for such a small percentage of the population, they say.

Probably the most vocal are gays and lesbians who mostly complain because they are unhappy with the slant of stories or photographs. Sometimes their objections are valid, sometimes they are not. And sometimes—though rarely—they say thank you for a story.

The philosophy of The Union-Tribune is to respect all minorities. The newspaper unwittingly fell short of that goal in its July coverage of the 19th annual Lesbian & Gay Pride Parade and Festival.

The story was played across the top of the front page of the local section and noted that police estimated the crowd at "more than 25,000 and up to 40,000."

This was a sharp contrast to the story that appeared in a Sunday San Diego Union in 1975, in the days when the city had two local newspapers. That first parade attracted about 400 participants and rated a 3-1/2 inch brief inside the Union's local section. The Tribune, which merged with the Union in 1992 and which did not publish on Sundays, carried nothing.

In July, a sky box with a small color picture of a rainbow of balloons and parade participants holding a banner appeared on the front page and referred readers to the story. But the only photograph that appeared with the story itself was that of a cross dresser on roller skates.

That sparked complaints and most editors, except the one who handled the story, agreed that as the only photograph with the story, it was unacceptable. The criticism was valid.

The editor who handled the story felt that the picture reflected the spirit of the parade; members of the gay and lesbian community felt it demeaned them.

Bob Nalli, a San Diego police officer who marched in the parade in uniform, likened the event to a "civil rights march." Another reader concluded that the newspaper failed to accept gays and lesbians "as regular people, just like you."

Another gay reader said the photograph portrayed the community as a "sort of buffoon, a big old drag queen." It was unfair of the newspaper to perpetuate that image, he said.

Negatives of pictures taken at the event do show people in funny, even bizarre, costumes. But then, so do pictures of most parades. The point is there were between 25,000 and 40,000 people at the event. Did the photographer select only pictures of the oddities to print for publication? Did his training to look for the interesting pictures backfire in this case? It may have. This is not a matter of being politically correct. The story spoke of the diversity of the community; the photograph that was used failed to portray that.

I wrote a column making that point. A gay man called and said I did not go far enough. He wanted an apology. An-

other man who called disagreed with the column passionately.

"These people are perverts, freaks," he said. "And they do prey on children. I know because I was molested by one as a child."

Another thought the photograph was representative and gave detailed statistics to support his argument that the gay lifestyle is unhealthy.

Some members of the gay community expressed thanks for the point of view.

Complaints on the July gay pride story from the gay community presented an interesting counterpoint to the calls that came after the gay march on Washington in April when readers who watched CNN objected that the newspaper depicted only the mainstream aspects of the gathering.

Some gays and lesbians, on the other hand, complained that the newspaper did not provide adequate coverage, even though on the day of the Washington march the paper had a story saying it was scheduled to take place. The cover of *Currents*, the feature section, was devoted to a story on Randy Shilts and his book, "Conduct Unbecoming." There were two sidebars, one on gay men, the other on lesbians.

Those stories prompted a smattering of vehement protests from the anti-homosexuals, but not an overwhelming number.

The newspaper has weathered complaints about news stories, features and editorials about homosexuals. Its editorial policy to support lifting the ban on homosexuals in the military has been criticized by conservatives and military people, both active and retired. San Diego is a Navy town, and Camp Pendleton, a marine base, forms the northern boundary of the county. There are more military retirees in San Diego than anywhere else in the nation.

Even so, relatively few readers objected to the editorial. But when Editor Gerald L. Warren appeared on the MacNeil/Lehrer News/Hour and reiterated the newspaper's position, he received letters in protest from viewers in Virginia, Florida, Oregon, Massachusetts, and Northern California.

Writers include quotations from the

Bible and a newsletter from Accuracy in Media, which outlined the organization's version of the "gay agenda" in detail. A viewer from Oregon wrote Warren about laws against sodomy and his concern about sanitation. He noted "only Dr. Kervorkian has a sure cure for AIDS."

Readers who object to stories on lesbians and gays accuse the newspaper of attempting to force feed them articles about homosexuals. They frequently accuse The Union-Tribune—despite its history of supporting Republican policies in editorials—of being a "liberal rag." The tone of their voices says it all: liberal is not only unacceptable, but immoral as well.

Most of those who object to a story about homosexuals often are upset when the only reason for the article appears to be that it is about homosexuality. For example, readers rarely object when stories appear about people in the arts who happen to be homosexual.

The Union-Tribune received both compliments and criticism for its article in the Sunday travel section about resorts in Palm Springs that cater to gays and lesbians.

Countering the calls from those who liked the story were calls from readers who labeled the article "revolting."

Another brouhaha was over a photograph of two lesbians in wedding dresses that appeared inside the feature section. The story reported the controversy the picture had caused when a Jewish newspaper published the photograph with a story about the couple's "commitment" ceremony, which is akin to a wedding ceremony. Some Union-Tribune readers threatened to discontinue their subscriptions.

The fuss was predictable. Why did features editor Suzanne Choney choose to run the article? Because it was news. The story told how readers reacted when a newspaper broke tradition. It was not advocating or taking a position. It depicted a slice of life in the 1990's. The same picture of two heterosexual women in bridal dresses would have been totally unremarkable.

In a span of a year and a half, there have been only a few requests to publish "wedding" photographs and an-

nouncements for gay and lesbian couples. The newspaper, which has an unwritten policy of running announcements only of couples whose weddings have legal recognition, has refused to print gay and lesbian marriage photos.

Is that a reasonable attitude for a newspaper that published the pictures of the lesbians because it was news? Is that reasonable for a newspaper that respects the rights of all minorities? I don't think readers of The San Diego Union-Tribune are ready for such openness. That aside, space is at such a premium that I think the newspaper

...the only photograph that appeared with the story itself was that of a cross dresser on roller skates.

That sparked complaints and most editors, except the one who handled the story, agreed that as the only photograph with the story, it was unacceptable.

can justify limiting the number of wedding announcements it will run to those who are in legally recognized marriages.

Perhaps the strongest reaction this newspaper has received about a homosexual topic was elicited by the comic strip "For Better or for Worse." The day readers learned there would be a segment about homosexuality, the complaints began.

The segment began March 26, the same day a story appeared alerting readers. By April 1, the newspaper had received 41 cancelations—minor when compared to reactions from readers in other parts of the country and to the 145 readers who canceled their subscriptions in an orchestrated protest against a single front-page story that had nothing to do with homosexuals.

Editor Warren answered at least 39 letters from subscribers. He wrote that if the newspaper had decided against carrying the sequence, "we would have

put ourselves in the position of screening from our readers a controversial subject rather than allowing them to reach their own conclusions."

Some said the newspaper should not carry the strip in a comic section; if the newspaper wanted to run it, it should appear elsewhere in the paper. Some readers called to thank the newspaper; they were impressed with the sensitivity portrayed in the strip.

The Union-Tribune has also carried a full-page advertisement sponsored by the American Medical Association and others for a booklet called "Living with HIV." There have been only two calls to my office in protest. One was from a woman who said she did not want to pay medical bills for those who have HIV, and another from a man who said that people were misdialing the 800-number in the advertisement and reaching him instead.

Stories about HIV and AIDS seldom result in complaints. The newspaper has carried at least 200 stories about AIDS since the merger in 1992. (A reporter has the dual task of covering both AIDS and mental health).

Even with the complaints, I think most readers are sophisticated enough to know that stories about homosexuals are inevitable. It is a newsworthy topic, not only because of AIDS and because of the questions about the place of homosexuals in the military but because homosexuals are becoming increasingly articulate about what they want and what they expect from the news media (I have on my desk a copy of the media guide issued by GLADD, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation). What's more, they are more and more willing to identify themselves, to join ranks to fight for their rights. That becomes news. ■

RESPONSE

Snide Digs at West Coast?

It seems that somewhere in nearly every issue of Nieman Reports there is a snide dig at folks on the West Coast. In the Summer '93 issue, it comes on page 69 in the italics describing writer Lynne Enders Glaser:

"Glaser writes poetry, raises organic vegetables, snorkels and makes her own pasta—things expected of a native Californian."

In the italics describing a Boston writer, it would be refreshing and more even-handed to see you people note, say, that "Wigglesworth Cabot (or whoever) is a collector of stamps and blazer buttons—things expected of a simpering effete New Englander."

For a group of journalist/educators that no doubt fancies its members open-minded and sophisticated, you folks are a disappointment.

Brooks Townes
Weaverville, NC

Lynne Enders Glaser wrote that description of herself—Ed.

LETTERS

Letters to Nieman Reports should be limited to 250 words. Please address them to: Response, Nieman Reports, 1 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Flippant on Mideast?

Jeffrey Goldberg's flippant article touching on public concerns about biased media coverage of Israel and the Middle East (Nieman Reports, Summer 1993) warrants response because it contains irresponsible characterizations of people and organizations. The writer claims that those of us who would like to see more complete and solid coverage on the contentious subject of the Middle East are simply disgruntled at the quantity and negativity of stories about Israel and he ridicules efforts to assess the coverage as a paranoid "combing the press" for evidence. This type of tiresome rejoinder is regrettably all too familiar to those in the public who dare challenge the quality of journalism in any area, including those who urge serious journalistic reflection on the caliber and content of Middle East coverage.

CAMERA (Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America), is a 25,000-member grassroots organization devoted to analysis of Middle East reporting. We do, indeed, engage in methodical monitoring of the print and electronic media's reporting on Israel and the wider Middle East. That, of course, is a prerequisite to making any serious evaluation of the nature of the coverage. We publish our findings in a variety of newsletters, alerts and newspaper and magazine articles. Had Goldberg contacted our office for information he might have had more to go on than a CAMERA column, which he refers to as a "circular." Since he misrepresents its contents I assume he did not even read that thoroughly.

Goldberg alleges that I went "overboard" in reproaching New York Times reporter Clyde Haberman for his cover-

age of a rash of stabbings of Israelis, but he omits the passages that substantiate the criticism. Goldberg also makes ludicrous and reckless charges about CAMERA perceiving a media "conspiracy" against Israel. CAMERA has never made any such claims nor do we believe in such nonsense. David Bar Illan, editor in chief of the Jerusalem Post, whose name Goldberg twice misspells, though he claims to know him, is not a "guru" of any movement as far as I know.

It is more than a little disturbing that the Nieman Foundation, which has nurtured serious journalists for many years and Nieman Reports, its publication, consider articles such as Goldberg's substantive fare.

Andrea Levin
President and Executive Director
CAMERA

Mr. Illan's name was misspelled by that type bug that haunts Nieman Reports, not Mr. Goldberg—Ed.

NIEMAN NOTES

Robert C. Maynard Is Dead

Word was received of the death of **Robert C. Maynard**, Nieman Fellow 1966, as this issue of Nieman Reports was going to press.

Bob Maynard was only 56 years old when he died of cancer at his home in Oakland, CA, on August 17. In that short life he accomplished much, as a reporter, a teacher and a publisher—the first black publisher of a general-circulation daily in the United States. With his wife, Nancy Hicks, he worked unceasingly to train blacks in journalism and to find them jobs.

He was publisher of The Oakland Tribune when he received the Lovejoy Award at Colby College in 1991. The thoughts that Bob Maynard expressed in his acceptance speech about Lovejoy's moral views could also be applied to Maynard himself. Here are excerpts from that speech:

There were many in that day who thought compromise was expedient; but Elijah Lovejoy was not among them. His view on the brotherhood of humanity was implacable. I take from Lovejoy's life, and from his death, a clear and simple message. He felt blessed to have been born an American, and to have had many privileges. A fine family and home in Albion; a wonderful education here at Waterville; and a deep love of the liberation that came through the life and death of Jesus Christ. He believed all those blessings beheld him to a great obligation. His soul was bound to the moral truth that bondage and freedom could not co-exist.

It is my thesis tonight that Lovejoy's



Robert C. Maynard

work is not complete. The ideals for which he stood are still fully to materialize for many Americans. This, even as we commemorate the 154th year since his death. In some larger metaphysical sense we, as a nation, remain enslaved by race. Not physical bondage anymore, but mental and social enslavement to ancient perceptions.

The very idea of race is itself an artificial one; indeed, ask any number

of morticians, and they will tell you that at the end we all look strikingly alike. And we know, as Lovejoy knew, that when we approach the throne of grace in that time when our earthly chores are ended, we will be judged by far more important measures than the color of our skin, the shapes of our eyes, or the texture of our hair. Yet, in all our lives, still today in this nation, we know that our perceptions are shaped by this artificial matter of color: where we go to school, where to work, where to live, whom to love... All of these are powerfully affected by one measure above all—the color of our skin

The point I wish to make first is about the matter of perception. It has something to do with moral truth in the modern age. We are all imprisoned by that which we see when we look at each other across the chasms of race. We see more (and sometimes less) than a whole person. In each encounter, we see the map of social history already implanted in our brains. The physical freeing of peoples of color occurred first with the end of the civil war, and gradually in this century, guaranteed rights evolved through the rule of law.

What we have not accomplished through all of this yet, is to learn the mastery of the idea of brotherhood for which Elijah Lovejoy, and so many others, have given their lives. These perceptions contribute to the alienation of our society and to its diminishment.

I will tell you that I agree with Elijah Lovejoy, that when we work and live together in a common bond of understanding, we are stronger than when we permit ourselves to retreat to hostile islands.

TENNEY LEHMAN HOME AGAIN

Tenney K. Lehman, long-time executive director of the Nieman Foundation, retired in 1985 and moved with her husband, Tom, to Martha's Vineyard. She recently became ill, and we asked her to bring us up to date on her health:

The serenity of country living was irrevocably broken last winter by the discovery that I had a brain tumor. There followed a trip to Boston for surgery and, as it turned out, two months of hospitalization and therapy.

Looking back on that troubling experience, I know I always will be grateful for the love and support from family and many friends. What they gave was like meat and drink.

I write now from our beloved Vineyard. It is mid-summer and what a pleasure it is to say that Tom and I have resumed our favorite activities—bird-watching (including a flock of wild turkeys), berry-picking, and monitoring the procession of water traffic out on Vineyard Sound. Meanwhile, healing continues and I am thankful for the progress it brings.

1946

Mary Ellen Leary writes to us with a West Coast (Piedmont, CA) perspective and suggestion: "As a long-ago Nieman Fellow, I get the uncomfortable feeling now and then that those of us out in the Western hinterland lack the opportunity to maintain a lively linkage with the current program and the people around which it is currently centered. What's the chance of arranging a meeting...with us Westerners, here on our own turf...for an evening to ...strengthen old ties?" Leary notes that to her knowledge the last such event was in 1978.

She continues: "I just think it would be an interesting and stimulating get-together. Reading the vastly strengthened Nieman Reports...I had such a sense of the reinforcement one gets from communicating with peers who have so much in common—in viewpoint as well as background."

Leary's Nieman year was the first year women were accepted as Nieman. Before

and after her Nieman she was political editor of the Scripps Howard San Francisco News. After *The News* was taken over by Hearst (*The San Francisco Examiner*), she spent three years as West Coast correspondent for Scripps Howard's Washington news desk. She says, "Unfortunately the papers in that chain in those days were very parochial and not much attuned to Western news. I began writing for *The Economist* and was delighted to find they did see news value in what was occurring along the Pacific Coast. To my somewhat astonishment, I'm still with the *American Survey* in *The Economist*, though my five-year campaign to get them to assign a reporter to Los Angeles did, a year ago, succeed. I remain as 'the old hand.'"

1953

Members of the class of 1953 are planning a 40th reunion October 5-7 at Harvard. So far seven of the 16 members of the class are expected to attend and bring their spouses. **Art Barschdorf**, who is making the arrangements, said the gathering will have an intergenerational flavor, with the program planned to include activities with the new class of Nieman Fellows. Events will include a trip to the Arnold Arboretum and a seminar with a Harvard professor. While the get-together will focus on fellowship and fun, Barschdorf says the oldtimers plan to discuss how best to help expand objective and informed reporting in the face of so much advocacy journalism, so often flawed with somewhat less than the truth.

1971

Itsuo Sakane was a surprise visitor to Lippmann House in August and we asked him to bring us up to date on his work:

Twenty-two years have passed since my Nieman year. That year was a turning point in my life. I was a science writer for *The Asahi Shimbun* at that time, but my experiences at Harvard and encounters with so many remarkable people and cultural events broadened my interest in the integration of science and art. I met Gyorgy Kepes at MIT and Rudolf Arnheim at Harvard, and even had a chance to listen to the beautiful Norton Lecture by Charles and Ray Eames. It was also

the time of the reassessment of C.P. Snow's "Two Cultures" and it was the transition between the Sixties and the Seventies.

Returning to *The Asahi Shimbun*, I traveled the world, writing many columns covering the movement connecting art, science and media technology. I also organized several exhibitions in the field of art and science, including holography, cybernetic sculpture, art and illusion, phenomena art and interactive art. In 1990 I retired from *The Asahi Shimbun* and began a new career as a professor at Keio University, where I have been teaching courses in science art and environmental art, which I developed over the last three and a half years. I am still working as a journalist and as international co-editor for *Leonardo* magazine, published by the MIT Press.

Looking back, I feel profoundly grateful for my Nieman year. Although very few Nieman have been working in my field, between art and science, I hope I can find some opportunity to share my experiences with the new generation of Fellows.

1972

H.D.S. Greenway will become *The Boston Globe's* Editorial Page Editor on January 1, 1994.

Greenway currently is Senior Associate Editor of the *Globe* and writes a weekly column on foreign affairs. He has been with *The Globe* since 1978, has served as National and Foreign Editor, and is best known for his work as a foreign correspondent.

Talking about his new job, Greenway says "As I grow older I find myself more interested in what should happen rather than simply what did happen. The editorial and Op-Ed pages of newspapers are what print journalism does best—a daily forum of ideas, a pulpit for polity, and the best vehicle for getting at the "why" and "why not," beyond "who, what and where."

The Globe's announcement says that "Greenway has been reporting international news for more than 30 years. As a foreign correspondent with *Time-Life* and *The Washington Post* he was based in London, Saigon, Bangkok, Hong Kong and Jerusalem. He covered the Vietnam War in both the 1960's and 1970's. He was awarded a *Bronze Star* for trying to rescue a wounded Marine during the

battle for Hue in February 1968. He was wounded in the attempt."

Matthew Storin, the paper's Editor, said, "If David brings to his editorials a fraction of the courage he showed as a war correspondent, *The Globe* and its readers will be well-served indeed."

1977

Hennie Van Deventer writes to say that he has recently published a book, "Scoops en Skandes," which translated from the Afrikaans means "Scoops and Shames," in which he chronicles humorous stories and anecdotes gathered in his 30 years as a journalist. There is even a chapter on an assortment of mishaps during his Nieman year. Hennie exchanged his editor's chair at the Afrikaans daily *Die Volksblad* in Bloemfontein for his present position of Chief Executive, Newspapers of the Nasionale Pers Group, about a year ago. He is now based in Cape Town. His wife, Tokkie, still resides in Bloemfontein with their children, Johan and Marisa, who are studying at the University of Orange Free State in that city. Hennie says he suffers severely under this separation.

1982

Margot Adler is taking a year's leave of absence from National Public Radio to write a book, tentatively titled "Heretic's Heart." The book will be a political and spiritual memoir of her experiences as a "red-diaper" baby, as children of politically radical parents were called in the 1950's, and as a participant in the Berkeley Free-Speech Movement and the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi. The book will also talk about her complex correspondence with an American soldier in Vietnam and her explorations into Pagan spirituality. The book, due in the Fall of 1995, will be published by Beacon Press.

Johanna Neuman is on leave from USA Today to write a book about technology's impact on diplomacy. As of early September she can be reached at the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center at Columbia University, 212-678-6600 or at her home in Bethesda MD.

Claude Van Engeland has been appointed head of the Audio-Visual division of the Office of Public Information at the

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris.

After Claude's Nieman year, he was appointed head of the foreign news service of the television news department of the Belgian Radio and Television in French (RTBF). In 1988 he became Managing Editor of the entire television news service. He held that position for four years until, in June, 1992, he explained: "I resigned over disagreements between myself and the board of directors of the company. Since that time I have been doing television features for the French satellite television TV5. I have also taken several assignments in Iran and the Persian Gulf area for *The Christian Science Monitor* and worked hard on a book on the history of the Iranian Revolution." Claude is very enthusiastic at the prospect of joining the newly reorganized team of UNESCO's Office of Public Information, and says that he sees this change as a "dramatic turn in my career. After being a journalist for more than 20 years I will become an international civil servant whose mission will be to promote the ideals of UNESCO."

1983

Bill Marimow joined *The Baltimore Sun* in April as Metropolitan Editor. The reason he made the move from *The Philadelphia Inquirer* was for the chance to work again with Editor John Carroll, NF'72. When Bill was in Philadelphia he wrote stories about police violence that won the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service in 1978. His Metro Editor then was John Carroll. There was a neat symmetry to moving to *The Sun* as Carroll's Metro Editor.

However, Bill learned in mid-August that he now will become an Associate Managing Editor at *The Sun* and in that capacity will oversee the metro, national, foreign, and business desks.

Bill's wife, Diane, has a job teaching art in Baltimore County; their daughter Ann, 17, will be a freshman at Cornell in the Fall; and son Scott, 13, plays soccer, basketball, lacrosse, and any other sport available.

Over the years, many children have been born to Nieman Fellows—before, during, or after their Nieman year at Harvard—but a Fellow from the class of 1983 is representative of a somewhat smaller set of cases of professional offspring.

After his year at Harvard, **Andrzej Wroblewski** returned to his native Poland, where he is now Editor-in-Chief of *Gazeta Bankowa*, the country's leading financial periodical. His son, Thomas, remained in the United States, working his way through college. When, in 1989, Poland led the way for other Central and Eastern European nations to democratization and introduction of market economies, Thomas, still in the US, began work as a stringer for various Polish news media.

Eventually, Thomas joined *Zycie Warszawy*, Warsaw's largest daily newspaper, and also wrote a book on the 1992 US Presidential campaign, "Bill Clinton—Not a Moment to Lose," published in Poland shortly before the inauguration. The book, a best-seller throughout Poland, was a true family effort, having been written by Thomas in the United States and edited by Andrzej in Poland.

Now, due to the political changes and climate of liberty in Poland, Thomas is happy to move back to Poland to continue his journalistic career there.

Andrzej's wife, Agnieszka, also a leading Polish journalist, continues as a columnist at *Zycie Warszawy*.

The family's youngest member, daughter Joanna, received her B.A. degree from Harvard in 1985 and this year completed her Ph.D. in economics at Harvard. She is married to Robert Stavins, a Professor at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

1985

Deborah Johnson returned to Washington this summer from Stanford University, where her husband, journalist Bob Thompson, had a Knight Fellowship. She says she was able to relive her Nieman experience "free of snow and slush and with two big changes: as a spouse, and as a parent of small children. It was definitely different, but fantastic. Being in California during the election and early days of the new administration was instructive—but it demoralized me about returning to mainstream journalism in the nation's capital."

Deborah left CBS News two years ago, after her daughter Mona was born (another daughter, Liz, is 3 1/2 years old). "In addition to imparting a new, cosmic view of life, motherhood has made me rethink work completely. So I'm now one semester into a mid-career MBA program at Wharton. The decision to go to business

school was more than a little inspired by working at CBS, which is incredibly mismanaged. I'm very glad to be doing it, but am not sure where this is taking me. Bob and I fantasize about trying to run a small newspaper or radio station in New England. I've also gotten very interested in issues having to do with families and the workplace, but haven't figured how to turn that interest into a job I'd want. If there are any Niemans out there (from any year) who feel they've found a satisfying solution to the question, "How can I be a journalist and a parent, too?" I'd love to hear from you."

To the members of the Class of '85 Deborah adds: "should we be thinking about a tenth reunion? Maybe if we start planning now...."

After **Joel Kaplan** left The Chicago Tribune in 1990, he married (Susan Miller, a researcher at The Tribune), had a girl (Elle Marie, born 4/24/91), had a boy (Noah Miller, born 6/25/93), and got a new job (Assistant Professor, Newspaper Department, in the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University). In 1990-91, Joel was one of five journalism fellows at Yale Law School. In addition, "Murder of Innocence," a book he co-authored with two Tribune colleagues, will be a "CBS Movie of the Week" in November.

1987

Michael Davis became Editor of Baltimore's Jewish Times on June 7, succeeding the publication's Editor of 19 years, Gary Rosenblatt. According to Publisher Charles A. Buerger, the choice of Davis represents "an opportunity to see the seeds of Rosenblatt's efforts flourish under the marvelous managerial skills of Michael Davis, who has great concern for our Jewish community." Michael had been with The Baltimore Sun papers for nine years.

Davis said he recognized the publication's "integrity and courage through the years, its tremendous regional and even national reach..." His goals include broadening The Jewish Times audience to encompass younger people and exploring the relationship between graphics and the written word.

In the 20 years that Michael has been a journalist he has held virtually every newsroom job, working with news, sports and features staffs at seven newspapers in Rhode Island, New York, Kentucky,

Florida, Illinois and Maryland. He regularly contributes freelance writing and photography to national publications, including Parade magazine, The Sunday Los Angeles Times and Newsday.

Samantha (Sam) Davis, Michael's wife, is Event and Campaign Manager for the Maryland Food Committee. They have two daughters, Megan, 14 and Tyler, 11.

1988

Eduardo Ulibarri, Editor-in-Chief for La Nacion in San José, Costa Rica, is planning some changes in the way his paper covers the next general election in February 1994.

The paper decided they needed to change to:

1. Meet more of the readers' and voters' needs.
2. Make it more independent from politicians' initiatives.
3. Make it more relevant.

Ulibarri describes in more detail the methods the paper used to decide how to improve their coverage and how those changes were implemented:

Following, in great part, discussions going on in the U.S. on the same matters, we decided, basically, to put a lot of stress on major issues, as perceived and defined by voters, but without taking away our focus from day-to-day and "horse-race" coverage.

We had a lot of meetings with our pollsters—a Costa Rican firm named Unimer, which is highly respected—and we came out with the following plan: We conducted, between October and November of last year, a series of focus group sessions (15 in total, among different ages, sexes and locations), in order to get a "qualitative" picture of people's concerns. After that, we devoted our regular poll, taken in January, to measuring the concerns expressed in the focus group sessions.

Out of that poll a list of major issues emerged.

We then began to execute our new coverage.

First, we devoted a major general report to people's concerns, in general. It came out at the same time that we announced our new electoral coverage to our readers. In the same edition we also interviewed what were then the "pre-candidates," since the two major political parties had not cho-

sen their candidates yet. After that, we started, each Monday, to go in-depth on each of the major concerns expressed by the people.

At the same time, we opened a telephone line so that people could voice their opinions on a long list of topics that we presented to them each week. We did not pretend that this was a scientific sample, but just a set of different opinions by different people.

Of course, we have gone with our day-to-day coverage. It became very intense in the weeks prior to each party primary. They were held on June 6th (Liberacion Nacional, the major opposition party) and Unidad Social Cristiana on the 13th of June (this is the government's party). We have been very careful in not taking sides in our coverage, and we have tried to be as distanced from each candidate as possible. Prior to the primaries, we conducted in-depth interviews with each "pre-candidate" (four on the opposition, two on the government party), at which, for the first time in Costa Rican journalism, a group of citizens, elected from our focus-groups sample, took part.

Now that the primaries are over, and both parties have their candidates selected for the February 1994 general elections, we are planning the following:

1. A new set of focus-group sessions, followed by another issue-oriented poll.
2. Follow-up on the topics which, at this point, are of major concern to citizens.
3. Exploration of a lot of neglected areas, such as regional political preferences, young voters' concerns, the selection of candidates for Congress, the situation in the most wealthy and the poorest municipalities in the country, the propaganda focus of each party, their organization structures and their finances.

To follow the propaganda, we are going to set up a panel of three experts who, on a monthly basis, will follow the trends of each party propaganda message.

We are sure that there will be a lot of misunderstandings on the part of politicians; however, we have perceived, so far, strong support from our readers.

Agnes Bragadottir of The Reykjavik Morgunbladid learned that one of the lasting benefits of a Nieman Fellowship is

Morgunblaðið

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STOFNAD 1913

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FIMMTUDAGUR 6. MAÍ 1993

Prentsmíðja Morgunblaðsins



DRRUSTUPOTA af gerðinni F-15 frá varnarstöðinni í Keflavík fylgist með auðvæðri herflugvél af gerðinni „Bear D“ í nágrenni Íslands. Hámarki náði flugumferð Sovétmanna við Ísland árið 1985 og þótur varnarliðsins flugu í veg fyrir 170 sovétskar herflugvélar.

Bandarísk stjórnvöld undirbúa breytingar á varnarviðbúnaði á Íslandi

Mikill niðurskurður er fyrirhugaður í Keflavík

not only the strong support system that develops between fellows within each year's class but also between those of different classes. Seeking to learn the intentions of the Pentagon and the State Department regarding possible cuts in the U.S. Defense Force at the NATO base in Keflavik, Iceland, she turned to fellow Niemans John Harwood ('90), Peter Braestrup ('60), Carla Robbins ('90), and Charles Shepard ('91), among others, for help.

In a letter Agnes said that "for me, getting this story was an indescribably exciting event," with the whole country taken by surprise when Morgunbladid came out with the news." She says that the proposed down-sizing of the base "is going to affect the economy of Iceland seriously, and about 1,000 people might lose their jobs—which would be the equivalent of 1,000,000 people losing their jobs in the U.S. We are a nation of 250,000, one one-thousandth of the U.S. population.... You can imagine what a scoop my story was, when I tell you that it took Icelandic politicians completely by surprise. So my paper did what it rarely does—it put the story on the front page. Normally we have international news on our front page and domestic news on our back page."

Agnes ends her correspondence with "10,000 thanks" to the Fellows who helped.

(And our thanks to Hoskuldur Thrainsson, a visiting professor in Harvard's Department of Linguistics, for his help in transcribing Bragadottir's article.)

1989

Rick Tulsy writes of his big career decision:

After 14 years at The Inquirer, I left Philadelphia in July to become Managing Editor of the Center for Investigative Reporting in San Francisco.

Why, wondered some people, friends included, who concluded that this proved my lunacy. After all, The Inquirer is without question one of the best newspapers for investigative reporting in the country.

Frankly, I had trouble grasping why the job didn't make as much sense to others as it made to me.

Near the end of the book "Read All About It," Jim Squires wrote, "It may well be that the values and traditions of the free press will have to find refuge and nourishment in that other 'public

sector' of our economy—the world of nonprofit foundations and educational institutions."

Even presuming that he has overstated the problem (I don't doubt that The Inquirer and other newspapers will continue to practice excellent journalism), Squires could have been thinking of the Center as he wrote.

Founded 16 years ago, the Center is the only nonprofit organization dedicated solely to the practice of investigative reporting. It includes a staff of 10 terrific reporters, each of whom shares a commitment to public-service journalism and a sense that the Center is a special place.

Its mission is simple: The Center is a place where journalists research and write segments for print, for television, for magazines and even for books uncovering systemic problems and abuses of power. The Center exists to take on stories that corporate journalism either cannot or has not adequately covered.

And at a time when corporate journalism seems reluctant to take risks—either because of shrinking resources, or fear of libel, or both—that seems to give the Center a pretty large mandate.

The Center has proven itself over the years with some terrific journalism. I'm confident—in fact, I bet my comfortable job on this—that the Center is on the verge of setting a standard for what journalism is all about.

At a time when television continues to create news magazines as a means of increasing profits, I believe that the Center can and will play a critical role in setting a standard for quality. At a time when print journalism seems obsessed with redefining itself, I believe the Center can and will demonstrate what journalism can and must do.

The Center takes to heart its mission as an educational organization, not only by enlightening the public but also through internship programs designed to instill in less-experienced reporters an appreciation for aggressive and thorough reporting.

To me the question is not why I would take a job helping the Center to reach its goals. I can't imagine why not.

Dorothy Wickenden and her husband, Ben Weiser, have finally moved to New York city for their new jobs—Dorothy as senior editor for national affairs for Newsweek and Ben as investigative reporter focusing on business subjects for

The Washington Post. Their new address is: 136 Corlies Avenue, Pelham, NY, 10803.

Rod Nordland and his wife, Sheila, announced the birth of a daughter, Samantha Lorine Webb Nordland, on July 2, 1993, at the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton, England. Rod and his family will return to their home in Rome, Italy, in August.

1990

Dianna Solis, Wall Street Journal correspondent based in Mexico City, reports on her trip to Indonesia:

Indonesia lives up to its travel-brochure ballyhoo.

It exceeds that ballyhoo when one has such a cultivated tour guide as Goenawan Mohamed. I had the pleasure to visit with our Nieman mate earlier this year during a two-week romp of the 13,000-island archipelago (I have made it only to the islands of Bali and Java but hope to add more in a 1994 visit.)

Goenawan looks well in his native element but is up to his eyeballs in work at Tempo magazine. As the presidential elections neared, he correctly predicted no changes in the world's fourth most populous country, ruled for the last 25 years by Suharto, who came to power suppressing a Communist coup.

After two years living in Mexico, I was most struck by comparisons between Indonesia and Mexico. Both countries are largely dominated by a single religion, Indonesia by Islam, Mexico by Catholicism. Both religions have been diluted to suit each country's needs, but both religions impose fairly rigid mores on women. Both countries suffer from corruption, influence peddling and human-rights abuses.

As of late, Indonesia has been on a development rampage, with 6-7 per cent growth rates. Emporio Armani and the Hard Rock Cafe are fixtures on the Jakarta urban scene, but in the countryside, as in Mexico, poverty rules and the annual per-capita Indonesian income is about \$600, or about a fourth that of Mexico.

Both countries suffer from a brutal colonizing history, but Indonesia seems to have emerged from it with a deeper sense of security and there seems to be far greater pride in its revolution. I guess not living cheek to jowl with a superpower like the US helps.

Yossi Melman and his wife, Billie, are in Ann Arbor where Billie will be a resident professor at the Center for the Humanities of the University of Michigan for the coming academic year. Their address is 1243 Westport Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

1991

Kevin Noblet has been promoted from Caribbean Correspondent based in Puerto Rico for The Associated Press to their foreign desk in New York. His new title is Deputy Foreign Editor. Kevin and his family left Puerto Rico in mid-August, and he will begin his new duties right away.

1992

Asked how The Des Moines Register coped with the serious problems caused by the recent severe flooding, **Tom Witosky** filed this report:

Randy Evans hadn't slept all night.

For that matter, neither had many of The Des Moines Register editors and reporters who milled anxiously about the shadowy and steamy newsroom.

Six hours earlier, record rampaging flood waters had "overtopped" the levees of the Des Moines Water Works, forcing officials to shut off its water distribution system, which serves more than 250,000 central Iowans.

Two hours later, two strong thunderstorms swept through the capital city, not only dumping two more inches of unwanted rain, but also short-circuiting the city's already crippled power system.

Evans, The Register's assistant managing editor in charge of local and state news, was clear as he began to make his assignments. "Right now, we are assuming we will publish something for tomorrow."

But as he looked about the newsroom he also knew it was a long-shot. "Though I am not sure just how in the hell we are going to do that," he said.

There will be a lot written about the Great Flood of 1993 that ravaged Iowa and Missouri and parts of several other Midwestern states last July. There probably has been more written already than any one person can read.

But if there is a lesson that reporters, editors and publishers can learn from the experience of The Des Moines

Register staff, it's this: There may come a day when the odds of your publishing a newspaper may be worse than your chances of winning the lottery. And the situation may last as long as a week.

There will be no warning for that day and few options will be available if you're not ready for it.

To be sure, The Register staff coped with the most difficult challenge it ever faced on that Sunday morning and the two weeks that followed. But it was about as close to a journalistic nightmare as anyone on The Register ever wants to experience.

For weeks, The Register had been covering the Mississippi River floods, particularly the destruction caused in Davenport. Pictures and stories of flooding all along the Mississippi had taken over our front page for almost a week.

But on July 8, the story became a local one when torrential rains filled the Raccoon River and Des Moines River basins to a record capacity.

By week's end, concern had grown that low-lying areas in Des Moines and West Des Moines would flood. But it wasn't until Saturday night that officials got a glimmer of what was about to happen.

By the end of the night, flood waters had gushed into residential and commercial areas never flooded before; submerged electrical power substations; forced cancellation of the Des Moines Grand Prix and, finally, knocked out the city's water supply. By 3 a.m. Sunday, downtown Des Moines, where The Register is located, was virtually inoperable.

For The Register, the nightmare began with the loss of electrical power during the final run of the Sunday metro edition. The Des Moines Fire Department provided sufficient power to complete the run, but made it clear the department wouldn't do it again.

Those who hoped it was just a nightmare found little to be optimistic about the next morning. The extent and suddenness of the crisis left company managers with myriad problems that had to be resolved quickly if the newspaper was going to be operated at any level during the crisis.

Water Works officials said there would be no running water for at least two weeks and no drinking water for a month. Power officials said electricity would be restored in a matter of days,

but warned that the system was so fragile that only essential services would be permitted.

With no portable toilets, no drinkable water, no generators, no air conditioning or lights, company officials knew that they had several days of scrambling in front of them.

But Charles Edwards, Publisher of The Register, made one thing certain at a 9 a.m. meeting of the company's managers. He wanted to publish a paper the next day and one would be published.

Options included asking for help from various nearby competitors such as The Omaha World-Herald and The Cedar Rapids Gazette.

Instead, a jerry-rigged system using the composing facilities of a Gannett-owned weekly in a nearby suburb and the publishing facilities of the Gannett-owned Iowa City Press Citizen was settled upon as the best option for the day.

Before the day began, editors had said that if a newspaper distributed to 100,000 Register subscribers in the metro area could be printed, it would be nothing short of a miracle.

Miracles do happen.

Reporters tried to put together as much news as they could about what had happened, why it happened and how readers could cope with a hardship seldom experienced in modern society.

Several reporters remained in the newsroom despite its heat and bad lighting because telephones were still available. Four manual typewriters were fetched from one reporter's attic, lugged up four flights of stairs and placed on desks next to the newsroom's bank of hermetically sealed windows. (Within days, two of those windows were busted out to provide ventilation in The Register newsroom, which occasionally reached 96 degrees during the day.)

Reporters fanned out across the Des Moines area to attend news briefings to monitor flooding and sandbagging efforts and to watch how a community copes with waiting in long lines for water or to use a portable toilet.

Once reporting was completed, stories were written at a fully functional hotel in the far-northwest suburbs of Des Moines where the business offices had been converted into editing and writing stations.

Because copy was on paper, editors had to do their jobs the old-fashioned way—with No. 2 Ticonderoga pencils and by hooking graphs. Once edited, the stories were faxed to the Indianola, IA newspaper where editors retyped the stories into the local paper's computer system. The negatives were then flown by chartered airplane to Iowa City.

A review of the newspaper shows that reporters wrote a total of 15 stories including a main bar outlining the extent of the problems facing Des Moines area residents. Also on the front page was an explanation to readers and advertisers about the publishing constraints, two pictures and a question-and-answer piece suggesting ways for readers to cope with the crisis.

The one-run edition also included a world-briefs column, a one-page sports section complete with Sunday baseball scores, a one-page editorial section and a picture page with several sensational shots, including one of a rescue of people from the second floor of a local motel.

Subsequently, publication gradually improved both in terms of number of copies and expansion of delivery. The newspaper—unable to use its own facilities for two weeks—split its publishing between Iowa City and the satellite presses of The Wall Street Journal, which also are located in Des Moines.

Publication of a full daily run of more than 190,000 copies didn't take place until the Saturday, July 17 edition. The following Sunday edition was published in full, but circulation and mailroom stuffing problems bedeviled the entire run.

By the second week, many of those problems had eased considerably.

Meanwhile in the newsroom, the adrenaline rush remained with most reporters and editors as stormy weather and excuses from public officials regarding the delays in restoring power and water refused to subside.

To cope with the heat and lack of air conditioning and ventilation, hundreds of fans were brought from homes and by the second week, gigantic industrial fans were in use on every floor.

To cope with the lack of running water, rows of portable toilets were brought to the company and placed in its docking area. (For a while, the toilets were unisex until several women

Market Forecast
July 12, 1993 Monday, July 12, 1993
The Sun Will Shine, Light Breeze, Mostly Cloudy
Temps: 82°-90°
Humidity: 64-74%
Toll: 800-368-3688
COMMEMORATIVE EDITION
The Des Moines Register
Des Moines, Iowa, July 12, 1993
**Floods cripple Des Moines;
entire city without water**
Downtown may lack electricity for a week



More than 1,000 residents waited for water Sunday at the Hi-Vee on Blair Drive. Park and recreation employees helped distribute one gallon to each person.

LOUISIANA: The Register

complained that Register males didn't seem to understand the need to lift the seat.)

In addition, company officials also provided employees with two meals daily of sandwiches, potato chips, cookies, fruit and soft drinks. Several tanks of drinking water were also housed in the docking area.

Now, several weeks after the crisis, early reports indicate the daily Register report on the flood's impact throughout the state became a staple for Iowans.

"I can't find a box anywhere with a paper in it," one reader complained. "Why can't you folks get more papers out here?"

Was the hardship worth it?

Of course, it was. It was newspapering at its finest.

Charles Onyango-Obbo, Editor of The Monitor in Kampala, was named Uganda's 1992 feature writer of the year for a series he wrote for The Monitor from Cambridge about the life of Ugandans in the U.S. He also was named Journalist of the Year. He says: It is difficult to nail down what they consider for this, but they say you must do everything in journalism well."

The award is Uganda's highest in journalism.

1993

At the end of **Sandy Tolan's** Nieman year, he was invited to go to Croatia and Bosnia with Misha Glenny, the BBC correspondent and author of "The Fall of Yugoslavia," to do a two-hour special for American Public Radio. Sandy was there May 10-19, and brought back this report:

Roller skates in the sniper zone. Not what you would set out to find in the Sarajevo streets, on a warm afternoon in May. But there they were, a flock of children, whizzing past Misha and me. I was on assignment for The Christian Science Monitor Radio, producing a documentary with Glenny on the stubborn resilience of Sarajevans who had not given up on the notion of multi-ethnic tolerance. And here, flying past us, was a living metaphor of that resilience: a half-dozen 10-and 12-year-old

girls, Muslims, Serbs and Croats, cries bursting from them in what sounded like a mixture of anguish and delight.

There was a lull in the shelling in those days. This was before the day that 3,700 shells rained down on Sarajevo. Yet the snipers were active, and these girls skated through the zone, it seemed, without hesitation. Why?

"We have to get out and have fun," they told us. "Otherwise, what's the point? Every day we play here, and if they're gonna shoot, they're gonna shoot." They had spent too long cooped up by an angry winter where people huddled eight and 10 to a room, burning their furniture, their books, all the trees in the city, to stay alive. Now it was warm again. "We hope it will never be winter again," one girl told us. But didn't they want to leave? Didn't they ever think about other children, living in places where the bombs were unheard and unseen? "We think about kids over the whole world, all the time," they told us. "We just wish we could be with them. But we love our Sarajevo. We never want to leave our Sarajevo." Then, as if on cue, there was a quick blast of sniper fire, and the children, laughing crazily, skated away. Their small wheels echoed amid the shards of glass on the broken street.

A few days later, I left Sarajevo. A few days after that, the shelling started again. And now, back in Cambridge, I write from safety in a perch above the Charles, and wonder about the children on roller-skates.

Sandy and his wife, Nancy Postero, will be living in Rockport, MA, from October 1993 to June of 1994. Their address is 7 Granite Street, Rockport, MA, 01966.

Arben Kallamata, formerly editor of Drita in Tirana, is now deputy director of Albanian Radio. His new address is Radio Tirana, Tirana, Albania.

Barbara Gutierrez, assistant managing editor of Miami's El Nuevo Herald, attended the National Association of Hispanic Journalists' (NAHJ) conference in Washington in June. The conference this year emphasized the role of the Latino middle manager in the newsroom. Titled "Hispanic Vision: Taking Charge," the conference attracted 900 journalists.

An NAHJ survey released during the conference revealed that although the

number of Latino journalists at the largest circulation newspapers has increased by 27 percent, from 509 or 3 percent of total newsroom staff to 634 or 4 percent, Latinos accounted for only 2.4 percent of newspaper managers.

Barbara spoke on a panel called "Racism and Sexism in the Newsroom: Advancing in the white, male power structure."

She chose to talk about her Nieman year and the dearth of minority journalists applying for fellowships. (There are no Latinos in the entering Nieman class. Only two applicants out of the 97 were Latinos.)

Gutierrez said many Latino journalists do not consider top schools for a fellowship because they consider the schools "too elite." Often, minority applicants feel that their experience will not be fully valued by the selection committees overseeing the fellowship application process, she added.

"What we do often is cross ourselves out of the process," Gutierrez said. "We rule ourselves out even when the white male structure might be ready to include us."

Barbara plans to continue to talk to different professional groups about the Nieman program. She also plans to organize a panel on how to apply to fellowships for NAHJ's next conference. ■

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