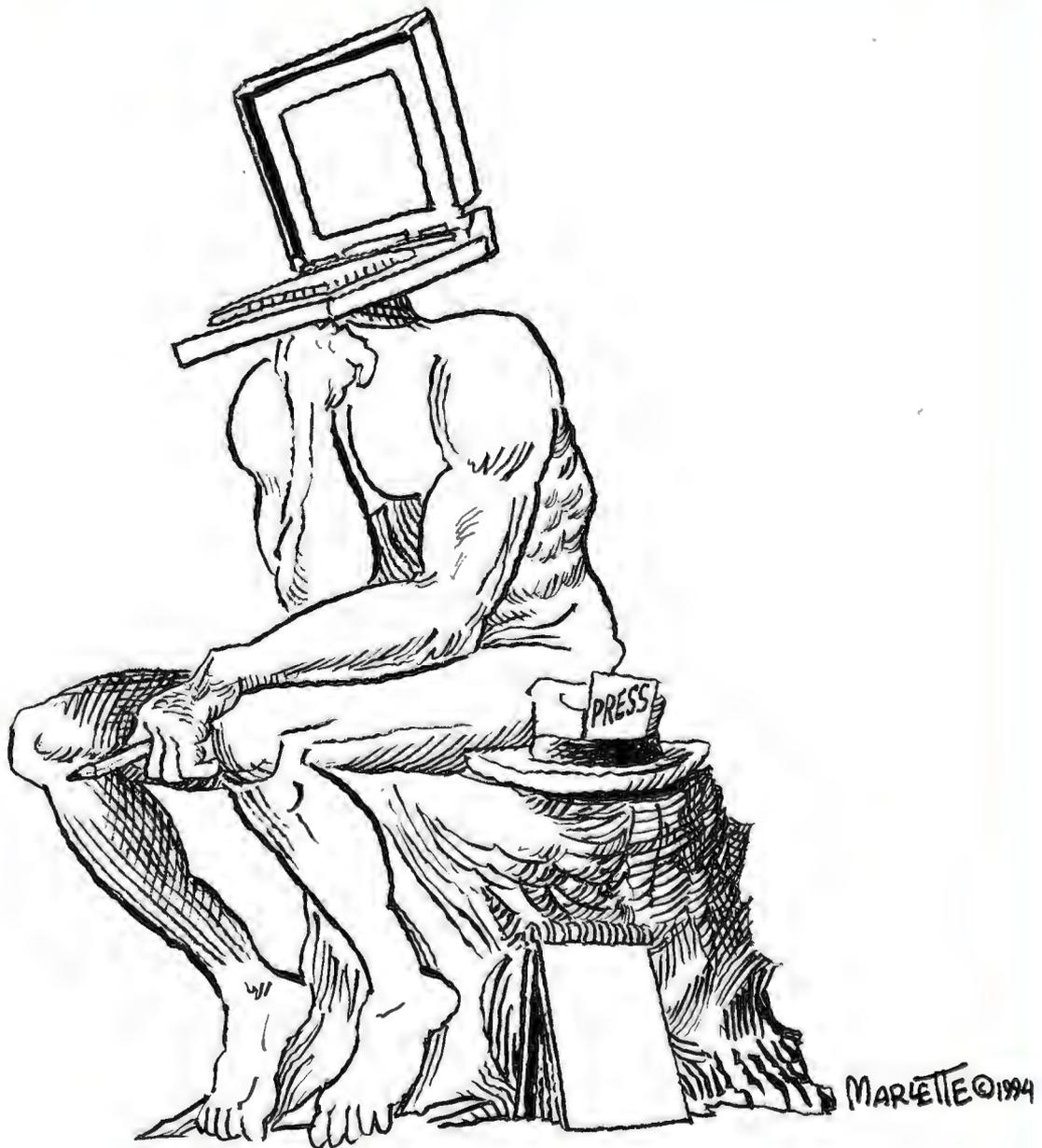


NIEMAN REPORTS

THE NIEMAN FOUNDATION AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Vol. XLVIII No. 2 Summer 1994

FIVE DOLLARS



Can Journalists Shape the New Technologies?

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

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

NIEMAN REPORTS

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Can Journalists Shape the New Technologies?

Toward a New Journalists' Agenda: Responding to Emerging Technological and Economic Realities—A Nieman Conference

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Doug Marlette, Nieman Fellow 1981, drew the cartoon on the cover.
Stan Grossfeld, Nieman Fellow 1992, took the photographs of the conference.

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Why Another Conference on Technology?

There have been many conferences on the new electronic technologies. Why did the Nieman Foundation sponsor another? What made the conference May 19-21 different was that it addressed the overriding issue facing journalists: Will the reporters and editors and news directors be able to shape the new media or will the technology dictate the future? The conference itself was shaped by Nieman Fellows, past and current, over the course of a year of rapidly shifting crosscurrents within the news business. Adopting a conference strategy and then adapting it in the midst of such rapid change proved to be just the kind of difficult challenge so many newsroom leaders now face.

Francis Pisani, Nieman class of 1993, grew interested in the ways technologies will transform the creative process for writers, and urged Curator Bill Kovach to sponsor a conference that would introduce journalists to the radical potentials of the technologies. At the point Pisani envisioned a conference, there were only a couple of major newspaper on-line services, and the words interactive multimedia had not yet become a cliché. The challenge seemed to be to get journalists to pay attention.

But by the fall of 1993, with Pisani back in Mexico, the almost willful ignorance on the part of the profession had begun to shift under an avalanche of press attention to massive communications mergers and Vice President Al Gore's visions of an information superhighway. Pisani's Nieman classmate, Katherine Fulton, who was busy teaching herself about the future by teaching a media technology course at Duke University, took on the task of rethinking the conference. Kovach pressed to include a look at the changing economics of the media system and 1994 Nieman Fellows Melanie Sill and Katherine King urged a focus on how journalists can use new technologies now to better serve their viewers and readers.

The planning committee, which also included Tom Regan, Nieman class of 1992, eventually settled on a broad format that would mine the wisdom of some of the best minds from inside and outside the profession, as we seek to determine just what the most pressing questions are or ought to be. The focus shifted from explaining the technology to exploring its vast implications. Key presenters were asked to make a challenge, with other panelists and the audience responding and questioning. All along, the emphasis remained on action—what should we be doing, individually and collectively, to shape the new media and the future of journalism?

The bulk of this issue of Nieman Reports is devoted to that question. In addition to excerpts of the transcript of the conference, Nieman Reports offers comments from a number of experts who were not there as well as some of the 98 participants. ■

Who's Going to Make the Decisions? Who's Going to Set the Values?

Introductory Remarks

Bill Kovach, Curator, Nieman Foundation

It is our hope that this conference will help journalists develop some insights into the potential of the emerging communications technology as well as to help us all get a better grip on the vocabulary with which to think about that potential and to engage in the debate about its purpose, its shape, and its application.

In order to do that it is important to take a few minutes at the beginning of our meeting to remind ourselves of some other times when new ideas and new technologies changed the way the world was perceived and organized and in the process changed the nature of communications and the values attached to the work of those who provided its content.

We may not know exactly where we are going, but we do know where we have been. So it is important to try at least to consider the lessons offered by past experience.

The history of communications is rich with examples of breakthroughs which liberated people from certain kinds of knowledge in which they were trapped, beginning with Gutenberg's printing press and extending through the telegraph through television to today's computerized world of digital information.

Each of these revolutions has had a profound impact on the way information was organized and transmitted. And, in each case, the combination of the technology and the economic organization of that technology has inspired its own set of values. As with all subsequent revolutions in communications one important effect has been to fur-

ther democratize the flow of information, to make it possible to put the possession of knowledge and information into the hands of more and more people. In each case that promise has been defined and limited by the way the new technology is organized into systems and the values that organization infuses into the systems.

For example, the introduction of the telegraph coincided with the apex of the colonial reach of the British Empire. This fact led to two effects on the journalism of the time.

First, because the British controlled the installation of the world system it fixed the international press rates, the empire rate: a penny a word from any place in the empire to any place in the empire. Thus the picture of the world was largely defined by the British Empire setting firmly in place an east-west system of world communications only now beginning to break down.

Second, by putting a value on each word, stories shrunk magically. Telegraphese eliminated texture, interpretation, context from stories. Where journalists once were celebrated for the eloquence and depth and detail of their leisurely dispatches a premium was now put on the latest news—on scoops—and a breathless energy in the telling; a focus on visible facts at the expense of deeper meaning.

Later, when Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone he thought he was inventing an instrument to spread mass education and culture—to transmit lectures and plays and classical music from urban areas to isolated homes and communities.

According to one student of the development of the telephone system, Sidney Aronson, in the beginning there was an almost total focus on the mass use of the system to spread news broadcasts and educational and cultural programming. But a combination of economic and political developments shifted the energy which organized the eventual use of the telephone.

The instrument appeared in the United States at a time when American industry was developing units which were national in scope. It had become important to this emerging economic organization of industry that the central office be able to direct and control the outlying parts of the system.

And much of this organization was in the form of illegal monopolies—and the telephone had a characteristic which made it compelling for the emerging robber barons. Unlike the telegraph it left no written record.

Finally, the economic organization of the telegraph system was already in place and telephone usage was soon dictated by commercial and professional applications inspired by the telegraph.

In the end a system envisioned to serve the broad public as an instrument of education and enlightenment was organized into a system catering to more narrow but more commercially useful needs.

And then came radio. In a new book entitled "Selling Radio," Susan Smulyan tells us radio, like all technological breakthroughs in communications in the past, was greeted with unlimited optimism for its potential as a system of enormous use to a self-governing society.

The first broadcasters were colleges and universities, labor and farm organizations, cities, and religious institutions. Their primary goal was to provide a forum to strengthen community bonds and for local and regional education and information.

As Ms. Smulyan writes: "The concept of national radio service preceded the idea of radio as a commercial medium."

In fact, that model capitalist, Herbert Hoover, who was then Secretary of Commerce, told an early National Radio Conference:

"The quickest way to kill broadcasting would be to use it for direct advertising....If a speech by the president is to be used as the meat in a sandwich of two patent medicine advertisements there will be no radio left."

But RCA, a monopoly created with government blessing after World War I to keep the new technology out of the control of the British-owned Marconi Company, favored national, centrally owned radio networks and the newly emerging advertising concept of suggestive selling.

Radio, in the end, was not shaped by society or by the popular culture but by a combination of commercial interests with the assistance of government regulation.

Commercialized radio grew because of a systematic sustained sales effort, not because advertisers flocked voluntarily to a new outlet. As a result another technology which promised public enlightenment and education became simply a medium of escape, diversion and entertainment.

And as faithfully as each tail follows its own dog, when television added pictures to broadcast the new industry simply followed the pattern of organization set by radio. Both were easily accommodated by the Federal Communications Act of 1934, written to favor commercial broadcasting at the expense of public systems.

I wanted to take this brief look back at the promise and the eventual reality which fol-

lowed the introduction of several other great innovations in the history of communications for only one reason: in all my reading of the history of communications and the changes wrought by technological or conceptual breakthroughs there is little evidence that those who provided the content for the system—the journalists—were seriously involved in the conversations.

In each case the demands of the technology and the economic organization assisted by government actions determined how the content would be gathered and organized. These decisions, in turn, shaped the values that governed the process.

And that is the reason we have convened this conference. There is no shortage of conferences on the new technology which are considering the characteristics of the technology or ways in which it will increase production, cut personnel costs, create new revenue streams. These are all important because they stimulate the journalists in the system to begin to pay attention to the trends and to take seriously the change that is washing over the system.

But these are aspects of the system within which journalism is embedded. They affect and they shape journalism but they do not take as their primary

obligation the furtherance of journalism in the public interest—a journalism which takes as its undeniable obligation the necessity of providing the public with a steady flow of information about the issues, the questions, and the characters of the day in a context which helps them to take an active part in their own governance.

Whether the technology which will carry journalism into the future strengthens or overwhelms this kind of journalism has yet to be determined. But one thing is certain. Unless those of us who care about this kind of public interest journalism become knowledgeable about the technology, conversant with its applications and active in shaping the decisions that will be made about its uses, other forces with more powerful interest will make those decisions. More powerful interests like those of John C. Malone, the head of TCI, who has said anyone who tried to run a corporation in the public interest would be fired.

It is important for journalists today to recognize the value which they carry with them into this uncertain future. It is important to remember what the Hutchins Commission study of the free press concluded in 1947. The Commission found that while each change in communications technology led to a



Conferees attending session at Harvard's Taubman Center

new organization of the industry no new content was introduced. Each new organization simply transferred to a new system of communications what originally passed from person to person as gossip, rumor and oral discussion.

What *is* new in the modern system of communications is the value added by journalism. The value of the systematic effort by journalists to gather, verify, organize, and present reliable and timely information in a meaningful context.

And it is important for journalists to remember, as well, that change will affect the way they organize to do their journalism. At a recent Nieman seminar on the art of political cartooning, Doug Marlette told a story that provides another way to think about what we are experiencing, this time from the history of art.

Before the Renaissance Italian artist, Brunelleschi, discovered the phenomenon of perspective, all artists were held prisoner to the fact that they knew the human figure to be about seven heads tall. Faithful to that knowledge they painted all their figures seven heads tall and in so doing could not depict depth in two dimensions.

Brunelleschi's discovery offered them—in effect and in fact—a new perspective and rescued them from the particular knowledge in which they had been trapped. They were now free to depict the real world in a way that made sense. Brunelleschi's vision brought previously spiritual pictorial art down to earth and moved art from the chapel wall to the family living room. Artists became journalists organized in what could be called freelance cooperatives similar to what some observers predict will one day perch on the banks of the Internet.

So it is in the hope that this conference can be the beginning of a discussion of this and other issues which confront and confuse journalists today. That it be the beginning of an on-going conversation among journalists concerned with public interest journalism and that the Nieman Foundation can facilitate the continuation of that conversation. ■

Case Studies Challenging Traditional Assumptions

Moderator

Melanie Sill, Projects Editor, The News & Observer, Raleigh, N.C.,
Nieman Fellow 1994

Presenters

Catherine Giraudeau, Audiotext Editor, San Jose Mercury Center.
Tom Regan, Columnist, Halifax News.
Susan Meiselas, Photographer-essayist, and
Christopher Vail, Multimedia Producer.

Mercury Center

MELANIE SILL

We start out by considering some of the reporting done around the L.A. earthquake this year in January. I think the case shows some of the things that were done that indicate what's in the future, and also tells us about some opportunities that traditional media have not yet figured out how to take advantage of. We prepared a short video presentation in the spirit of multimedia.

[Video featuring Tracy Conan, a San Jose Mercury reporter, who filed audiotext reports on the earthquake, is played.]

While I was doing research for this presentation, I called Tracy Conan and talked to her a bit about this, because I didn't know how a reporter would feel about being put on the spot and asked to do something new. Tracy has covered her share of disasters. She worked for eight years at The Miami Herald and covered Hurricane Andrew and other disasters there. She also covered the fires in Southern California last November, when she first came to The Mercury News. And she said that she really liked

filing the audiotext reports from the earthquake scene because it was the first time she had covered disaster without feeling like she was working for what she called a dinosaur. She felt that she could get her reports out quickly, and do something else with her print stories. So she has incorporated audiotext reports into her routine in covering other stories. And now, I think, we're ready to talk by telephone to Catherine Giraudeau, [Audiotext Editor at The San Jose Mercury Center].

Sill—Could you tell us, roughly, how many people used these audiotext reports and the on-line service and other alternative sources of information?

Giraudeau—Well, in the week following the earthquake, 1,500 people called in for The News Call earthquake coverage. That may not sound like a whole lot, but considering that our average call volume for everything for a week at that time was about 400 calls, it was pretty significant. In terms of on-line, 35,000 people have access to Mercury Center in our area; we don't have actually exact numbers on how many people actually did access it.

Sill—What do you think people can get from the audiotext reports that they can't get from other media or from the newspaper?

Giraudeau—Well, as you heard in Tracy's report, they could get a kind of immediacy and eyewitness perspective that most radio reporters aren't going to put on the air. There was a lot of news, there was a lot of help information, where to go to get services. But I don't think that any other medium was putting out that personal kind of view. The other thing that people could get through Mercury Center and News Call was the chance to talk to each other. And people really needed to talk.

Sill—I guess people in this room are wondering what lessons they can take from Mercury Center's experience so far with audiotext, since you all have been doing some of the earliest work with it in terms of news reports.

Giraudeau—Well, I think that having a broadcast medium, which essentially News Call is—or maybe more appropriately, you would call it narrowcasting—but having that attached to a print medium like a newspaper gives that print medium the immediacy of radio or television. That's something that I think all newspapers should have, especially in a disaster situation like the earthquake.

Sill—And my last question is, what kinds of ideas you got from the quake that you're putting into practice now with covering other stories?

Giraudeau—Well, I'm trying to set up to have all our foreign correspondents call in reports. It's something that they aren't able to do in the few stories they're able to get into the paper. So, for example, our Mexico reporter's going to start calling in slice-of-life feature reports on daily life in Mexico, as is our Vietnam bureau reporter.

Toronto Citytv

MELANIE SILL

The next case looks at a television station in Canada that has used technology—not new technology, and not anything in terms of machines that will blow you away. But they have used this technology to forge a pretty lively relationship with their community in

Toronto. And this might be a kind of precedent and forerunner of some of the things that are going on with New England Cable News, New York One, and other local, independent cable stations that are trying to build different kinds of identities in pretty competitive markets.

TOM REGAN

Since coming on the air in 1972, it can be argued that Citytv had redefined the idea of local TV. A couple of years ago, Barry Diller, who was then the chairman of Fox, advised people that if they wanted to see the future of television, they should go to Toronto and, in his words, "suck up the environment of Citytv." Through a combination of imagination, available technology, and chutzpah, Citytv has become a much-cloned model. It's also made a lot of money. I believe the importance of Citytv can be hoiled down into three areas.

The first one is the look of Citytv, or how Moses Znaimer [who conceived and set up Citytv] has shown that on television, style is as important as substance when it's done in the right way. Second, how fragmentation of the TV audience is not something to be afraid of, but something to be embraced. And third, the key to Citytv's real success—its relationship, based on technology, to its viewers, a relationship that breaks many rules about how the media and the public should interact, a relationship that shows that the key to success, at least for this one local television station, has been a relationship and a movement towards democracy, and away from greater control.

Imagine your local TV news. It goes something like this—you turn on your TV, and there's Biff and Jill, looking prim, peppy, and plastic, in most cases. They sit behind a very conventional desk in a very conventional TV newsroom set. Perhaps the management has taken a chance, and there might be a monitor or two behind our team. There may even be the occasional live feed, which sometimes is shot from just on the street outside the station, but it looks really neat when it comes inside. The news is presented in a static, straight-

forward style. Because the presentation is often—well, dull, the news director is forced to spice up the newscast with lots of sensational footage about murders, about robberies, burglaries.

Don't forget the weary and friendly chatter between the hosts! When the newscast is finished, we might talk to Flip, the weather guy, or Chuck, the sports guy. By the time the newscast is over, the only movement we have seen in the studio has been Flip gesticulating in front of his weather map. Maybe in the closing shot, we might actually see the camera people. Nothing like "behind the scenes" to excite the audience.

Now, if you want to know what Citytv looks like and what it feels like and what kind of emotional response that you might have to it, think informal, first of all. Think urban. Think of a TV station that prides itself on literally being everywhere. Think of a TV station that tries its best to tear down the fourth wall between the broadcaster and the viewer. Think of a TV station so popular with the public in Toronto that residents of the city actually invite members of the station to weddings, family reunions, and neighborhood celebrations. Think of a TV station that tries to say, "Come on, be a part of this!"

Citytv has shown that on television, style can be as important as substance when it's done with imagination. Now, as journalists, we are supposed to reject this notion. Style for us is often a dirty word, and that's understandable, because most media attempts at integrating style with news are clumsy, ham-handed attempts that create Frankensteins, rather than Fred Astaires. But as Professor Derrick de Kerckhove, who is the director of the Marshall McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology at the University of Toronto noted in a recent interview about Citytv in *Wired* magazine—I love this statement—"Television is not meant for substantial arguments. It's meant for relationships. And very few television stations have managed to push the relationship as far as Citytv."

Citytv created this style, this new sense of space and news on TV, by deconstructing, perhaps, the core element that TV has relied on since its

inception—the studio. Citytv's "studio" is literally the City of Toronto. Its home headquarters, the Chum Building on Queen Street West, is an anti-studio. Cameras are no longer hard-wired to the traditional notion of a control room or a studio. A network of 32 exposed hydrants connect audio, video, sync, intercom, and 90 miles of cable in the building. Any corner, any office, any hallway, any broom closet can literally be on-air within minutes. Not to mention the entire block outside the building, thanks to the external hydrants which turn the streets of Toronto into Citytv's on-air backdrop.

Since there's no conventional studio, no proscenium arch that hides the backstage area, you literally see everything that happens on Citytv. Techies wandering around in shorts and Toronto Maple Leaf hockey sweaters. Somebody talking on the phone to his girlfriend. Perhaps you will see a bus drive by through one of the many windows that open the entire studio, the whole first floor where much of it is shot, to the street. Then again, there may be a crowd of people looking in.

That's because Moses Znaimer's philosophy is that what happens just outside the traditional framed shot of a TV camera—what he calls the "process of TV"—might be just as interesting as what is inside the frame.

Citytv shows the strings that make the puppet dance, and creates even more magic by doing so. Citytv completes its magical "everywhere" act by using available technology in new ways. Twenty-one camera cruisers constantly roam the city of Toronto. Two live-eye microwave hook-ups and six remote control cameras [are] scattered around the city of Toronto. The result is a connection to the city, a sense of its reality and of its movement, that most TV stations could only dream of.

Citytv news coverage is also different in one other important way. This does not involve technology so much, but it does involve a movement towards a new kind of news coverage—which is also, I think, partially what we're talking about here. And that is, Citytv is extremely multicultural. After all, Toronto may be arguably the most multicultural

and multiracial city in Canada. Yet the face of most of the TV in Toronto is white, Anglo-Saxon, and male. From the beginning of Citytv, Moses Znaimer has shown Toronto its reflection in the mirror of his TV station. It was the first TV station in Canada to use a black newscaster on-air long before it became politically correct to do so. In keeping with his belief that TV should be democratized, Znaimer has hired reporters and other on-air staff of Indian, West Indian, Korean, Ukrainian, East Indian, Caribbean, indigenous, black, native backgrounds, to name a few.

It's also fair to point out that this practice is good business. By the year 2000, more than 50 percent of Torontonians will come from cultural backgrounds that are neither white nor European. And whose news do you think they're going to be watching?

But all the points mentioned above really play secondary roles when it comes to the real genius of Citytv, at least as far as I am concerned. Citytv has redefined the nature of the relationship between the broadcaster and the viewer. It has—successfully, I believe—torn down that fourth wall, the one that says, "You, the viewer, must sit there passively and watch what we, the broadcaster, will show you." Citytv is part of a trend toward greater democracy in all forms of media. It's a movement enabled and fueled by technology. In this new world of journalism, the formerly passive recipient of our musings in the media will play a much greater role in the creation of the product.

In the case of Citytv, the viewer is indeed often the product herself. The key word here is access, and Citytv offers the people of Toronto an access to the airwaves quite unlike most other television stations in North America. "Regular Janes and Joes," as they're called, introduce the late-night movies. Fifty thousand visitors go through the station every year, many of them ending up on-air. Almost all of the station's in-house products are done in front of live audiences, some of which spill out onto the streets outside the ChumCity Build-

ing. Station breaks feature slice-of-life portraits of Toronto captured by those roving cameras mentioned earlier.

But perhaps the most compelling example of this movement towards democracy is Speaker's Corner. Wired magazine called it "a strange oasis of the soul. A technical confessional where, for a charity-bound buck, anyone can pose, preen, or proselytize in front of a video camera for two minutes...and, good taste permitting, end up on Citytv." As Wired notes, "Speaker's Corner" offers the ultimate in broadcast accessibility.

It works like this—you enter the "Speaker's Corner" booth, which is located right beside the ChumCity Building—and there are now several other ones around the city. You deposit a "loonie," and that's what we Canucks call our \$1 coins, into the box. The money goes to charity. You then have two minutes to talk about whatever you want to talk about! People who normally never get a chance to have their say on what really matters migrate to "Speakers' Corner."

So do those in search of understanding. Perhaps the most interesting example of this was the case of Rocket Ismail, the Notre Dame football star, then a wide receiver for the Toronto Argonauts. During a particularly heated game, Ismail deliberately stepped on an opponent's unhelmeted head with his cleats. The hometown Argo fans soundly booed their new hero for this act of unsportsmanlike conduct. Ismail fled the press, but traveled the city ashamed and, wanting to apologize, went to "Speaker's Corner," where he apologized to the city of Toronto for his sins.

Last note—as a matter of fact, they told me—most of the time "Speaker's Corner" is used for political commentary and other things, but there have been three wedding proposals and also, one person who actually came in and confessed to a major crime, believe it or not. Turned out to be the guy that did it, too.

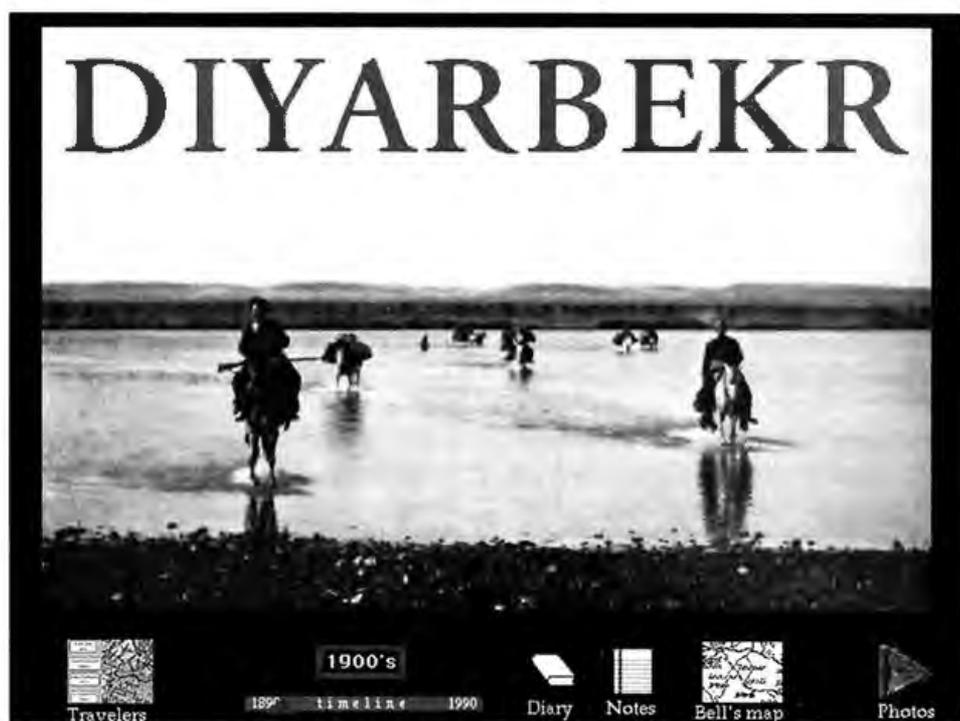
As we previously noted, a lot of this has to do with relationship. In the past, the media and the TV in particular have kept its distance from its audience. Sure,

TV wants the audience's attention—and its money, for sure—but seldom has it been asked for its input on any kind of a really meaningful level. This is one of the reasons why so many Torontonians consider Citytv their own station. It's a sense of having a shared emotional investment in the outcome, and I should point out that Citytv is number one in the market and has been for a long, long time. For the people who watch and participate in Citytv—and "participate" is the right word—this kind of TV is more than good business, or profitable. It's fun, and exciting, and accessible.

Is it good journalism? Some say yes and some say no. Citytv has become the number one newscast in Toronto. And I'm happy to say it doesn't have to rely all the time on sensationalism to get those numbers.

A good example was part of the recent newscast which took place from celebrations held in Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto. They were held to mark the triumph of democracy in South Africa. Other stations merely covered the celebration in a minute or so during their newscast. Citytv did its whole newscast from the celebration, recognizing that in a multicultural city like Toronto the election result in South Africa was a local story. And they used their technology to be able to bring that story to the people of Toronto. Citytv went to the celebration and integrated it into its newscast, and that sounds like pretty perceptive journalism to me.

Finally, Citytv leaves us with two important issues to be contemplated this weekend. One is the issue of the control of information and the other one is the issue of intellectual property. Citytv and all other media that are moving toward more interaction with their audience raise the question of control of content. And this question reveals I believe a somewhat basic contradiction at the heart of journalism: our expressed desire to give our audience the information that they need and our desire to be gatekeepers of that information. In the coming years, people will want more control over what they read, hear and watch. And anyone who has worked in any of the new technologies can tell you that people want more control over



A screen showing options from Meiselas-Vail Kurdistan CD.

their news. And not our control. Citytv has moved toward this model in a number of ways including a regular consultation with community leaders and groups to see what they want to see on the TV station. Watching journalists struggle with this notion is a little like watching management types struggle with the idea of total quality.

[There] are two questions that I suppose I would like to leave based on this Citytv model. How do we devolve control to our audiences without diminishing the value of content? And how do we protect valid intellectual properties, especially at a time when technology is erasing the traditional boundaries between concepts that may have existed in the past?

In the Shadow of History—Kurdistan

MELANIE SILL

Our next presentation will convince you that changes are already occurring. Susan Meiselas and Chris Vail are working together on a fascinating project that takes traditional documentary and

journalistic materials and knits them together to create a different kind of narrative.

Susan and Chris first worked together as photojournalists covering Central America during the 1980's. Now they're collaborating on an interactive CD about the Kurdish people. It is the history of a people whose culture has never enjoyed official boundaries as a nation. The project is based on Susan's research and investigation which began four years ago during the Gulf War. A year after she began her work on the Kurds, Susan was awarded a McArthur Foundation genius grant that enabled her to continue the project. Since February, Chris has been designing and producing the prototype for this interactive CD and now they're going to show it to you and tell you a little bit more about it.

CHRISTOPHER VAIL

I remember the day I walked into Susan's studio to discuss collaborating on this project about Kurds. At that point I knew very little about the Kurds as a people or their history. She handed me a stack of materials, photographs, maps, diaries, letters, diplomatic correspondence and said, here, take a look at this.

So I sat down for the next hour or two and started going through this, reading the stories and looking at the material. Then she sat down to talk with me, and I had some questions. I said, okay, who are these people? And I cited some examples. There were some interesting stories that caught my eye. Every time I mentioned a photograph or an event, or some story that I had read, Susan had about 17 connections to go with it. And she kept bringing more and more material into it. And she kept saying, "Well, if you're interested in that, you have to see this."

Pretty soon we were digging through piles of magazines, new and old, books, other material all over the studio, listening to Kurdish music, looking at weavings. We were having this whole experience. I think I spent maybe five hours there that day. When I walked out of there my head was full of Kurdish facts and stories, but also it was just reeling because I had had this rather intense experience of learning about a culture that I had no idea about. And one thing that I decided when I walked out of there that if we produce anything about the Kurds that it should somehow replicate the kind of experience that I had had there in her studio that day.

SUSAN MEISELAS

Digging is a metaphor for this project. The digging is digging back through the photographs that are kinds of records. I think of a relationship, a relationship that the West has had for a long time with the Kurds. What I'm doing is really building a book and hopefully this will lead to an interactive format for that. Because the linear narrative of the book is already constraining. I'm looking at a hundred years of travelers to Kurdistan, myself at the end of a timeline somewhere. People have obviously gone back since I've been there, and trying to recreate that relationship in that I think that photographs are a record of a relationship.

The Kurds not having a nation means that they have no central library, you know? Bibliothèque Nationale doesn't exist. So you find their history, their

memory buried in those places, both the family albums and our archives. So that's the source of a lot of this material, but in fact those sources, which is quite interesting for me, I'd love to be in all of your newspapers digging around. I'm sure I'd find some things, most of them probably would not have the critical detail that I need to know, which is who's in those pictures, and what date they were taken. Pictures when they end up in archives are very often fragments of what happened. And in fact it's kind of horrifying to realize how inadequately that information is kept, and most of it is not very well preserved.

So I'm looking at the history through the eyes of missionaries, anthropologists, colonial administrators, military officials. You know, the Mahabad Republic, which was 1946 in Iran, the only other time the Kurds had any autonomy, was really only documented visually by a U.S. military attaché in Tehran.

[Prototype of CD-ROM, with viewers able to call up old still photographs of places and people in Kurdistan, is played.]

BILL KOVACH

The interactive world on display in our three case studies raises a lot of points. There are a couple that I would just like to mention. The obvious one[is] the new relationships which are possible between the providers of news and information and the consumers.

I think in the more traditional one, in the Los Angeles earthquake scenario, the audience most often wanted the most basic kind of information—is my family safe? And at least as often wanted the journalist to get out of the way and let them talk with each other, to sort of become Lily Tomlin at telephone central and make the connection and move away.

Citytv in Toronto has obviously decided to one extent or another to invite everyone into the studio and to establish a kind of a personal relationship, a sense of Citytv as the place in which community expresses itself, which I know is an issue that a number of you are working on considering, Ed Fouhy,

Buzz Merritt among others, who are concerned about this sense about how the new journalism helps foster this sense of community. But it's one that moves at such a frenetic pace—tell me everything that's on your mind in 50 words or less—that it raises some question about the value of that approach as journalism.

And finally we had Chris Vail and Susan Meiselas, a very complex and textured journey through something called the Kurds, which offers the possibility of a lifetime relationship between the consumer and the information and provides an opportunity for the journalist to create a body of knowledge that never existed, and to allow the consumer of that knowledge to create his or her own journey through it.

All of these are different in form if not in kind. And I think they all have implications for journalism and the notion of what journalism is in this new world. ■

In the Good Old Days-1

Questions at the conference about validating sources on the Internet reminded Bill Kovach, the Nieman curator, of a story that's told around The New York Times, which, while he cannot vouch for, is "true enough of the culture to be a true story."

The first interview that The New York Times had with Calvin Coolidge right after he was sworn in as President at midnight on the death of Warren Harding did not go in the paper because it was called in from a Boston reporter who said he had just talked to Coolidge. The Times editor said to the correspondent, "I didn't know Coolidge was in Boston." When the correspondent said he was not, the editor asked, "Well, how did you talk to him?" And he said, "By phone."

"Well, how did you know that was him on the phone? I'm not going to take that story. You go up to Dixville Notch and see this man and make sure it's Calvin Coolidge." The story was held out until he drove up to Vermont and talked face to face with Coolidge.

Kovach pointed out that "we're raising the question all over again with computers."

What Is Journalism and Who Is a Journalist When Everyone Can Report and Edit News?

Moderator

Katherine Fulton, Duke University's Sanford Institute of Public Policy.
Founder, The North Carolina Independent. Nieman Fellow 1993.

Challengers

Michael Rogers, Senior Writer, Newsweek, and Managing Editor, Newsweek InterActive.
Ellen Schneider, Co-executive Producer, PBS documentary series POV.

KATHERINE FULTON

I was thinking this morning about this question of what is journalism and who is a journalist. And I remembered my first interview more than 15 years ago, to work for a newspaper, and this crotchety old sports editor who was the managing editor said to me, what is news? And I kind of squirmed, because I actually think that's a complicated question and one that's kind of mystified me for in fact 15 years or more. And I've devoted my career to trying to think hard and try different ways of thinking about that. And I think the fundamental issue is that—his answer was, news is whatever I say it is. And in fact, what's changing is that news is going to be whatever the people who consume it say it is, not so much what we say it is anymore.

A very interesting man named Ted Nelson, who the people who know about computers will have heard of, claims to have invented the word hypertext, said this about what it is. He said: "Not the nature of machines, but the nature of ideas is what matters. It is incredibly hard to develop, organize and transmit ideas and it always will be. But at least in the future we won't be booby-trapped by the nature of paper. We can design magic paper."

What we'll see what Michael [Rogers] is playing with is magic paper. Michael is not new to multimedia and interactive multimedia is not new. It is simply new to journalism. Any of you who have seen the kinds of things that are being done in education and how extraordinary they are, know the potential of this technology and also some of its dangers, the things to watch out for.

Newsweek InterActive

MICHAEL ROGERS

I sort of started and spent most of my career in the world of letters and journalism. But lately in my new media activities, I find myself speaking primarily in front of groups of venture capitalists, software wizards, financial analysts and so forth. And it's only in the last year or so that the audiences have started to be editors and publishers and writers. And, as I will conclude later on, I think that's a very good thing. Because if we don't bring our values and our culture to this new medium, there are many, many people out there who are willing to do it for us and indeed are already doing their best to do so.

I'm going to get straight to the bells and whistles as quickly as possible and keep this head talking as little as possible. Because I think that demonstrations are really key. I've been traveling around the country for two years now, talking about new media and journalism, and essentially have come up with the conclusion that you cannot explain a new medium using an old medium. I'm quite sure there were wonderful radio programs describing television, but it really wasn't until people walked into the department store and saw that little box with Milton Berle on the screen wearing a dress that they said, I get it, I want one of those.

And so it is I think with interactive multimedia, with yet another caveat. It takes more than simply seeing it. One actually has to participate in it. Even the demonstration that I will do today is not accurate in the sense that it's like trying to demonstrate Newsweek magazine for you, standing up and saying, well, you start with the table of contents, it's really quite well written, and then we flip over here, and there's a picture, you'd like this picture if you could see it—you have to interact to understand really what the medium means.

At Newsweek we've been fooling around with new media since 1989. Actually our first product we decided not to sell. It was an interactive pro-

gram, it was called "Upheaval in China," about Tiananmen Square. It required five large pieces of equipment to run, essentially three trips to the car. And we decided that this was not going to be a commercial product. We continued to fool around, mostly with interface design, until in 1992, we realized that we couldn't learn much more by designing prototypes and taking them to conferences and showing them to other people who were building prototypes. That in fact, the next step in learning digital journalism was taking it into the public, doing R&D in public. And that's exactly what we've done since March of 1993. We're just finishing our fifth issue. We're a quarterly. Because that's as fast as we can figure out how to do it, although now we know how to do it on a monthly basis, we think, but it's a non-trivial problem as they say in computers.

The things that we wanted to learn by going into the public are three, really. First of all, what does the audience use this stuff for? We wanted people who'd really paid with their own credit cards that we could call up or write and say, gee, why did you buy this and what do you think of it? We really thought that we had to have that kind of audience and that's been an invaluable asset so far.

The second thing we wanted to learn was scheduling, logistics. No one has any idea what it costs to do these products. And as anyone who's gone out and tried to get a bid, for example, on doing a CD-ROM, you will find that the bids are all over the map. It's basically how rich you look is how the bid comes back. If you're a Fortune 500 company, they add a couple zeros at the end. No one really knows. So we decided we better figure it out ourselves. And what do we call the people who work on this? Are they writers, are they producers? What do we call the audience? And this is one we haven't even decided on yet. Are they viewers, are they readers? A lot of questions that we want to answer practically.

Then the third thing that we're trying to do and this is in some ways the most practical, is figure out how to integrate advertising into this new medium. Because we think at least from our point of

view, Americans don't pay full freight for much of their information now. We don't see any reason to assume that will change in the future. So integrating advertising within a serious editorial context is something that has to be done with a lot of editorial input. The church-state relationship is really going to have to be redefined. And until we develop more of the state, we've got to really work on it ourselves.

I think probably the overall challenge that we've learned in our years in new media is that in the end the fundamentals still apply. The problem is figuring out what the fundamentals are. Because so much of what we do in journalism today and storytelling is predicated upon the technology. It's remarkable to what an extent the things that we may consider to be fundamentals are in fact artifacts of the tools that we use. And sorting all of that out gets very, very confusing.

We've chosen to do CD-ROM initially rather than on-line, mostly because as a magazine that's dependent upon great color photography, spectacular graphics, etc., etc., we felt that we should explore the world of sound, video technologies like that, something that one can't do on-line at present. Basically on-line is best for text. So our initial project was CD-ROM. We're still continuing to develop on-line projects. Haven't launched any yet, because actually we think on-line is a pretty complicated thing to do and actually add value to what a print magazine does now.

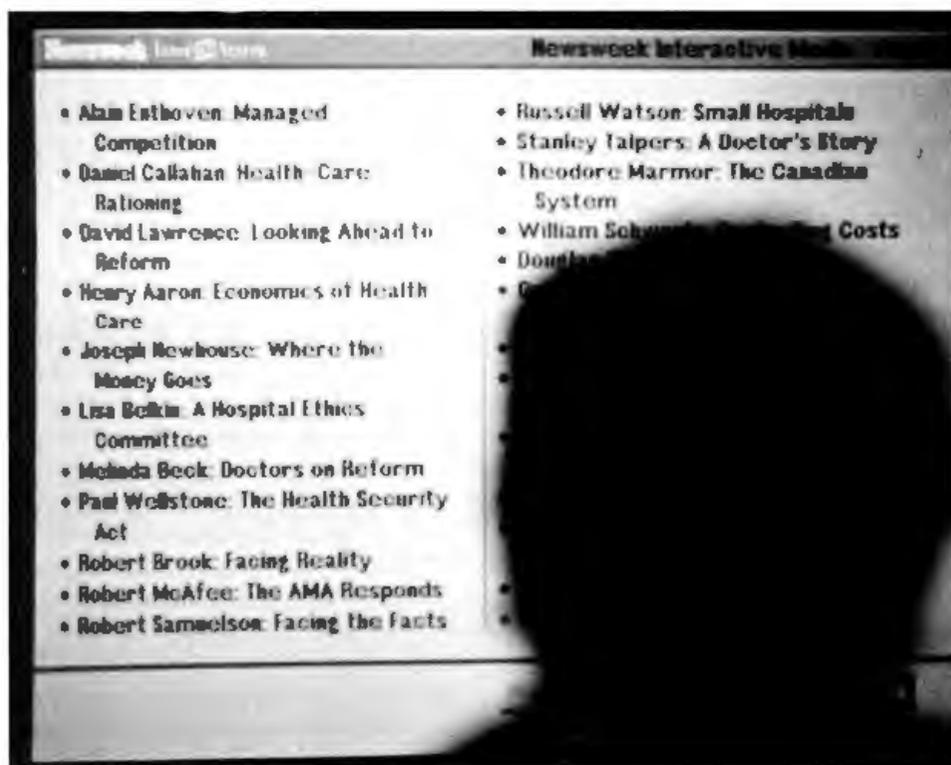
So we've chose to do CD-ROM, because we think that in the world of digital journalism, once you learn to deliver information and entertainment in a stream of bits, the container is secondary. Once you have these fundamental skills, you have the staffing, you have the infrastructure, someone can back up a truck and press CD-ROMs for you, or they can back up a truck and connect you to fiber optic. The delivery mechanism is really secondary. And then we say to people, if they can show us a way to get our bits in acceptable quality out to our audience and get dollars back, we're in business. So we're really

focusing just on the tools of digital journalism. Right now, CD-ROM is the place to try it.

We've really chosen to, right from the start, view this as a new medium. There are some really good archival applications for CD-ROM because of its vast memory abilities. But we really look at this as more of an opportunity to investigate a true new medium. We don't see this as a replacement for print Newsweek, any more than CBS television was a replacement for CBS radio. They're really very, very separate things. Paper is very hard to compete with. It is a great display mechanism. It's not that good a transport mechanism. It weighs too much. And indeed I think 50 years from now kids will be amazed to hear that we were rich enough to truck as much paper around the country as we do today. I believe a piece of paper will be something of great value 50 years from now. Kids truly won't understand the phrase it's not worth the paper it's printed on.

So, paper is hard to compete with. People come to me and say, oh, I still work in that primitive old print technology. No. Print technology is incredibly sophisticated. It probably is at its apex. It's a really amazing technology. What we're doing is really, really primitive. But it has a lot of potential. And that's why we chose to begin to do stories from scratch. So the stories that I show you today are created, scripted, all the information is gathered, specifically with the idea that it will be presented as interactive multimedia. And what we've ended up with, if we started to put a magazine on a disk, it's closer to some blend of radio, television and magazine.

We think that one of the important things about interactive multimedia, one of the big problems is balancing narration and exploration, that too much interactive multimedia sort of drops you into the middle and says, now what do you want to do? People pay us to tell them stories, or to tell them what's important. So to some extent we have to keep that ability to just be there and be told a story. At the same time though this medium makes it possible for us to



A Newsweek InterActive screen

allow the viewer, the reader, to ask questions. And balancing that passivity and interactivity is a key thing.

[CD-ROM of Newsweek Interactive is played.]

Let me just close briefly with what I see are some challenges that we're sort of facing. One is certainly how we tell stories and allow exploration, but still tell the story? And really it changes the role of editor. To put it simply, as a print editor, people would come to me with stories, and I'd say, well, this is a good piece but I have 10 more questions, please go out and find the answers to these. My writer would come back, I'd say, well, only one of these is really that interesting and we're short on space anyway, but thanks. A familiar experience. In multimedia I can basically put all 10 of those answers in as hypertext, as footnotes, if I think some reader might be interested. So it changes that sense of editing. But still editing has to be of value to create a story, because that's what people want.

Secondly, reporters need to learn to see in all media types. I think we tend to find really good print reporters, who

definitely tend to think of a print story. Certainly a good video reporter really looks for stuff that's going to work on screen, the same with radio. And it's something that after a decade or so becomes a real habit. Multimedia reporters in a sense have to see all media as being at parity. In other words, tell the story in the best media type at that moment. And that's a really interesting, creative challenge.

Another challenge is dealing with the question of authority and voice and bias. And the whole changing role of the institution of the newspaper or the magazine. In a sense I think a television news program, a magazine, we can always say, well, there's another side to this story but we're out of time for tonight. In multimedia it's going to be harder to do that. One will actually end up, there will be serious questions if we don't show both sides of the story, because we've got room on the disk, we've got room in the pipeline. That's one question that's going to come up.

A second interesting question that one encounters on-line is the accessibility of the institution. The notion that now all your readers can correspond directly with the writer. And this is some-

thing that a number of magazines and newspapers have jumped into with some enthusiasm. The early results are that this has to be treated quite carefully. Just to take a random example of a journalist who does some stuff on-line, there are far more people in the United States who would like to talk to Jim Fallows than there are people like Jim Fallows to talk to. And it's already becoming a problem at some institutions who say that they're putting their writers on-line.

Finally, in today's journalistic climate, your average mid-career journalist is not that [motivated] to move into new media. It takes quite a leap. Because if you're a storyteller and you've got a great story that you want to tell, you want to reach a dependable audience. New media is not a place to find a dependable audience. And indeed, it's also not clear in very, very practical terms, what a transition to new media is going to mean in terms of career opportunities. So one challenge is bringing in people with really strong backgrounds to take part in this.

The second challenge is one that I think grows out of the economy. That a media organization today if it's surviving is far leaner than 10 years ago. I know that's the case at Newsweek. If we were Newsweek InterActive ten years ago at Newsweek, there were people with time on their hands, I'll admit it in public. Since then we've gone through quite a slimming process. And people, by gosh, work pretty hard. And it's not that they're scared of new media, they're quite interested in it. But they're already working 50 hours a week, and they're just not going to have time to do anything more.

Q. & A.

Kathy Bushkin—I'm Kathy Bushkin from U.S. News and I just asked if we could see what's behind the advertising part.

Rogers—Let me choose Charles Schwab. Now the voice will prompt you to choose either a short video that describes how this product works, and it runs along for 45 seconds or so. But at any point you can go back to the advertising menu and get

more in-depth information on what the product is, stuff that you could not really go into detail on the video. So it's a very simple example of what's possible in interactive advertising. But in the broadest sense, it's actually taken us three issues to convince advertising agencies to do true interactive ads. We've had ads where they just gave us digitized video and everyone has bought into the idea of doing interactive ads, but this is a breakthrough. But it's just a beginning. That Charles Schwab ad, as soon as we have an on-line component to this product, for example, will have a third button that says, hook me up to Schwab right now. And then that added element will really make these ads make a great deal of sense.

Ed Turner—Ed Turner, CNN. One of the great advantages that you've had over your broadcast colleagues is that as print, you could do it on the phone if you had to, or you can show up at an intimate interview. And now you have to drag around a camera, an interviewer, for all I know, a producer, and [perhaps a] makeup expert. How awkward was it?

Rogers—Well, it's really a learning experience. What we're trying to do now is assemble a multimedia correspondent's kit that uses very simple equipment, a digital audiotape recorder, a small, really high quality, High-8 camera, miniature lights. And there are obviously times that video is inappropriate, but we are certainly entering a time in history when everyone in the United States will have seen themselves on television at one time or another. It's becoming less intrusive. But it's something that one has to work with.

It's also very complicated. You have to learn to ask questions in a different way. There are questions that work on video, questions that work if you're going to use it as text, questions that will work if you're going to use it as quote radio. So we're still learning. But it's proven to be less of a problem than we thought.

Kathryn Montgomery [Center for Media Education]—I'm just curious when you do an interview on video for multimedia, do you include the entire video, so that the person using it can have access to the whole thing unedited, or do you still edit it? And are there different rules for editing?

Rogers—At this point we still edit it simply because there's not room to put it all on the disk. Video takes up a lot of space. But when in doubt we tend to leave more of a media type on than to take it off. Because if people are inter-

ested in something, they will continue to watch it. If they're not, we don't lose them to another channel. It really is a different kind of video editing. The kinds of three-minute, four-minute radio pieces that we do on Newsweek InterActive would be hard to get away with on most radio, because you know, if people lose interest, they change the stations. But here we're fairly confident that they're going to stay within our product, so it changes the editing process a little.

Howard Schneider—Howie Schneider at Newsday. I know it's early, but how many use it, how much do they pay and what do they say about it?

Rogers—Right now we are shipping about 15,000 copies an issue, and that gets out to people in bundles. That is to say they buy a personal computer, a CD-ROM drive and they get one [issue of Newsweek InterActive] free. That's the majority of that 15,000 copies. We also sell it retail. The list price is \$49. It ends up being around \$20-25, which was the price point we wanted initially, that of a hardcover book. Subscription is \$99 a year. Readers are really interested. The one thing that surprised us most is [that] there's a lot of content in these stories. It's a quarterly, so they really have more of the intellectual content of a short hardcover book. We discovered that our readers on average were spending three to four hours per story, which was longer than we thought.

Leonard Downie—Len Downie, Washington Post. Who are these readers that are spending three to four hours with this and how do you think that translates toward a more mass audience?

Rogers—It's very difficult to say. It's the same as who watched television in 1948. It was people who owned television sets. So it's a very limited audience. In the world of consumer electronics, just to put it in perspective, at least the first 10 million people who buy something are considered to be early adopters. And we're not even up to 10 million people who own CD-ROM drives. So it's very early, it's very male. Although it tends to be males with families who have purchased their computers for educational purposes, a surprisingly high number are Newsweek subscribers.

Ellen Hume—Ellen Hume, Annenberg Washington Program. I've been trying to subscribe to your multimedia production here for many months, and I call and say when are you going to develop it for Windows?

Rogers—In 1995, I think most titles will be released for Mac[intosh] and Windows. And the standardization is moving along quite quickly as well as the development of software tools that let us develop for both those formats simultaneously. We think that the personal computer for the near term, at least the next two years, will be far more important for digital journalism than television, in terms of interactivity.

Victor Navasky—Victor Navasky, The Nation. How did you decide to make it a quarterly? It seems to me the decision on periodicity on print media anyway is determined because the post office requires you to do it for second class privileges, or the retail distributor needs it for bookkeeping purposes, but why not just put it out when you have something to say or sell 10 of them for a price?

Rogers—In this particular case frequency was a quarterly because that was as fast as we could figure out how to do it. We can see doing this on somewhat the same turnaround as Vanity Fair, which has a monthly basis for good editorial reasons. But choosing frequency is absolutely crucial. But I think you have to choose frequency so I know, am I tuning in to see the bombs bursting over Baghdad or am I logging on to learn why they were bursting?

Donald Hazen—Don Hazen, Institute for Alternative Journalism. What are you telling the advertisers about how they have to project their product differently than in a magazine?

Rogers—Advertisers are actually way ahead of us. They know that interactivity is here already, and it's called zapping. They've been dealing with interactive television for some time. Basically, the ads have to be of service or entertaining. We don't think within the interactive paradigm that we can create ads that you get locked into. Because if we do that, no one will ever go into them at all. And we've discovered, although we thought we'd have to fight quite a battle over what I call the interactive versus in-your-face question, that the agencies are pretty much signed off on the fact that this stuff has got to be interactive and volitional. ■

Point of View

ELLEN SCHNEIDER

POV is a series on public television. We invite independent producers and self-described independent producers from all over the country to submit their work. We look at close to 500 pieces annually. And it's a rather fascinating process. And throughout the time—we've been on the air for seven years now—we have always seen a healthy cluster of very personal first account pieces. They are about all subjects. They are sometimes effective for broader audiences, sometimes they are self-indulgent, sometimes the quality is uneven. But we're beginning to notice a trend, which is the use of very portable, Hi-8 video cameras, and I'm going to refer to them kind of generically as home video, even though their range goes far beyond the home these days.

These are stories that really come from the grassroots, they frequently come from the heart, and I think what we're finding is they're beginning to show us slices of life that outside observers simply could not have access to. The most stunning to me last year was "Silver Lake Life: The View From Here." This was an intentional film that was begun when Tom Joselin and his partner of 22 years, Mark Massey, found out that they had AIDS. And decided that they wanted to, as kind of a last project, really tell the rest of us what the experience was like.

We have always hoped that POV as a program would be the beginning of public debate. That even though we were presenting one person's point of view it would enliven a public discussion and stimulate other points of view. And as a way of enhanc-

ing that last year, we put a plug at the end of this show and every other show that said, if you have an opinion about what you see in this program, send us a camcorder response to it. And we're going to put together a mixture of those responses and air them on public television.

[Two clips from "Silver Lake Life" were played, followed by two responses on home video from viewers.]

We got a lot of conventional mail as well. We got a letter from a woman who said it made me feel ashamed that I could dare to be so quick to pass a judgment on something I really knew nothing about. And a housewife in Utah wrote us the day after the broadcast, she went and volunteered for the local AIDS foundation. But I think what we're saying here is that this is an opportunity to really put a sharp focus on an issue

that has been covered widely, and to etch into that public collective experience an indelible impression of what happens during the sickness.

The press was equally enthusiastic. The Washington Post called it one of the most moving and provocative things you will ever see on television. The Baltimore Sun echoed, one of the richest TV experience viewers will have ever had. So we're beginning to try to really be the midwives of what we see as a very emerging new form and a very important one. And there [are] a few elements that seem to be critical for the success of them, because they're very, very hard to do and to do well.

Obviously it needs a dramatic, unfolding story, captured on this very portable video, by the subjects themselves, who have an ability to really tell the story, to really focus a large issue around a human experience.

This is where I'd like to talk to you more as a group about how this fits into what you're doing. The notion of widening the net to include subjective storytelling, whether it's on TV or in print, raises perplexing issues. I'm very interested in these increasingly blurring distinctions between political issues and personal stories. Crisis of a family, the health care situation, immigration, gender issues, have very flexible boundaries now. And I think we're all seeing the increasing move towards personalized journalism. How the news magazines are starting to use intimate portraits to get us more closely connecting to bigger issues. The single working mother as a metaphor for the economy. Or a family's nightmare with an HMO as a way of talking about the President's health plan. But regardless of the sensitivity of those pieces, it's always going to be a different perspective when you've got the outside reporter coming and looking



Ellen Schneider: stories from grassroots.

in. So entering into this notion of using the personal story to talk about bigger issues is the proliferation of these very small portable cameras. There are now an estimated 24 to 30 million home video cameras in circulation, and they think that about a million new ones are being sold every year.

You're also familiar with the short history, of home video already on television. It's not necessarily a very pretty one. There was a pretty quick notion that a lot of backyard antics and behind the scenes crime activity could actually be a viable format for series, and they're fairly well known. The notion of individuals shooting tape—and the most obvious example is in the Rodney King videotapes—also began to find their way into the news. But this is again usually focusing on the most humiliating and embarrassing situations. John Wangle, the producer of "Cops," told *Rolling Stone* magazine that voyeurism is good. One man's tragedy is another man's TV show. And it can also be profitable, as we understand video vigilantes are roaming around the country now shooting arrests and crime scenes and probably making sales right now to other television series.

So how do we turn to technology from these more sordid origins and take these moments, these absolutely powerful slices of life that we did not previously have access to, into a new form of television that really enriches discussion, that doesn't replace news and public affairs but simply gives a more intense and personalized and in some ways authentic focus?

I can give you some examples, because we're going around the country now and holding workshops, asking people who are engaging in this kind of work to share their stories with us in the hopes that we can create a series of them. There's a woman in Boston who I've been talking to. She's an African-American woman, she's young, she grew up in an integrated neighborhood in Chicago in a middle class family. She went to an Ivy League school. She learned to become a filmmaker, and she found out recently that she has a sister that she never met. Her sister lives in the South, she is a very devoted wife

and mother, very, very close and active in her church. This video diary will be certainly the personal story of these sisters reuniting. It will also be the story of African-American women's experiences in the late 20th Century. And I suspect because I know her, that it will also be about race and class and religion and gender, and the crisis of the black family.

I know of another woman who is going to visit her Jewish Orthodox mother, who's moved to the West Bank, and talk about that perspective from the inside out.

What about quality? It is the question most paramount in our minds as well. Last year we asked the people sending in this work to specify whether or not they thought they had done a video diary. One in five self-selected for that category. And I would say, after looking at almost all of those hundred, maybe two really had the kind of resonance and structure and characters and authenticity to really work.

It's also occurring to us as we're working with these people, and particularly the less experienced, that the need, just as with any production or story for editing, for production values, for the ability to resonate within a larger audience, because many of these stories again work for the people in them, and simply have no relevance to those outside. As all stories, video diaries are very, very hard to tell. It's simply not something that I expect a lot of people are going to be able to pull off very easily. There are some natural-born storytellers. Some people do a lot of training and still aren't really able to pull the pieces together to make it work for the rest of us.

So right now we're really focusing more on people who have had some of that training. And we're again going around and asking them what they're doing and what they're needs are. And I want to tell you and I think you'll be pleased to hear this, as we're putting together these workshops, that many of them are raising the very questions that we have raised ourselves. What about the ethics? What about privacy? Why

are we doing this? So there is definitely a very necessary dialogue that has to happen before these really mature.

I thought we could talk about the questions of exploitation and interpretation. Tom and Mark, I know this, who made "Silver Lake Life," really wanted you to know that they did this absolutely voluntarily. This was something critical in their final days. So they believe that when you withdraw the subject-object relationship and they become one and the same, it becomes a fully conscious process for the rest of us to interpret.

But what if a diarist is willing to exploit their own situations? Is that something that we necessarily want to encourage? What about the family? Even if you signed a release, do you really understand at the time, the implications of going so public with something so private? And how do we monitor accuracy? Where is that fine line between expressing an opinion and declaring a fact? For example, if someone in "Silver Lake Life" had said, AZT simply does not work, and it's very obvious to me, do we have responsibility to clarify that, or do we assume that the public will understand that this is simply an opinion expressed by an individual?

Really what should we make of this willingness and real desire increasingly to spill one's guts in public? There are some media critics who are now taking that very seriously and wondering whether or not this is an attempt to recreate community as our other community institutions begin to perish.

One of the challenges for us is to recognize that as we go into the future and examine these multi-channel and multimedia opportunities that it doesn't really take 500 new channels or 50 or even five to begin to make our media more inclusive. As you can see, we have a lot of technology to do that right now. And I hope that as we go forward collectively that that becomes a high priority. And as we saw with the video letters that came back to us, it doesn't really require that we wait for true interactivity, to ask people what they think and to respond directly in a medium that we can all experience.

I know that the kind of tawdry beginnings of home video on television may feel easy to dismiss. But I think that things are changing and I hope that you'll help us change that. And I know that with a lot of these video diarists, you won't recognize their names. Some of them will be experienced filmmakers that we hope to bring to you. But others will be homemakers or immigrants or teenagers or senior citizens. I hope that you'll agree that as we prepare to move forward on this that these are really important voices, and that their contributions will bring new definitions to how we understand our business and our responsibility and really our democracy.

Q. & A.

Judith Stoia—I'm Judy Stoia from WGBH television. I saw one video diary that was done by the BBC. They gave a Hi-8 camera to a doctor in a rural area of Albania, and he started shooting material and sending it back to a producer in London. And it took many, many months to shoot it. It was a fabulous documentary. But there was the hand of the producer in it, who would call and say to the subject, you've got to show us more of your family, you've got to show us more of yourself. Which is different from what it seemed like Tom and Mark were doing. It seemed to me from looking at this before and from what you're saying, that they gave you something that was truly their own finished product, and there wasn't an outside mind or producer of any sort. And I'm wondering if you're seeing one way superior to another, or if you're imagining that you would try to figure it out as you go along. The reason I'm asking is that it seems to me that some people who have wonderful stories to tell might need some help, but as soon as the help is imposed it's changed the story.

Schneider—I think it depends on the story itself. The BBC are doing an ongoing series called Video Diaries. It's very successful. It's also intensively labor intensive. They asked viewers to send in their stories, and they have ten people reading letters full time. They gather what they think are the best letters, they meet a portion of them. They give cameras to a smaller number of them. They get footage back from even a smaller number, and

then they begin to work with it as you've described. We are not assuming that that is a viable model here, nor is it necessary.

We have people who have been trained to a certain extent. And the likelihood that some of those individuals have dramatic stories, know how to use the technology is actually pretty good. In the case of Tom and Mark for example, you may notice that there is a closeup of those baskets trying to be pulled apart. The average civilian would not know to shoot that closeup. They would have locked the camera down, and you would not have seen the strain of trying to kind of summon that energy. So in that case he had the skills, he knew how to tell a story, he had a sense of production values. I think that some would need extra support and that is something that we would want to supply. I think it really happens on a case by case basis.

Schneider—I'm Howie Schneider from Newsday. One of those so-called burdens that we have to bear in journalism is verification. Okay, meaning one of the things we do is try to determine what is real and what isn't real. How do you know that these aren't hoaxes? How do you know that people aren't making up stories, filming scenes that are artificial? What's the process?

Ellen Schneider—We haven't entered into that yet because most of the work we're seeing so far is pretty far along and we're beginning to develop relationships with the individuals. I think that authenticity is something that you really try to recognize. And in these cases because they take so long to produce that you generally know what's happening over time, that becomes high priority. I mean, how would you answer that question if we asked you to come on staff as our resident media ethicist?

Howard Schneider—Well, I'd go check out these people, I'd find out a lot about them. I'd want to see if they were credible. I'd have some level of standards to find out if they are filming things that may in fact not be real at all. I'm not talking about their point of view, I'm talking about their story. Do you have any process of verification now? Do you know anything about these people?

Ellen Schneider—Well, sure, we know a lot about these people simply because there aren't that many that we know about. I mean I can say that of the individuals that I listed those stories, I have some professional relationship with all of them, and know that their motives for making these stories stem from very

passionate sources. To be a DES daughter for example and to want to tell that story and want to describe in some detail, the removal of all of your reproductive organs so that you can possibly prevent that kind of activity in the future, takes a lot of guts. She's not likely in that case to fabricate details that didn't exist, that's not what the story's about.

Howard Schneider—I mean how do you stop the video Janet Cooke? The process on a newspaper, for instance. There's an editor and a reporter and they're asking questions, and there are checks and balances. The question is what are your checks and balances? And one hoax in this kind of medium might destroy it, right?

Ellen Schneider—Absolutely. And I can say also that since we've started with people who have some training, these are people that all have within their backgrounds documentary production. They consider themselves professional documentary producers, who happen to have a personal story going on in their life. I have yet to encounter anyone that is outside of that loop except for the minister in Portland. And I've looked at all of his footage, but I think you're raising an excellent question.

Tom Regan—Tom Regan from The Daily News in Halifax, Nova Scotia. A couple of examples to go along with what you're saying from the CBC. The CBC did two examples recently. One involved a doctor in Vancouver who was dying of AIDS, and who the local TV station gave a camera to, and he kept a weekly diary. He was on every Friday evening, talking about what was happening, and this went on for four or five months, actually until a few days before his death. And eventually it became the most watched part of the news every Friday night. This was a person who was a total amateur, had never done any kind of video before. I think eventually it was made into a film and it was nominated for an Academy Award.

Ellen Schneider—The video diary of Dr. Peter.

Regan—The other one is an example of the danger of the ethical questions. A couple of months ago, the CBC put the cameras into the home in a town in Ontario, ostensibly to do a piece on why [a] youth was troubled. And with the total agreement of the family, they allowed their lives to be filmed 24 hours a day. Well, it turned out pretty quickly that it wasn't the youth that was troubled, that it was the parents. There was a lot of really disturbing footage that was turned into a pretty gripping two-hour documentary.

Two days after the show aired, the police arrested the family and took the child away. And there have been real ethical issues raised about [whether it was] right for the CBC to go into these people's homes and expose them in this way, even with their permission.

Sandy Tolan—Sandy Tolan from Home-lands Productions. My question is about the fact that subjectivity in this kind of approach is often politically unpopular. My question is, politically speaking, with pressure groups, are you concerned about the future of this form on public television, and do you see that there could be a possible future for this kind of storytelling in commercial television, depending on whether the pressure continues from the Congress against this kind of subjective storytelling?

Ellen Schneider—As far as public television goes, point-of-view programming and even controversial programming are really part of the enabling legislation that the Carnegie Commission used to establish public television to begin with. And so far the signal that we hear from public television is that that will continue to be part of the mandate. So we feel that as we make intelligent decisions about the programs that we go in, that we reach for a wide mix, that we use the elements like talking back, which for us has been very exciting to see what people think, and as we integrate into the next season, an on-line forum whereby members of America On-line can talk back to POV the night after we broadcast. We hope that kind of debate will be enlivened and much stronger in the future.

Fulton—Let me make a quick point, which is that of course there's a print counterpart to this. Anybody who's looked at on-line services and the Internet knows that there's some extraordinary personal storytelling happening in print as well. It has a lot of the same problems of authentication. For instance in the Nieman on-line discussion, how do we know those people are who they say they are? ■

Reporters and the New Age

Choice: Produce for an International Network Or Write for Tinier Audiences

BY LARRY TYE



The electronic revolution signals the beginning of the end for old-fashioned print reporters like me, consigning us to churning out more and more banal copy for tinier and tinier audiences.

Either that, or it heralds a new beginning—one that will encourage editors to order up the hard-hitting, high-impact stories that we relish and that newspapers will have to produce to stay competitive, and will ensure that what we write is recycled onto TV, distributed over an international electronic network and saved in a library that's accessible at the push of a computer key.

Which of these wildly divergent scenarios is more likely?

The recent Nieman conference on Emerging Technological and Economic Realities suggests either could happen, although the future probably will hold bits of both. More important for reporters like me, the conference made clear that we can help determine which vision prevails—provided that we're energized rather than immobilized by the prospect of change, and that we act now in our own newsrooms as well as join the wider discussion going on for years in and around the world of journalism.

Here are some more specific lessons I took away from the conference and from similar discussions we Niemans have had this past year:

• **More can be better in getting the word out:** It's a bit chilling to consider that what we write increasingly will be

broadcast over the airwaves and shipped across an electronic network. Putting print reporters on TV, the way they're doing these days in my newsroom at The Boston Globe and in others nationwide, often means reducing complex stories to sound bites. And the more of what we write that goes out over the Internet, the more likely it is that Net users will stop buying the paper and start reading only things they already were interested in.

But as with nearly every other impact of the new technologies, each perceived pitfall also opens new opportunities.

Take TV. I, for one, want my reporting and writing as widely disseminated as possible, and TV offers one more way of reaching people. Experiments like those underway at The Globe, meanwhile, envision the bite size broadcasts from print reporters motivating viewers to pick up the paper and find out the full story.

The same can be said for the Internet. Getting stories out there ensures they'll reach users worldwide, well beyond any single paper's circulation. And the more great stories Net users read from a particular paper, the better the chance they'll conclude that that paper's worth paying closer attention to.

• **New technologies can open up new reporting techniques:** The Internet offers a wonderful way to locate and cultivate sources.

Reporters all around the country found that out during the recent L.A. earthquake, when they received chilling tales of damage via their modems. Yes, it's vital to check out the accuracy of such tales, as participants at the Nieman conference pointed out, but

that's easy if you have the storyteller's e-mail address and it's something you'd want to do with any information you're given.

I got a hint of other ways to exploit the net while reporting a recent *Globe* series on threats to personal privacy. I put out an SOS in a relevant-users file, and got advice from privacy buffs across the world, many of which turned into great leads. The same approach can help you find victims of a scam you're investigating, people with strong views on the politician you're profiling, or anyone else you're having trouble reaching through conventional reporting.

And knowing a source's Internet address often gets you through when they're too busy to return a call, or are away from the office but still logged on.

If a computer-illiterate reporter like me can find ways to use the Internet and other electronic aids, anyone can. Easy-to-understand training is offered by lots of groups, including IRE.

• **The electronic era can help us define our priorities:** There's no question that a proliferation of broadcast stations, as well as a swelling of those who get the news they need from the Internet, pose a huge challenge to newspapers, network TV and other conventional media outlets. But those outlets don't have to respond by cutting deeply into their reporting staffs and news holes.

For instance, at The Washington Post, Executive Editor Leonard Downie Jr. told conference participants, the new challenges have made him push even harder for the hard-hitting enterprise stories that distinguish print from TV and for the in-depth analysis net users seldom find. And at The Wichita Eagle, Editor Davis (Buzz) Merritt said the electronic revolution makes him more sure than ever that newspapers' salvation lies in listening to readers, fostering public participation in elections and civic life, and providing a product that outdoes rather than imitates the new competition.

Newsweek, meanwhile, is offering compelling proof that the electronic revolution sometimes means longer, deeper stories. The magazine's CD-ROM product gives readers lots of choices of

how deeply they want to probe a subject—from stories even shorter than those in the conventional magazine, to ones that offer source documents, analysis and other deep background unimaginable in the version you buy on the newsstand.

• **We had better be ready for a new kind of reader feedback:** Many newspapers already let readers "write in" electronically, to editors or directly to reporters. But the Nieman conference made clear that's just the beginning, as the public increasingly will be ready and able to tell you instantaneously what they think of your broadcast or print story and, even more revolutionary, they'll be able to offer up their own outlook to a wide audience via the Internet or portable, high-quality video cameras.

That prospect is, in some ways, disconcerting to a reporter like me. There's little enough time to get stories done on deadline, and there'll be even less if editors expect me to answer every electronic message. I also like the fact that I have a louder voice than my readers, but that'll be less and less the case as they become more and more sophisticated in tapping into the Internet.

Yet reader feedback also means I'll get a wider and quicker sense of how readers like what I'm writing, which can only help me get better. And while many of their story ideas are likely to be lousy, there are bound to be some gems.

The conference left me ruminating about lots of other impending changes in our business, some exciting and others unsettling. There's the need to redefine who my competition is as we collaborate with TV stations and seek to outdo faraway Internet sources. There's the urge to work out a way to be compensated as our work goes out over the airwaves and electronic networks, along with a hope those feeds will bring in enough revenue to keep my paper and others financially healthy. And there's the puzzlement about why major newspapers seem to be working in a vacuum as each strikes out on its own with expensive experiments on collaborating with TV stations and developing electronic versions of their print products.

But newspaper bosses' uncertainty over where they're going creates an opportunity for reporters like me to help steer them, providing we know what we're talking about. That happened at The Post when Downie backed away from plans to replace old VDTs with newer models of the same thing, opting instead for a more versatile PC-based system promoted by computer-savvy reporters and editors. And it's happening at my paper, where top editors are soliciting reporters' ideas on what path to take towards electronic self-sufficiency.

I also see hope in the often-dreaded scenario of 500 TV stations: The more balkanized and specialized our broadcast and Internet choices become—with special channels and files for golf partisans, political junkies and every other special interest—the more I think there'll be a demand for general interest papers like mine, and for reporters and editors who help sort out the world for people drowning under an information overload. ■

Larry Tye, who has spent the last year hosting lobster parties and backyard barbecues as part of his Nieman Fellowship, was at the writing of this article getting ready to head back to The Boston Globe. Once there, he says he'll return to writing short and long term investigative stories and hopes to put to use some of the computer skills he's picked up during his Nieman year.

In the Good Old Days-2

"For decades the newspapers have used bulletin boards to stimulate curiosity and interest in news. Now science gives us the most splendidly sprawling bulletin board the world ever has known. If the old fashioned bulletin board was a good thing for the newspaper, isn't a glorified bulletin board better?"—Marc A. Rose, Managing Editor of The Buffalo Evening News, in an article titled "Radio or Newspaper—Can Both Survive?" in the December 24, 1924 edition of The Nation.

What Skills Does the Journalist Require To Take Advantage of New Technology?

Moderator

Katherine Fulton, Duke University.

Challengers

J. T. Johnson, San Francisco State University, founding Editor of MacWeek.

John Markoff, Technology Reporter, The New York Times.

KATHERINE FULTON

This panel is called a panel on training in the broadest sense. What does it take to be a journalist in the world that is being created? Tom Johnson is both a working reporter as well as somebody who has taught journalism and thought a lot about it, and a really sophisticated user of the technology. Tom is also involved in starting something called The Institute for Analytic Journalism that's looking for an academic home now. The idea is to train mid-career journalists in analytical skills using computer technology in ways that very few of us yet do know how to use it. You all may have read about the technology and heard this new thing everybody is talking about intelligence agents who are going to roam out through the oceans of data and find what you need and bring it back to you. On my computer when I get one of these there is going to be one that says "Markoff," because I'm going to want everything that John Markoff writes and I don't care whether it's in The New York Times or anywhere else.

J. T. JOHNSON

One hundred years ago [the coding of card to store information was developed] for the 1890 U.S. census. Though the storage medium was not electronic, the card-punch technology of hole and

no hole is the fundamental binary system. By developing a coded sequence of those holes and no holes or ones and zeros, the storage capacity is infinite. And so it is that data and tools of analysis, and the resulting information flowing from that process, is grounded in binary code.

That binary information world has spawned a revolution that I believe will be every bit as influential as the revolution that gave us symbols of ink on paper. But here's a special challenge we all face; when it is stored, the data we need to analyze—analyze for security, analyze for economic gain, improved health or for mere pleasure—when it is stored in its native form, the data looks like nothing but ones and zeros.

Now the most traditionally literate person in the world hasn't a clue what these ones and zeros mean. Equally significant is that the world's best programmer could not take this slice of data and tell you whether it's used to create a lower case z on a computer screen, or to determine the color of an individual pixel on a computer, or to say that it's part of someone's EKG drawn on a computer screen. All of our traditional skills, skills correlated with literacy in the artistic or journalistic sense, are useless when living under this new data storage retrieval analysis environment. Those skills of literacy are useless unless we know how to use the tools of the new literacy to extract

meaning from the data that pumps through the veins of the contemporary world. Our eyes, ears and brain alone, even if coupled with traditional literacy, simply do not increase our ability to identify, analyze and communicate that data, that analysis. In fact, we are struck dumb in its presence.

What's the major impact of all of this? Well, first is that time and geography are not simply transcended, they cease to have any influence at all. We do not need to go physically to the data to get it. For a journalist, that can mean no more trips to the cop shop to pick up the arrest reports, no more trips to the press office of [the Supreme Court] to get rulings and decisions, no more nagging ignorance about the underlying numbers used to prepare the city or the county budget.

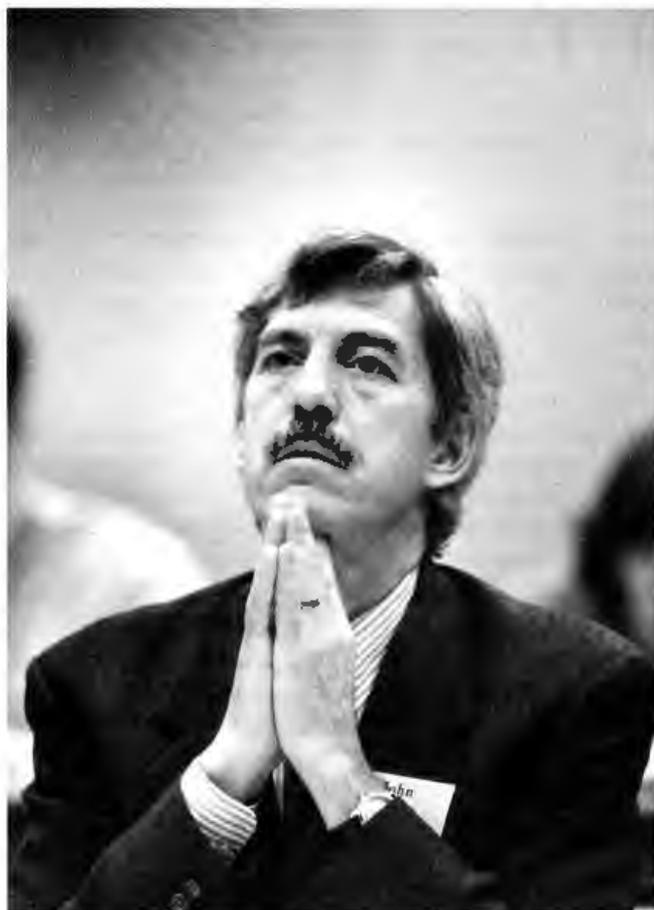
Secondly, it means economies of scale in terms of capital investment for the practice of journalism are either lost, or in the case of print journalism, they work against us. I can reach a larger audience with my data information faster using a \$500 computer and a phone line than any traditional publisher can ever hope to, no matter how much he or she spends on a new printing operation. And as John Markoff indicated in his Sunday story 10 days ago, we're just that far from doing the same thing with television, only we'll have to put another zero on that desktop investment, make it \$5,000, not \$500.

But the tide is running in my favor, and there is no reason to believe that it will shift. So we come back to the fundamental model of data-in, analysis/information-out, and we ask, "How does this construct have anything to do with journalism?" It turns out the process of journalism is exactly the same. All we do as journalists is retrieve data in a variety of forms ranging from the SEC insider trading reports, to press releases from the Bosnian army, to interviews with flooded-out farmers' wives along the Mississippi.

We analyze that data and draw some conclusions that we put in something called a story. But we can zoom in and look at the process of journalism in a more fine-grained level of abstraction. When we do that it reveals what I call the "model" of the journalistic process. These are the identifiable steps of how we put together a story, and it starts with the packaging, which includes all information formats from newspapers to multimedia. The packaging inevitably derives from something being written. And writing the story of course can mean an article, a script, a score for a CD-ROM product. The writing is the product which flows from analysis; the raw material for that analysis flows from a loop process that starts with research, which produces data, which leads to reporting. The reporting leads to more research and back to analysis, etc.

The reporting is what we have always done. Essentially we go out and talk to people, an act of data gathering. The pre-reporting process, however, has become more important. Research is the variable in the equation that points us to new sources, enriched context, and novel insights applicable to doing the same old stories, to say nothing of the new and undiscovered ones.

And so with this process in mind, finally under the threat of a deadline, the journalist realizes that he or she has to break out of the research reporting analysis cycle and write the darn thing.



John Dinges of National Public Radio

As journalists, editors and journalism educators, we have traditionally spent most of our time concentrating on the right hand side of the equation. What's the focus of the story? Where's my lead? How shall it be played on the page or in the news cycle? What's my lead? Does the story demand a follow up? What's my lead? Do I need more interviews, am I libeling anyone? What is my damn lead? How do I get it out?

Under the old style of data storage of ink on paper, essentially all journalism students and journalists came to us in the classroom or the newsroom with the same degree of literacy and world knowledge. They could all read and most did so just for the sheer joy of it. They could all put together a coherent sentence. They all had some exposure to the library where data was organized in beautiful oak card catalogs, organized alphabetically by subject and title and author. Any literate person could figure out how to use a dictionary or an encyclopedia or an atlas or an almanac.

That meant that as an editor or educator we could jump right in and focus on the writing and the packaging, the right side of the equation.

I emphasize this because I believe that today we can't afford that right-hand side focus, that single-minded concentration on the final package. The information environment has changed and is changing. It's changing at such a speed that we all have to relearn what it means to be literate. We have to learn how to identify, retrieve and interpret those mountains of ones and zeros.

I'm talking about the fact that many city and state budgets in New York and Texas are now on-line. I'm talking about the fact that all the business of the legislatures in California and Minnesota is now coming on-line. I'm talking about the fact that if I'm reporting a story on what's happening in Korea, I can interview someone there for the price of a phone call using my keyboard and hook-

ing up to a BBS [bulletin board] system in Seoul.

Third and fourth graders in Michigan are producing electronic newspapers, complete with photos shot with a digital camera, and they're distributing their paper over the digital network in their school. There is no reason why they couldn't circulate it to 20 million.

At the other end of the scale is an article about how the government of Croatia, knowing full well that the Serbs were sweeping down with the intent to destroy their people and nation, took one million dollars from their meager treasury to invest in a digital network. They could have bought bullets; they chose data and information. They did so knowing that no matter what the end, it would be determined by the old data-in analysis, information-out model.

Now let me quickly point out that this model says nothing about the quality of the information that flows out. But I will guarantee this; the quality of the information out can only be as good

as the data flowing in. Hence, because of this shift in the data environment, educators and journalists must immediately turn more attention to the left side of the equation, the research, reporting and analysis aspects, if we are to improve the quality of the data in analysis components.

The implications of this assertion are these. The first is that we can best prepare for change in the process and content of newsrooms and classrooms by embracing the inevitability of change in the digital era. This revolution is a sea change that cannot be reversed; it is up to us to tap its energy. And I can't predict exactly what form the writing is going to take, or the shape or the look or tool of delivery of this new information package. But there is no doubt in my mind that we will be tapping the digital warehouse for data; not just the number of auto accident caused deaths last year, but also to find one of the three area codes for making phone calls to ships in the Atlantic Ocean. For sources like the AIDS researcher who has just received a grant from the World Health Organization. Or to find a Peace Corps volunteer in Central Africa who is on the Internet and who can tell us about the political situation of the moment.

Second, data will be stored in digital form with appropriate tools, analyzed in digital form with appropriate tools, and communicated to others with digital tools. So the challenge becomes how can we as editors and educators prepare for this change, change that requires new skills of reporting, research and analysis. Change that literally redefines the term literacy. More specifically, what I'm talking about is how do journalists set up their telecommunications hardware and software on their computers and troubleshoot it if necessary? How do you access the various online sources to find information you want?

How? Well first we can think about adopting what I call the three 100's as your polar star objective. The first is 100 percent of your people shall have access to. By 100 percent here, I mean just that. Everyone in your organization, from the muscle shirts down on the

loading dock to whoever is sitting in the CEO's chair, they all need access to the second 100, that is 100 percent of the data and analytic communications tools which need to be on everyone's desktop. By this I'm not talking about how you define their data or the applications you think they need, or what you think relates to their job. I'm talking about an objective that puts all the data and all the tools, Internet, CompuServe, Nexis, the word processing systems, spreadsheets, geographical information systems, all of them, on every PC in the building. Essentially, make these tools as ubiquitous as telephones.

Expensive? Maybe. But what are the long-term prospects for your enterprise if your employees or students can't first learn what's out there in the digital warehouse and how to fetch it and massage it after it is under their control? And where is innovation going to come from, those new routes across the uncharted lands, if the potential innovators lurking in any organization, don't have the tools to make the voyage of discovery?

The third 100?—100 percent of the people need access to 100 percent of the data and tools 100 percent of the time. That means 100 percent of the time, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, in the office, at home or on the road. That means first, making sure that no one in your organization ever has to wait 60 seconds to find a terminal and a keyboard that's hot. That means giving your employees phased-out PC's to take home. That means cutting some sweet deals with equipment suppliers to get machines and software at rock-bottom prices, and then finding a way to carry the paper on those machines so all employees can do a lease/buy arrangement with no interest for a 24-month payout withdrawn from their salaries.

But access alone isn't enough. We have to consciously invest in education for your employees and colleagues. Note I specifically did not say training. I can train a seal to play "The Star Spangled Banner" on a trumpet. But education is required if that seal is going to learn how to read music.

Sure, sending your people off to day-long or even week-long seminars on this or that is valuable, it's better than nothing almost. But real education requires long-term managerial and financial commitment. This new digital world is not easy to man around in, especially initially. The learning curve is steep on the front end, because we often have no intuitive sense of "What is this thing called e-mail or a spreadsheet?" It is not exactly like anything we're familiar with. A good forward-looking organization will have one educator for every 75 or 100 people on the staff. If your total staff is smaller than that, then contract out your teaching needs, or take it on yourself, but do it.

I'm not talking about narrow, one-shot lessons here, but a curriculum plan that is forever on-going, that builds on earlier skills and insights, but, is also flexible enough to pick up new people as they come into your organization. Our communications sector in the economy devotes less to training employees than any other, save for higher education. And unless we change that, all of us might well end up exploring the possibilities of opening a Mr. Donuts franchise.

The third component in this—first being hardware and software and availability, the second being an education plan—is an in-house marketing and promotions plan. You need to keep selling this to our people on a constant basis so that you can develop a real "Hey, have you seen what we can do now" type of spirit.

Finally, management changes necessary to not just dog paddle but to perform water ballet in this new ocean of ones and zeros, has to start at the top. We have to literally take the leadership role and educate ourselves first. That means at the very basic level, making sure that wide-area electronic mail is pervasive in your organization and that you are the first one to use it fully. If you do, everyone who reports to you will catch on. And if they can't figure out that their future depends on being part of your information loop, then they're probably not smart enough to be working for you anyway.

Finally, and maybe this is most important of all, have fun. All of this is fun. Because for those of us who are information junkies, those of us who can still get excited about a new concept, we who at the end of a day still relish the ability to think back and say "Yeah, I did learn at least one new thing today and it was terrific," we who need that particular kind of adrenalin hit, today is the best time to be alive. And I count myself fortunate to be along on this ride.

JOHN MARKOFF

There has been relatively little—almost none, if you compare us to other similar information-intensive professions—investment in the reporter's tools. And it gets very striking when you're someone like me who's in Silicon Valley and sees what companies who are information intensive invest in in their white collar professionals. You know, \$100,000 for stuff on someone's desk is not unusual.

And during the 1970's I was really proud of the fact I had a Selectric Typewriter. But I sold it in '81 and I bought an IBM PC. And if you sit down and look at an ATEX terminal these days, which big city metro papers still have, we're really talking about a Selectric on a piece of glass. I mean, there really hasn't been that much change, which is pretty striking.

So the first challenge, and it's just amazing that I have to say this now to our industry, is basically still to end the mainframe mindset. That is still the point of view that dominates my newsroom in terms of making technology decisions, and it's a cultural thing. The people who grew up in the culture of mainframes and minicomputers just



John Markoff: end mainframe mindset.

don't understand what personal computers can do. And I don't really know how to get around that, except maybe to sort of move those people out of the way and move in other people. And that's a very difficult thing to do.

Then there is this wonderful cost-performance curve that we're on, and we have to take advantage of it. We have to also realize that it's an exponential curve, and we've just reached the most interesting part of the curve and it's only going to get more interesting from here. There are junctures that we have to be cognizant of. There was the transition point between mainframes and

minicomputers, and then there was the transition point between minicomputers and personal computers.

As a result of the microprocessor and the personal computer, the second challenge is to go from mainframe computing into where? Well, to build our newsrooms around commodity hardware, off-the-shelf software, and open standards. So why? It's striking to me. We're 15 years since the personal computer has become a useful business tool, a useful information workers' tool. We're more than 10 years since the introduction of Lotus, we're 10 years since the introduction of Mac. When I left the newsroom two years ago, I was the only reporter, with maybe one or two exceptions in the newsroom, who was using a personal computer for anything more than terminal emulation. I know that's changed a little bit, and I think there is probably an inverse relation between the size of the newsroom and the amount of technical innovation that's going on.

But once we go to that second point where we're using commodity hardware—that's PC's, Macintoshes, UNIX work stations, we can take advantage of this cost curve which is defined by Moore's Law. That's the simple fact that was ob-

served by Gordon Moore, one of the co-founders of the Intel Corporation a couple of decades ago that every 18 months you can put four times as many transistors on the same size piece of silicon. It's held through since then and it will hold through into the foreseeable future.

We've had these two transition points and we're poised on a third transition point. We're still grappling with the introduction of the last generation technology; here comes another event that is going to be as de-stabilizing as the last one. And you'd better believe that it's

coming, and you can take advantage of it. I see it as a tremendous opportunity if you think about it in the right way.

We haven't dealt with personal computing very well, we're just beginning to deal with network computing, and there's this new thing on the horizon. And that new thing is that while by the end of this year, the PC companies, the Apples and the IBMs and the Motorolas are talking very enthusiastically about being able to give you 60 to 100 mips [million instructions per second] on your desktop, which is a very large number, you will be able to get an order of magnitude of even more speed from makers of videogames and settop box machines. The context on that is I think that an IBM PC in '81 gave you something like a quarter of a mips. Now I've got at home a PowerPC which has 60 mips.

But what is new is that you will be able to buy by late this year or early next year essentially a machine that will do a billion instructions per second from the makers of television settop boxes. And it's going to cost less than \$500. There is a price performance discontinuity coming that is as abrupt as the one that took place when the microprocessor was introduced. And it's going to change the world as dramatically as the personal computer did. Each one of these waves of new information technology has reached a wider part of the population. And what's happening in the next two years is going to do that all over again.

In six years when the millennium arrives, we are going to be able to have a machine that will be on our desk that you and I can afford, that will process a trillion operations a second. It will have a quarter of a terabyte of memory. So how much memory is that? The standard reference in *The Times* is [the novel] "Moby Dick," which I think is 1.2 megabytes. And so a terabyte is something like a quarter of a million copies of Moby Dick on your desktop.

The fastest computers in the future will be the cheapest computers. The world is being turned upside down. Why is that the case? When we started the military and large corporations built supercomputers. In the future, Sony

will build supercomputers; that's how different the world is. And the reason why is [that] all of the technology pressure is to put all of the transistors on one piece of silicon. Every time you go off a piece of silicon, you take a tremendous performance hit. And you know, the law of the microcosm—the price of every piece of silicon ultimately falls to \$3.30. The consumer electronics industry is going to drive computing over the next decade.

All the notes that I take when I'm working at my desk, and all the articles I write and everything I download, I keep on disk. I find that between the notes that I take and the articles I write, I create about 10 megabytes a year, really not a lot of stuff. I download probably another 10 megabytes of stuff.

What [a program called] On Location does is it runs a little background process, a demon, that watches me create text files or change them. And every time I change them, it updates its index. And so it indexes all the text on my disk and it's there whenever I need it. I find this just absolutely invaluable and I don't understand why everybody wouldn't want to have the same thing, but people would come by my desk and sort of look and walk away.

Once again, this comes out of a world where cycles are free and memory is plentiful. Most reporters are still living in a world where [cycles] are expensive and memory is scarce. And so they ask you, you know, take your files off the ATEX system because you're going to clutter it up. But I'm going to keep everything that I've written forever.

You search On Location, but there is no reason you really have to do that. I'd like something that would arbitrarily watch me as I type, and at arbitrary points, say sentences or paragraphs, turn that into what's called "context relevant retrieval." It would open a window on my desktop and as I typed there would be a sort of stream-of-consciousness information that would be hits that had been found out there, things that I may have forgotten years ago about. And they would scroll off 100K or so, and I wouldn't have to have it open. But remember, cycles are free, what are we going to do with them?

They are there to be used. And that's the kind of program we have to start thinking about. There are notes that I took that I've forgotten years ago. And they would come back to me and I could use them again. Or they would make connections that I would have lost and be easily accessible. And that's the stuff that's not there right now that I'd like to see.

My electronic mail program, besides the database, is sort of my second most important program. It's a program called Eudora written originally by a hacker at the University of Illinois. It's a wonderful, wonderful program. It still is free so you can just go out and get it and use it. What he's done now is he's added filtering. This filter allows you to find specific words, either in the headings or in the body of the messages, and they get put into mailboxes. And so it cuts down the clutter, and it will be available in the Windows world too. I probably spend a good third of my day in it.

Now what's really neat about the Apple technology, and I think you can do the same stuff in the Windows world, is that I can get this same access but with a lower data rate, wherever I am in the world. I can bring up my machine back in San Francisco, I can bring up this folder wherever I am over a modem and move files back and forth. And I keep the On Location index and I can actually find things that are buried in files from wherever I am. And it actually works very well.

I think that what the net is about—this will probably be heresy to this conference—[is] connectivity instead of content. And that if we think it's content, we're maybe missing a point about why all the people are there. And that what the net is doing and why it's going through this phenomenal growth is because people are finding community, not because they're looking for Bell Atlantic's interactive multimedia shopping mall, and that that's really driven it. It really is global village coming to fruition.

And the other thing I wanted to say about the net is that to try to take a snapshot of it is really a mistake. Because it's this wonderful ecology in which new protocols are bubbling up

virtually every day, and it really is going to alter continuously over the next couple of years.

Q. & A.

Q.—John, if you were running The New York Times, what would you do, given the presentation that you just had?

Markoff—The first thing I'd do is buy me Mead Data [which owns Lexis and Nexis].

Q.—How much?

Markoff—I think we can go up to 750 million [dollars]. But we may have already spent that money on The Boston Globe, I don't know. The New York Times has a contract with Mead Data Corporation in which electronic distribution and storage of The Times is granted to the Mead Data Corporation under a contract in perpetuity. And so it's put The Times in a very difficult position to plan this electronic arena. And we're doing some things, I mean, we're on Dow Jones, but the information only stays on Dow Jones for 24 hours and then it's rubbed off, which makes absolutely no technology sense at all. I guess it makes a certain amount of business sense.

Q.—But what would you invest in?

Markoff—Well, I guess the first thing I'd do I'd change the leadership of the people who make information technology decisions and then I would go from there. I mean, given the culture that exists, I don't think anything can happen and it's a difficult problem.

Leonard Downie—I'm Len Downie from The Washington Post. We did get rid of those decision makers at The Washington Post and the newsroom had to take the lead; it wasn't going to be done otherwise. We had an out-moded mainframe-based dumb terminal system, and it was going to be replaced by a fancy shmancy mainframe dumb terminal system. And the people like you in our newsroom literally rose up and said, "This would be the craziest thing you ever did" and educated those of us who didn't understand about this, and we did change the decision makers, and we now have a PC-based system which is almost entirely throughout the newsroom. All of our reporters and editors will have, most of them already do, PCs running the newsroom system and only one of the Windows and everything else is freed up to do all the other kinds of things; proprietary software, the kind of things you were talking about, all on their desk.

And our next job is to upgrade all of the portables to match that so that when you're out of the office you're in the same level of environment. We'll soon have all of our people on Internet and so on.

The newsroom had to seize control. And in the end, the people responsible for technology elsewhere in the corporation said "Thank you. We thought you were really stupid all these years. And that we had to serve you in this stupid environment. And the fact that you really wanted this, we didn't know."

David Lewis—David Lewis, Nieman Fellow from CNN. What percent of your reporting time is spent with your machines, and what percent of it is spent with people?

Markoff—I think probably still the best reporting that I do is the time I get to just hang out in [Silicon] Valley. I mean, that's the stuff where I get quality stuff, even against all of this modern technology and I don't get to do enough of that. Second to that, probably, I think, the telephone is the second most important tool.

But beyond that I get a tremendous number of good story ideas off the net. For a while it was my private preserve and I sort of have this feeling now that this thing has become mainstream America that there goes the neighborhood. And when I was at The Examiner during the mid-80's, I really was the only one there and it was great. Now it's a totally competitive scene.

Q.—If I could just follow up for both Tom and John, is there a danger that we will forget how to telephone and how to meet people face to face if we are too enamored of these wonderful tools, which are wonderful tools, but perhaps they will help us get away from something that is also very important?

Markoff—I think initially it's extremely seductive because you realize that you can sit at home in your bedroom and you get on there at 2:00 in the morning and it's hopping. There are people out there and you're talking to them and you can find it. But after you get through that first phase of the love affair, you realize that to have something for a longer range you're going to have to just use the tool as a tool. But as Tom said, you ultimately have to go out and talk to people, you want to go out and talk to people. So there is a learning balancing process that goes on.

I think what we're talking about is not getting rid of any of the traditional values that we have in practice as a journalist, all of that stuff stays in place. We're just

talking about adding new dimensions to what it is we do as a journalist.

Brad Goldstein—My name is Brad Goldstein. I want to change your equation just a bit to data-in data-out to garbage-in garbage-out. Have you thought about the danger of relying solely on on-line technology? Because if you are on-line to your local town hall or your city, there's a possibility that the person on the other end could manipulate your data. So that what you're getting in is garbage and what you're putting out is garbage.

Johnson—Exactly, and that's what I meant that the quality of what comes out is only as good as the quality of what went in. But I think that same thing is true if you're dealing with paper stuff. I mean, the mantra has to be if you're going to be dealing with large pieces of data, big data walls, you have to assume it's dirty.

Dwight Morris of Los Angeles Times—Any data that you acquire from the federal government or anyone else is full of holes. We did a project where we wanted to get to every piece of property that the Resolution Trust Corporation had ever had and find out what happened to it. And it came to us on paper; it was about 45,000 pieces of paper that had to be keyed. [We had to spend] four months of our time going through property records all over the United States filling in a lot of the missing holes. The idea that this is a panacea and that boy, we're just going to have these machines and they're going to do all of our thinking and all of our work for us is idiotic. What they are, as you pointed out, is a tool, a very powerful tool. But at the bottom line we still have to do what any intelligent person would do, which is to verify, double check, clean and then use the information that we get.

Johnson—Which is why I think this education is so important. Because if you're doing a spreadsheet and if you're looking at some data that's been printed out with a dot matrix printer, zeros and eights look very, very similar. And so when I'm working with my students they very quickly will figure out if you hit the wrong key you put in the wrong number, suddenly our whole spreadsheet is out of whack.

Fulton—The point that Tom didn't make explicitly in his speech is that we don't talk about telephone-assisted reporting. And that to talk about computer-assisted reporting gets us in some ways away from—you talk more about analytic journalism. And I think sometimes we miss, too, the ways in which these tools can help us understand the

information. Your ability to find notes and quotes and put things in context and rearrange things, the process of analyzing and thinking about the material that so rarely happens in our business. We think about reporting and we think about writing and we don't deal with the in between very well. And I think the tools help us with that some.

Anthony Oettinger—Tony Oettinger of Harvard. I think you need to add to that observation the fact that all of your customers increasingly have access to exactly the same tools. And that this enormous democratization and consumer aid thing is what is the radical effect. And I want to tie that back to the remarks that Michael Rogers made earlier. Because you are engaged in truly an interactive game with your customers that has had no parallels since Homer stopped telling his tale in a conversational mode to a live audience. And I think that's the true significance of what is going on.

Alan Ota, Nieman Fellow 1994—What specifically [are] you using on the Internet? Are you just cruising the bulletin boards; are you going into some of these university libraries around the world, and if so what are you using? Secondly, do you think that Mosaic could be a delivery system for providing news articles to a global audience?

Markoff—Day to day really the only tool that I'm using on the net on a continuous basis right now is electronic mail. However, that said, there are at least six or seven projects now to develop separate commercial versions of Mosaic that address a lot of the early—

Fulton—Could you explain Mosaic?

Markoff—There is a protocol called The Worldwide Web on the Internet that was developed by physicists at CERN to store multimedia [graphical] information in a hypertext way. So you could have a document that would have pointers to other documents that could be anywhere in the world. [Using Mosaic], once you've clicked [on an icon in one document the reference document is transmitted automatically to your screen.] Mosaic gives you a window into the worldwide web; it's a browser.

And there are a number of interesting projects now to commercialize Mosaic. You could, for example, conceive of an information model where you would deliver The New York Times daily as some Mosaic version, but you would have hypertext links imbedded into it to the Mead Data Corporation's archives of The Times. And so any story could retrieve any

portion of The Times archive; you could go as deep into the news as you want. I think the Mosaic architecture would support that very nicely. Then you could add in the Encyclopedia Britannica if you wanted, which is actually one of the most interesting demonstrations of the technology up now. They actually have it on the net commercially. So maybe for a quarter or a dollar you could get an Encyclopedia Britannica reference which I think actually for me would be very worthwhile.

Jerry Kammer—Nieman Fellow here. I'm going to Mexico for my next assignment, I'm signed on to two Mexico lists. And many articles are transmitted. My question is the reliability of the information. Because someone enters them into the system, how do you know you can trust what you're getting through the Internet?

Johnson—Well there is a technological solution to that. I mean, there are sort of levels to the problem. But I think ultimately that the technological portion of that problem will go away. You can use cryptographic technology if you want to authenticate that the information that you're getting is what was sent from the source. Now do you trust your source?

Michael Janeway—Mike Janeway of Northwestern University. Len Downie's comment suggests both a newsroom and a consumer issue, which is the generational component. In the university world we're certainly aware that students coming in from the more techie oriented high schools are way, way ahead—18-year-olds are ahead of 20-year-olds who are way ahead of 24-year-olds, and students are teaching faculty in this area. And my sense is that something like this is true in newsrooms as well. Have you looked at this new environment in the generational context?

Johnson—Yes, what you say is true. Clearly young people who are familiar with video games or whatever grasp this stuff. But what I've found—I mean, John and I are old guys, right? We didn't learn this in the cradle, we picked it up somewhere. We picked it up somewhere along the line. I mean, it seems to be more an attitudinal aspect.

Somebody in the Times a couple of weeks ago, a novelist, made the comment that in terms of the have and have nots, that the haves in terms of the information resources, will be text oriented. The have nots will be graphics or visually oriented. We're talking about the MTV generation versus those who can read.

Now how do we deal with this in a university or in an educational environ-

ment? I don't know. Because there are old guys, many people much older than I, who have really grabbed onto this stuff, they really like it, they're excited by it. At the same time, there are young people, the 20-year-olds, who don't. So I don't see any kind of correlation there.

Ellen Hume [The Annenberg Washington Program]—I'm wondering, I'm hearing some complaints from younger journalists and from some of my journalism students that there are now ghettoes in newsrooms for the people who are technically adept. And they sit at computers hour after hour and all the reporters who get to go out and have all the fun reporting dump. "Oh, I need to know this document, would you please search it?" And they never get to do a story or get a byline and there's this whole sort of class orientation going on in the newsroom. Is this happening and should people be concerned about that?

Markoff—I'm only one newsroom and I don't see that at The Times. I tend to hand off a lot of my research stuff but it's to professional searchers; people who are not reporters that The Times has, librarians who are trained to do this. Certainly I don't see it at all in our newsroom actually.

Kathy Bushkin—We've trained a group of people in computer-assisted reporting and they range generational and they're the ones who are moving the fastest in our newsroom to become true, full reporters. And they get it. They're telephone-assisted, they're computer-assisted and they know how to report. And the good thing about them is I think they're learning how to skeptically question conventional wisdom. They really ask the questions that I find younger journalists aren't learning how to ask properly and I find this to be such a great way to break some bad habits that I saw were creeping into our business. ■

How Will the Editor's Job Change?

BY DAVID HALL



Commentary

Off and on there is talk of a new journalism. In the 1970's we flirted briefly with a journalistic milk shake of point-of-view-as-advocacy. Pretty soon that grew flat. Today a gaggle of would-be prophets preach that technology—specifically, computer-driven technology—is forcing us toward some new journalism. The more woolly of these visions has every home a news center and every being a journalist.

After reading scores of magazine articles and news stories about where emerging technology is taking us, after debating with colleagues and attending conferences (most recently at the Nieman Foundation) I am more intrigued than ever about where we are going, but convinced of one thing: the old journalism will get us there.

After decompressing from the three days at Harvard discussing "A New Journalists' Agenda," I wrote and quipped to Curator Bill Kovach that I was "perplexed in a more informed way." My notes reflect the energizing, schizo nature of the discussions. On Friday morning there was the question: "Who is a journalist and what is journalism when everyone can report the news and edit to suit personal tastes?" Scary stuff. Later that morning the notes reflect some calming down when John Markoff of *The New York Times* drove a nail of common sense into our platform of visions. Among the best of reporters at not only covering the computer industry, but also extracting respectable facts from sources of data, Markoff cautioned that analyzing data is not enough: it still must be checked for accuracy. He asked a journalist's primal question: Do you trust your source?

Do you trust the Internet? I do, if the news on the screen is my son at college

telling me where he will be camping over the weekend. (Actually, to his frustration, our PC at home has yet to marry a modem, so I still trust telephone answering machines; but let's not digress.) But we all know that the Internet, while full of promise, is really an electronic cacophony unless you know and trust your source. It is full of stuff, but unverified stuff is not journalism.

The most reassuring note I made at the Nieman conference came on Friday afternoon: "What we have gathered to talk about is the relationship between new media (technology) and the values we espouse as journalists." So it is those values that I come back to constantly as I reflect on the task asked of me: write an article for Nieman Reports on how I think new technologies will affect my job as an editor.

Changing technology will affect my job in two ways: not at all, and profoundly. (Philosophers say that the eternal question is: Why is there something, rather than nothing? For editors seeking direction in the so-called new information age, the quandary is similarly boggling.)

The most important concern is how new technology affects the editor's job not at all.

An editor's overwhelming responsibility is to readers. And that responsibility means to harness the verities of journalism—accuracy, fairness, editorial independence, concern for democratic values, content and perspective—toward the basic function that editors perform every day: they choose. Our choice, our judgment of what is news, remains a precious commodity, whose worth we sometimes diminish. I am convinced that whether they consciously acknowledge it or not, subscribers write their checks and newsstand buyers plunk down their coins to buy the judgment of editors. An editor's ultimate

worth stands on whether regular readers of his newspaper believe not just the specific day-to-day stories published, but, more importantly, believe that the newspaper is a reliable standard-setter for the community, distinguishing between news that is significant and that which is trivial. It seemed to me, when we sat in Friday night's public forum at the Nieman conference, that Leonard Downie of *The Washington Post* had the editor's responsibility for judgment in mind when he voiced his fear that



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many in our profession are "giving up" on public-interest journalism as a high priority.

These observations reaffirming the verities of journalism may seem like firmly grasping the obvious to some and like foolishly clinging to romanticism to others. But as editor of a newspaper serving a complex metropolitan area, I am convinced that the primacy of words and images inked onto paper will not only carry us into the 21st Century, but also serve as our main economic underpinning for decades to come. So in analyzing the so-called new media ventures that beguile as well as interest us, I insist that no effort, no resources, be drawn away from sustaining and improving our core product—the 365-days-a-year newspaper. Happily, I have a publisher, Alex Machaskee, who supports that priority while remaining open to new ventures. (Alex's view on the lure of emerging technology is multiple partners with short-term contracts.)

Yet as the editor's job changes not at all in its basic responsibilities of journalism, the impact of new media technology will profoundly affect how well we perform. The Nieman conference did clarify my thinking on priorities, and I offer these for consideration.

Seek to enlarge the audience. A frequent concern of our conference was whether new technology would feed increasingly an information elite. Savvy editors and publishers will see such a trend as opportunity to reaffirm the value of a daily newspaper as a mass medium that unites communities by making easily accessible information available at low cost. Many of us question the pursuit prevalent in the industry only a few years ago of demographic success at broad audience expense. The elite are forever fickle, but the men and women who populate our cities and our middle-class suburbs not only want to know about their communities, but also tend to become loyal customers when a newspaper meets their needs.

Make more news available. Every newspaper throws away daily much of the information it gathers. Because most computer technology is the province of

the elite, they tend to gobble data pertaining to a special interest. Whether this interest be fly fishing or foreign affairs, stock performances or batting averages, editors should take the lead in identifying this additional news and helping to shape how it's distributed, either electronically or on paper. Two things are imperative: that journalistic judgment make the call, else ultimately the credibility of the news institution will crumble; and that the core newspaper not be cannibalized to start voice information and computer-interactive services, for that also hurts credibility and trust of the news institution.

Get involved in experiments. The editor should not sit idly by while advertising divisions and technical departments devise new media ventures. Editors should become knowledgeable about conventional television as well as interactive cable technology—and should steer ventures in those media toward undertakings that support and supplement the newspaper, rather than replace the daily paper.

Spend money on results. Publishers and owners will finance experiments. Newsroom dollars should go to train editors and reporters in how to access new information sources and how to analyze the data they find. Computer-assisted reporting is an unfortunate term, but so be it. Reporter Elizabeth Marchak of The Plain Dealer's Washington Bureau, acknowledged as an expert at searching through computerized records, preaches and practices that the search time doesn't breathe as a story until the tell-tale document is in hand or the face-to-face interview is finished. Still, using computer power is not cheap, and editors who want to bind readers to precisely informative newspapers will be establishing separate departments, with designated heads, to help direct reports as well as oversee computer equipment. That equipment should be chosen specifically for the job of processing data for journalism—and editors should resist having to compromise that equipment by double-bunking with other tasks in the company. (Good journalism need not be profligate, but neither is quality cheap.)

Gain efficiencies where possible. Don't compromise on equipment, but do share resources. Marchak: "The business department side of the paper for years has been spending money on marketing and demographic studies and mapping software that newsrooms are only now beginning to appreciate. Good editors are finding ways to learn how to use the information, share the costs and produce results-oriented stories never seen on newspapers before. For example: Using mapping software and marketing data to write about the differences in neighborhoods—schools, playgrounds, malls."

Finally, get a grip. On-line information services are increasing rapidly. Mainly, however, they are being used by information niches like brokerage houses, prosecutors' offices, medical libraries, lobbyists and the like. Evidence and experience suggests that while a service like CompuServ signs up new residential clients daily, those modem mavens, too, plug in to satisfy a special-interest need that even the most comprehensive newspaper, with the largest of news holes, could never fulfill. To think that the TV-to-MTV generations—who like their mothers and fathers, have jobs and families, and get tired of making decisions—to think that these people are going into the business of news-editing-at-home, on their leisure time, is to think fuzzily.

Many sensible things were said at the Nieman Foundation's conference in search of a new journalists' agenda. But one thought that lingers came as Allee Willis (songwriter, artist, filmmaker, writer) answered questions after Friday's lunch. She uncomplicated all the babble about interactivity by reminding us that the model for interactivity is human conversation. Surely the Internet will grow, and certainly on-line information services and interactive television will challenge what we do. All of this will change us for the better only if we remember that those principles of good journalism which got us here will sustain us wherever we are going. For good journalism, from a newspaper trusted by readers, will stimulate more good conversation on any day than will any computer link. ■

Multimedia—Back to School

BY TERRY SCHWADRON



OK, you've finished the last interview, you're back on the plane, you know how to use your laptop computer, and you're a happy reporter.

You've made your peace with technology and are secure in the fact that you know how to file from your hotel room. What more—besides the inevitable questions from the desk—could anyone ask of you?

Consider this:

- Your editor asks whether there is any chatter on the local bulletin boards about the action that the agency you cover took this morning. The editor says it would be good to include some voices....

- The copy desk has downloaded a copy of the speech you just covered and wants to question whether there is enough context surrounding the quotes you've selected....

- Your source says she'd be happy to get you a copy of the information and wants to know your Internet address.

- The newspaper-sponsored local cable TV team wants you to do a stand-up version of your story for them, but says sentences in your story are too long ...

- The multimedia team wants to include parts of your story in the CD-ROM, but thinks you should hear how it sounds against the music that has been selected as the background....

For publishers and media company owners, the realities of the emerging new technology present a vast number of opportunities for investment, alliances, new products and new ways to connect with our readership. There is plenty of risk ahead, just as there is delight over the possibilities of leveraging the best of what newspapers and magazines have to offer into the world of electronic distribution.

For writers, editors, photographers, artists and editorial librarians and re-

searchers, the prospects of opportunity are laced with the fears of diving into waters that teem with uncertainty and scare us because we lack survival skills.

The clearest notion emerging from the recent Nieman Foundation conference on the impact of the new technology was that our newsrooms need to know what is happening and to acquire skills that will empower us to decide how we want to participate.

At the minimum, our reporters need to understand the power of the personal computer, of electronic talk on bulletin boards, of the availability of information from individuals and from institutions on the electronic highways. The possibilities in news collection, in analysis, in community discussion, in getting someone to answer our questions are in flux. Our idea of the complete reporter is changing to include the ability to understand how to find information through the computer.

And, as news organizations consider adding new products and services through electronic distribution methods, reporters increasingly will be challenged or interested in reconsidering their use of language, the length and breadth of stories, the possibilities of adding video "evidence" for their stories. Our artists and photographers will want to understand what is different about presenting static and animated information on screen or through linked screens. Our editors will want to experiment with different ways to coordinate storytelling in a world that can link background information with the current event, pictures and videos with references to individuals, and sound clips with words. The skills of our editorial librarians to find and distill information increasingly will be shared and taught to others.

What all this amounts to is a call for massive self-education efforts and organized training by and within our news organizations. Perhaps most important for many was mere exposure to multi-

media and the Internet. Experiencing these multimedia and electronic media is enough to alert, stimulate, excite and frighten many of us. The overwhelming conclusion is that we need to know more—quickly.

News organizations should be finding ways to introduce staffers to on-line services, to the possibilities of computer-assisted reporting, to the offerings of the Internet and to the world of multimedia CD-ROMs. We need to give ourselves the time to explore and to make decisions about whether to participate and how. Someone at your paper goes to trade shows; if you cannot go yourself, find out what is happening.

At The Los Angeles Times, we are installing a node to the Internet to allow all reporters using a personal computer access to the worldwide net. We are experimenting with audio services, alternative print and fax services; we are about to launch an on-line service and we are experimenting with multimedia CD-ROMs. In each case, we are seeking to involve the newsroom and staying away when it seems to be a burden. We have announced technology seminars and have brought in equipment manufacturers. We are inviting reporters and editors to help design the next generation of personal computer. We have asked reporters and editors, artists, librarians, photographers and photo lab technicians to take part in early multimedia experiments.

Together, we should learn what works and what does not. We just ask for time and interest. The arrival of the electronic world is a fact. We can choose to ignore it or be dumbfounded by it only at our own peril. How much more satisfying it is to consider the opportunities for news gathering and for publishing. To play, you need to inform yourself and your newsroom. ■

Terry Schwadron, Deputy Managing Editor of The Los Angeles Times, oversees development of technology applications in Editorial for The Times.

Inventing the Interactive Multimedia Future

Featured Speaker

Allee Willis, song writer, artist, filmmaker, set designer, writer and interactive multimedia artist

ALLEE WILLIS

I don't think that the answer to turning on the masses, which is what I do, and which is what you guys do, or hopefully we do if we're doing it right—I just don't think that they are going to get turned on by seeing the Last Action Hero hacked up into little pieces. Does the plot go this way or that way? Does Arnold get the girl or not get the girl or the kid or whatever it was? It just isn't what it's about.

So number one, I have a problem with the way a lot of this stuff is being covered. The model for interactivity to me is a human conversation. And I think that parallels a lot of the stuff going on here. Where if I throw a thought out to someone, they kind of think about it, mull it around, toss it back to me. And this goes back and forth and back and forth. This is like 100-way communication. It's not just two-way, even though it may just be between two people.

I really feel that journalists have the power to completely shape the digital age, because you are the people who educate the masses, who all this information is for, and all this entertainment is for, about what the future is. And if you're going to incite the masses, if you're going to empower them with the information you give them, or the ideas that you give them, they have to find what you're reporting exciting. And I don't think that people are jumping up and down about seeing Roseanne at 7:00 or 7:02. Pretty

much all anyone is hearing about is this extended way of pay-per-view home shopping, which they already can do. Booking travel arrangements. That is not a revolution.

So, the one thing I would like to say is there is a lot more going on that I don't see the bulk of the journalists going after. And I think that it would do you guys a service to dig, and it would certainly do the artists a service. And it would certainly do the masses a service.

The message I really want to deliver is now more than ever, I think, [that] journalists have the power to be more creative than they ever have. This is a time when the power structures are freely saying we don't know what this is. They may be trying to control it by on-line services coupling with traditional newspapers. Buying things up. Trying to control it in the old way. But people don't know how news is going to get to people. They don't know what it's going to feel like, what it's going to sound like, emotionally how it's going to hit.

And I feel that the opportunity for the individual journalist, the same way as the opportunity for the individual artist, has never, in the history of our lifetime, been at this point. And I feel that the same way that the artist who has a unique view of this, has to kind of in a way fight the entertainment conglomerates, David against Goliath, but still with it being within the system.

That that opportunity [is] for the journalist to kind of fight this conservative media structure that exists. I feel that opportunity is there because all those conservative medias and all those relatively conservative entertainment conglomerates, communication conglomerates, want is existence, a massive existence, in the 21st Century.

And, though, I think they're approaching it by buying things up and kind of doing pretty



Allee Willis: be more creative.

mainstream things, they know that it's going to take something [of a] breakthrough. So, I guess what I feel I would like to say to you the most is that the opportunity [exists] for you to function more like artists and more like creative people, as opposed to the people who just gather the information about those creative people and comment on it. I really see the role of the artist and the journalist merging.

And I think the public suffers from a fear of technology, the artist suffers from fears of technology, the press suffers from it. Like, what is it? In the absolute true spirit of the pioneers, who knew what was going to be? Or, if they were going to fall off the edge of the earth. But, I would much rather be where there are no rules, [where] no one can tell you that you're on the wrong path, than staying within this little box that someone has carved out and says this is how you shall do your job.

So, I think it will define itself. I think to be a true artist you have to accept [the fact that] you don't know what it was. Because if you could define it in any step along the way, you're probably already boring people. You know, it's too definable. Some unbelievable technology people are screaming to do things differently. It is a revolution; no question it's a revolution. And you absolutely individually have the power to be the pioneers.

And just from an artist's standpoint, there have been certain key journalists who have made my life a lot easier by taking an interest in what I was doing because I was doing things differently. And I think that the opportunity for artists and journalists to kind of align themselves and shape the future as much as the technology companies, as much as the phone companies, as much as the entertainment conglomerates [is] here. So I would just say have the guts to accept the fact that everything as you know it doesn't exist anymore. And just go for it. I mean, it is a massive sandbox. It is a playground. You can choose to be completely traumatized as shit, or so inspired—honestly, it's like being five years old and paid to do it. So, just kind of go for it.

Q. & A.

Q.—Can you be more specific about what you think journalists actually should be doing?

Willis—The bulk of what I see—I mean the overwhelming bulk of what I see on the information superhighway in the 21st Century reads to me like a bunch of press releases. I think it's being covered like it's a business story. And I think it's a social change story. It's an evolution of the human being. It's evolution of the human brain to deal with the complexities of the 21st Century. And I don't see many people covering it from a real creative point. They cover it from a business, financial point. And for me it feels that they miss the whole purpose of the fact that it's a revolution.

If you look back, historically when any unbelievable technology has presented itself, that is a way of carrying ideas between people in a different way, it's rarely been the powers that rule the age before who are the ones that do it here. So I would just say there's a lot more stories out there than what I think is currently being covered. Especially, for me as an artist, some of the most important press.

Typically what happens to me when I get interviewed is the editors always say to the reporter, usually it's their first gig. They've heard this word "information superhighway." They've taken a crash course by seeing one dull CD-ROM after another, but they're very excited. I'm not putting down CD-ROMs as a whole. I think information gathering, news, unbelievable use. Childrens, unbelievable use. As a delivery system for entertainment, brain dead.

Q.—When you talk about artists and journalists working together, are you just talking about journalists giving support to innovative artists, or are you talking about [all] sorts of collaboration?

Willis—Well, I wasn't thinking of it in terms of the second. I was thinking of it in terms of the first and, another thing, journalists acknowledging that they are artists and probably the reason that they wanted to do it in the first place is that they felt they wrote great or they had a particular gift with storytelling that somehow imbedded with news was a great way to get their writing out there.

So, I'm talking about journalists tapping into their own inner artist. I'm talking

about journalists maybe as a means of doing that. Getting excited and re-inspired because they're talking to other people who are kind of doing things in a non-traditional way.

But, the key word I think that you said was "collaborators." And I think one of the things that is missing from the coverage of what interactivity is, which is always referred to as two-way communication. And what is missing from a lot of the interactive stuff that's out, especially I think CD-ROMs, is this notion of who—someone said it in one of their speeches—is it an audience, is it a user? What do you call these people?

And, I think, to truly address interactivity right, you have to accept the fact, definitely as an artist—and this is what keeps a lot of them away—that the audience is now your collaborator. And that they will be impacting your work. And how can you really allow honest two-way communication if they don't? And so you have to rise to the challenge of, Oh my God, what happens there? But, again, that can either be a threat or an opportunity. And the other thing is this is inevitable, this stuff is coming.

So, to resist it because you don't get it, or resist it because you don't want anyone touching your work, or a normal person can't write, or they're slanted or whatever it is—yeah, a lot of that is true. But, that's the nature of the beast. So I'd rather figure out some way to embrace it and come up with a revolutionary form than stay away from it. But, again, heart of the matter, interactivity. People tapping into their creativity. And that's it.

Q.—What happens to the hour-long documentary, the long magazine piece, is it all fragmented now?

Willis—No. Well, first of all, I think those are all incredible forms, and they will be here—And someone said this earlier, the same way radio will be here. And I don't think that people, because there's television and movies, look at radios as a backwards form. You just go to it for a different kind of emotional sustenance.

So I think there's room for all that. But, I think that the people who truly are attached to those forms, and truly create great work in those forms, are not necessarily going to be the people who come up with the great non-linear storytelling form. And again, if you're going to have to allow for a zillion people inputting your work, it is going to be non-linearly.

But, to me, what I see the press covering is how—and again I'm coming at it from an entertainment point—but how such

and such a linear writer, some big author, some big screenwriter or some big musician just got a big deal—well, relatively, I guess—to do a CD-ROM, or to do a video game or something. And it's like again they didn't slap wheels on the horse and call it an automobile. And that's what I feel like—through the press this is being presented.

Q.—One of the fundamental questions is what is journalism and will we miss it when it's gone. I want to ask you, as an artist, a non-journalist, what do you think journalism should be, and differentiated from sheer entertainment? Is there still a niche for journalism?

Willis—I think there's a more important place for journalism than ever before. The only way you get through the world is by trying to get as much information as you can and make choices. And the fact that there may be more viewpoints represented. From my standpoint, why is that any less journalism? Is a story any less a story whether it is a book, a mini-series? The answer to that one is probably yes. Or, a film, or a magazine piece? So, no, I think it's unbelievably important for journalists to figure out.

And again it's wrong to say to figure out what this is, because I think that will only reveal itself after probably quite a few years go by. But it, on the other hand, exists every single step of the way. And if the Internet is having that profound effect on people, and the way the Internet is being used now even two years from now it will be looked at as a joke. So, just because it isn't formed yet is no reason to stay away from it. But, seriously, I think it has a more important role even that it has. And that's what I'm saying. That you guys have the power to shape how you will do your jobs. And I think it's the creative responsibility of everyone to want to know more about it. Or, your job could be eliminated. Or, you could be writing for something that maybe has a less exciting presence in the world.

Q.—There's a lot of concern expressed lately, it has been for years, but heightened I think now about mixing journalism and entertainment. From your point of view, what's wrong with that?

Willis—Well, first of all, I'm probably not the right one to answer that because I'm ravenous over those shows. I watch *Hard Copy*, I watch *Current Affair*. But, I view it more as entertainment, I enjoy it. I have a lot of friends who they do stories on. I know a lot of it isn't true. I still suck this stuff up like there's no tomorrow. You know what, though, I view that trend in journalism the same way I view the trend

in movies—movies that cost \$100 million dollars that are nothing but promotional tools for McDonalds. I don't know if any of you have seen the *Flintstones* yet. Staggering. Staggering in the lack of, to me, almost morality that went into making the movie. That, to me, is the kind of—it's a let's appeal to the crassest element of the public. And I admit that's an element in me that's like completely alive. But I can take it more on those shows than like the *Flintstones*, which oh my God, how much money.

I don't know. But the point is that is, in a way, the enemy. And that's where if purely driven by marketshare and profits, which I guess is the same, there's going to be more of those. How many times does the individual have a chance to fight this? In the same way that I feel the artists have a way of fighting the 100 trillion *Flintstone* movies, you can fight the other thing.

Q.—There's something about it that appeals to you a lot. So, could you specify what those aspects are and what about those elements that could be adapted to do something journalistically meaningful that would be appealing to people?

Willis—Okay, the part of it that totally appeals to me is the currentness of it. Especially the last three years thinking about all of this stuff that I'm trying to do, [I] had really had to lock myself inside. And my window to the world, without question, is television. And that television links me to a community. And it's the intimacy of what's going on there. I can't believe how fast these so-called deep stories are on a *Hard Copy* or *Current Affair*, these detailed stories, I guess.

But, it's the sense of immediacy and it's the sense of the community. And if there are two overwhelming characteristics of this new digital age in terms of the impact on the consumer, it's community and immediacy. And, I think, it is the very elements of those shows that you have the opportunity to tap into, but in a much more morally correct, intelligent, thought-provoking way.

Q.—But entertainment.

Willis—Absolutely. Entertainment to me has always been the quickest way to get a message across. And if you are in these digital medias competing with people who have television images, movie images and regardless of what anyone thinks about those things, there is some pretty brilliant stuff coming across, it's got to be presented, I think, with at least that flair. Because getting into the digital age is most fearful to me, to the consumer. So something has to compel them to go. ■

My Information Country Road

BY JAROSLAV VEIS



Just after the fall of the Communist rule in Central and Eastern Europe one observer noted that the Xerox machine was one of the greatest dis-

sidents. It was true: During the Eighties the number of copying machines in the post-Communist world increased dramatically, and governments were no longer able to control a substantial proportion of information, which was freely distributed among the population. There were other non-human dissidents: the automatic telephone exchanges, which enabled news to flow freely to the West, and the computer, which made possible the production of underground publications.

I cite these examples from the era that seems to be the Stone Age of information technology (so fast is the pace of innovation) only to stress detail often overlooked: Great ideas have to find their way to the ordinary people and information technology has been crucially important for the process of democratization of the world. So there is no wonder that I assume *The Modem* has already become candidate number one for *The Great Dissident of the Nineties*.

Of course, there is still the basic question of access to the new technology. There are some countries with governments that do not particularly favor letting their citizens be more interconnected with the world. There are other countries with governments that do not need to bother with the question of costs. If the obsolete computer or the slowest modem costs half an individual's average yearly income, if a couple of minutes of an international telephone call equals a family's budget for a month, why? And there are still other countries whose governments would support the

new technology, but their present networks of telephone lines are in such a bad shape that they can hardly carry ordinary phone calls and where satellite phones are just for the few lucky and rich ones. (I recall thinking about the possible "Watergate type" investigation back in Prague, by the way. If I remember correctly, a great part of the original investigation depended on the phone. I was trying to imagine a reporter in Prague working hard, first to get the tone, then to dial the number. At what point would he give up?) Yes, to have or not have, that is the question to be answered first.

Fortunately, to save the role of The Modem as The Great Dissident, there is not only the post-Communist and the Third World, but also the first one with its Internet. It is estimated that there are already 7,000 discussion groups on Internet and every day a couple of new ones are born. Thus it is much easier to produce and to distribute the electronic newspaper than the printed one. I may see it every day on my computer monitor, sometimes even free of charge. Of course, strict critics of information purity point out that what comes from the computer mostly does not have identifiable sources, cannot be verified and so hardly can be regarded as news. True, these reports are not news in the journalistic sense, but they are news in the dissent sense—and newspapers too.

Does it fit in the projected vision of the information superhighway? I presume not. It fits much more into the information superspace. Wide open, nearly limitless. Not only with the superhighways and interstates, but with its blue highways, country roads and even the hunter trails.

Who are the people exploring this superspace? The ones looking for alternatives

other than rock music? The ones who prefer computers instead of human beings? The teenagers for whom the keyboard and monitor are more natural than an ancient tape recorder was for me at the same age? The ones who understand the true meaning of the word interactive much better than I, even if they never use it? The large part of generation X who have been living already in information superspace, not bothering with middle-aged baby boomers busy constructing an information superhighway and with analyzing to determine whether future users would be more graphic- or more text-oriented? I do not know, yet.

Meanwhile, I try my best to enter at least the borderline of information superspace. I even have the real reason: not much information on what is happening in my part of the world comes to

me through the filters of the editorial desks at The New York Times, National Public Radio, CNN—and those are the most porous ones. So I had to learn how to get to LISTSERV. @UBVM.CC.BUFFALO.EDU, the source distributing The Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Daily Report. This is a digest of the latest developments in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and all the former Soviet Union, prepared by RFE/RL Research Institute. Not the information superhighway, but a solid country road. And in a way a surprising road: I could hardly imagine that in the year 1994, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, it would be good old Radio Free Europe to welcome me into the information superspace.

If you have not crossed into information superspace yet, try it. It is fun—until you start to think about the content of the news from many places of the world. But some instinct says to me that the more of us who cross the line, the better the news will be. ■



Jaroslav Veis, a columnist for Lidové noviny, a daily newspaper in the Czech Republic, has just completed his Nieman year. A graduate of Charles University in Prague, he is a former writer and editor of science fiction, essayist and translator of English and American fiction. He has worked in various capacities at Lidové noviny since the newspaper resumed after the collapse of the Communist regime. In 1991-1992 he was Editor-in-Chief.

Democratization of News And the Future of Democracy

Moderator

W. Russell Neuman, Edward R. Murrow Professor of International Communications and Director, Murrow Center, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.

Challenge

Denise Caruso, Editorial Director of Information Services, Technology & Media Group, Inc., a subsidiary of Friday Holdings, a venture created to acquire and invest in media properties.

Responses

Louis Ureneck, Editor and Vice President, The Portland Newspapers, and Co-chairman, ASNE New Media Committee. Nieman Editor-in-Residence, 1994-95.
Ed Fouhy, Executive Director, Pew Center for Civic Journalism, an initiative of the Pew Charitable Trusts, which seeks to stimulate civic discourse.
Jean Gaddy Wilson, Executive Director, New Directions for News, a nonprofit newspaper research and development group.

DENISE CARUSO

I really appreciated Allee's talk because she and I agree on one thing, which is that one of the biggest mistakes media companies are making today is to look at the on-line environment as just another package for them to distribute the information that they already generated.

Although the information itself may be the same to some degree, interactive media, it's really important to notice, is fundamentally different from mass media. I'm going to not quote McLuhan again because I know we're getting a little tired of that. But very simply put, the message of this new medium is "I want what I want and nothing more."

A low estimate of more than 20 million on-line consumers today choose and control the information they want. They assume interactivity and an active role in selecting precisely what they

want to read or see. So you might say that interactive media is transforming our democratic marketplace of ideas into a shopping list of topics and keyword searches. Now what does that mean? Is the interactive media buying public better informed than we schlubs who still read newspapers? I don't know, and I don't think that they know either.

But, since I do believe that the successful practice of good journalism in whatever media is one of the best ways to ensure an effective democracy. I'm going to address only three issues, although I'm sure there are at least 20 more, about electronic media that I believe will have a profound effect on how successful journalism can continue to exist in a networked world.

The first thing I'm going to talk about is the proliferation of information on networks. In order to keep this brief, I'm going to assume that we agree that the means of media production and

increasingly electronic media distribution, are in the hands of the people, as well as the media companies. So, desktop publishing, fax machines and modems and increasingly desktop video and audio editing tools are really within reach of almost anyone, whether they buy them themselves or borrow them.

The result in print media is hundreds of new magazines, newsletters and alternative weeklies, as well as all the things that you get at Christmas and around the holidays from everyone who has a Macintosh and a laser printer with 4,000 fonts all used on the same page.

Now, the news business was one of the first beneficiaries of electronic production. But, ironically the efficiencies of electronic distribution have already shrunk its street value. By keeping an eye on the national wires you can take great advantage of your time zone and your competitor's scoops and easily get your version of their story into the same day's paper or broadcast.

Take the wire concept a step further into the on-line world, and it's an even grimmer picture. On a network that carries news wires from several news organizations, as most of them do, news has virtually no brand recognition. You type in the key word "news on America" on-line, for example, and you see screen after screen of headlines with no source ID. PR News Wire, The Mercury News, and a column by one computer columnist or another all look the same on the computer screen if they contain the correct topic or key word. In today's popular electronic news environment there's no equivalent of a newspaper's distinctive flag or typeface or a TV network's logo.

Last, and perhaps scariest I think to people in here and scariest to me for other reasons, is the exponential increase in raw information that's being created by regular non-journalist people. Reams of this so-called news are being posted everyday in news groups on the Internet and on various on-line services. Ordinary people can expect to be deluged with increasing amounts of this pseudo-news and it will become increasingly difficult for real news organizations to be heard above the din.

The second thing I want to talk about is on-demand information. As the sheer volume of information continues to increase, people automatically recoil from the overload. Increasingly, they are dealing with it by using on-line technology to make contact with only the specific topics that they request. As you know, this is called information on demand. This has some troubling components for those of us who believe it's dangerous to let the people choose their news.

If I want only to know the latest about Barry Diller and Time Warner, or the very latest about AIDS research, I may not ever see what's happening in Rwanda or the Supreme Court if on-line is the only place I'm getting my news. And even if I did want to be more



Ed Fouhy: our values are out of synch.

broadly informed today, I can't really ask the network to tell me about something that I didn't know happen. Natural disasters. Would I have known yesterday to ask whether there was an obituary for Jackie Onassis? Probably not. Breaking news is the same thing. You don't have any way to know something is going to happen, so how do you ask to receive the information?

And it raises many other questions as well. One of the sales pitches that consumers get for on-line news is that you'll be able to get more information on the stories you really care about and less on the ones you don't. Well, that's great. But in news organizations, how do you support this non-trivial extra cost of reporting, producing and editing every news story to feature length? Same goes for broadcast.

There's another interesting problem for publications that I think Michael Rogers mentioned earlier. For publications that have chosen to go on-line, one of the big selling points to customers is that they can have access, via their

computers, to the publication staff. Well, that's really a great idea too, except for one thing—who has the time?

I personally don't know anybody in journalism who isn't working flat out just to keep their heads above water. And now we're asking them to hang out on-line with people who have been known to be incredibly vocal and pretty unabashed about their ignorance. And I really wouldn't be surprised if this became a guild [newspaper union] issue.

Then there's the question of how you ask your customers to pay for on-demand information. The prevailing model for the future is that each of us will pay per view, will buy stories piecemeal, whether in print or broadcast, instead of getting a pre-set package of news for the price of a subscription.

Though this model might be useful for entertainment products on-line, it has the potential to put news organizations at great financial risk. So what happens if your staff has a bad run and nobody reads or chooses to view your stories for a few days in a row? What happens if your server goes down? What happens if your competition sabotages your network? Any break in your popularity on a daily basis and you take an immediate financial hit. You don't have any cushion of a subscription.

And the pay-per-view model makes news organizations as volatile as the stock market, if that is the model that holds. I don't think that makes anybody very excited. And I'm not even addressing how you'll assign value to stories, or how you'll collect the money, or how such a model changes the content of what a marketable story is. So, this on-demand model presents some pretty interesting problems.

The last issue I want to talk about, and certainly not least, is advertising in the death of subsidized mass media. On-demand interactive media flips the traditional economic structure of mass media on its back. It removes a key

component of what makes mass media work. It's called serendipity, and it's an integral part of how we consume media.

Creating serendipity is the stock and trade of every editor and creates as much value for the advertisers as it does for those who research and produce the stories. Editing and page layout are about encouraging people to keep scanning and turning pages. Our eye travels from story to story to the ad for the sale at Macy's. Or when you're sitting on the sofa stunned by the latest revelations about Tanya and Nancy, the Nike ad comes on. So, both editors and advertisers want you to get a message you didn't necessarily set out to find.

But there is no electronic equivalent of serendipity. Without it how do advertisers get their messages to your eyeballs, and how do news organizations finance their operations? Especially since on-demand information is likely to require that you produce some multiple of the amount of news that you produce now.

Even more troublesome to news organizations should be the kinds of discussions underway in the advertising community about how to imbed or directly connect advertising messages with specific pieces of programming. In an on-demand world where people are far less likely to request commercials as part of their media consumption package, advertisers see great opportunity in making their products a part of the landscape. There are a lot of ways of looking at this, so I'm just going to boil it down to the simple and most dramatic.

Murphy Brown starts looking like a tournament tennis court. Compaq computers, Microsoft software on Steelcase desks and Pampers and Gap kid stuff in her office. Maybe a big old poster for the latest Garth Brooks CD on the wall near the elevator. That's for a sitcom. What would be equivalent of that in the world of on-demand news? If advertisers become accustomed to tying product pitches to other types of programming, won't they also want to be sure their messages are somehow germane to the specific news story that's been selected? Isn't that in direct opposition to the

Chinese Wall between advertising and editorial where it's considered to be a screw-up to put a car ad next to a story about the auto industry, for example?

Advertisers are not convinced that advertising has to be volitional, and they're trying to find every way possible using interactive technology to make you look at their ads.

The number one issue is to deal with the advertising situation. Clearly this issue, and all its ramifications, is one of the biggest that news organizations face today. How can you provide clear, unbiased reporting if your information is subsidized by on-demand advertising tied directly to a specific message or a story? And how can you move ahead in new media without subsidy? It's very expensive.

Making this bridge between old and new media requires that journalism re-engineer its corporate DNA and rethink its business charter. People have to start working with their staffs and with advertisers to invent a useful place for ads in the on-line environment.

We know that the Prodigy model so far hasn't worked. That putting information on the same screen as an ad isn't really something that people like very much. So, work on it and come up with something that does work and that doesn't compromise your integrity as a news organization.

The second thing is to use your skills as critical thinkers to hone your strategies. You must also re-engineer your editorial DNA. At a time when in-your-face reporting has pushed journalism into the gutter of public esteem, where sleaze news groups can, and do, and will continue to proliferate, and when on-line news is just a pile of headlines on a screen, news organizations must take on the task of educating the public about the difference between journalism, public relations, eyewitness reports and analysis. Somebody should be talking about good information versus bad information. And the difference between informed and uninformed opinion.

The journalism community is one of the very few groups in the world suited to teach these critical skills. After all we hope that we're using them everyday when we do our jobs. And being willing

to meet our own standards is the first step toward moving out of the commodity mode of news into something that's based on added value. And in an on-demand world, value is literal not figurative. At the most basic level, somebody should be working on how to brand legitimate news organizations on a computer screen so some of these problems can become obviated.

The third thing is to create your own electronic serendipity. In addition to its ability to create valuable editorial products, the journalism community holds an ace in the world of information overload, a stockpile of steeled editors who know how to separate wheat from chaff. In the lingo of the interactive world you are already intelligent agents.

Many people won't want to drink from the fire hose of information that's available today. That's why they come to you now, whether they know it or not. Even outside of your existing products, a great business is waiting to be made by becoming a trustworthy nozzle.

The fourth thing is to be very careful with whom you ally. The pack mentality is just as obvious in the rush today to get on-line as it is in the pages of the daily papers. One way to avoid the problem of getting lost in the crowd is not to become part of the crowd to begin with. Don't give away your most precious commodities, which are your customer list and your information, in venues that don't serve you.

Use technology appropriately. Don't do electronic media just because everyone else is doing it. Have a compelling reason, a good idea, something that you know customers need, want and will pay for. Make sure that your message is consistent with the media you use to deliver it. As anyone knows who's covered Silicon Valley, those on the cutting edge run the risk of death by hemorrhage.

In the long run those who succeed are not always the pioneers but those with original ideas for products that solve a problem. As one market researcher says, "It's far more important to be right than to be first."

Sixth, don't chase the money. If you follow the discussions of organizations like The Electronic Frontier Founda-

tion, on whose board I serve, and the Advisory Council for the National Information Infrastructure, you know one of the gravest concerns is that networks of the future will serve only the rich.

The same could be said of the content providers of the future, since of course information is what flows over those networks. It would be easy today to sacrifice your duty to inform the public in order to attain higher profits and serve the information needs of only the wealthy few. God knows they do have intense information needs. Certainly no one on Wall Street would fault you for it. And, of course, without profits you can't operate.

But, keep in mind that the world is a very large place. In a world where both bandwidth, the amount of information that can go over a network, and information itself, are virtually infinite, I think it's a fabulous challenge to find a way to deal with abundance rather than scarcity. We all stand to gain a great deal, financially and personally, by finding creative, supportable ways to keep more of the world, not less of it, properly informed. There's much to be lost if we set our sights too low as we head into the next century.

LOUIS URENECK

The president of ASNE, Greg Favre of The Sacramento Bee, put together this group called The New Technology and Values Committee this year. It's a new committee. And the purpose is to help daily newspaper editors understand the impact of converging technologies on the core values of journalism.

The project basically will unfold in three phases. First, in September, in Chicago, we will convene a conference of journalists, editors and reporters, about 50 people, a kind of cross-section from large daily newspapers, small daily newspapers, medium-sized papers, people with lots of experience in this area, and people who are just becoming aware of some of these issues.

And the idea will be to have a facilitated discussion to better understand the hopes and fears, concerns, that these people feel about these issues, and also

to better understand what opportunities they see for journalists in this area. I'm going to try to get a sense if they were asked to make tradeoffs, what might those tradeoffs be in the area of values, what is negotiable, and what is absolutely not negotiable. So that the first phase really will be trying to understand how a group of journalists, daily newspaper journalists, respond to this topic.

The second phase of the project will be to conduct structured interviews with carriers, or those people in industry who might represent partners for journalists and media companies in the future—cable operators, telephone company executives, people from the entertainment industry—to try to get a sense of what their values are in this area, whether they've given that subject any thought, what exactly are their priorities as these new technologies evolve.

And third, and very importantly, final phase, will be to talk to consumers, the people who really hold the key to what will happen, to try to get their sense on the matter of journalism values. Is that a subject that resonates with them? Do they perceive a value set? Do they care about it? What might those values be in their eyes? And to see what their vision of the new media technology is.

As I say, this committee is just getting started. We had our first meeting in April in Washington. I just want to offer a few personal impressions of that meeting.

First, most journalists don't have time to reflect on these issues. Most journalists are busy. They're not reflecting on the context of their work.

Secondly, there is a growing concern about these issues among the people who at least attended our committee meeting, and who are going to be involved in this project. And the image that occurred to me as I looked around the room, was of a group of people who have stepped into the middle of an intersection in a busy street, and then suddenly the light turns green and the cars begin streaming at them. Different responses among different editors, different people. Some people are confused and they sort of freeze. Other

people want to turn and head back to the curb. Other people want to boldly push on and cross the street. So we're dealing with a range of reactions and emotional responses to some of the challenges that are raised by this topic.

Some of the questions that arose at our first meeting that will recur through the course of our research:

What is the value added or worth that newspapers provide to readers in an era of new media? How, if at all, do readers want information to be mediated by a newspaper? Should newspapers play a gatekeeper role? How do people see this role changing with new media? What are the implications of the volumes of unedited copy that are becoming available to people? Do we need to act as a filter? What are the appropriate ways to do that? With new media, what happens to the idea of common knowledge or a community culture, what challenges that pose?

What happens when the transmission of information is controlled by non-journalists, such as phone companies? What are the implications? How do the economic interests of newspapers, carriers and others intersect with journalistic values? What stresses or tensions arise with the new media? Those are some of the questions that will recur through the research.

What will this study yield? Well, first, some of the things that it won't yield—we're not looking for any definitive description of what any single group thinks about new media and values. We're not trying to develop a list of media values for ASNE. Neither are we trying to predict impending developments in the area of new technology. And we are not trying to ascertain what new media will work, and which will fizzle.

Really what we're trying to do is to sharpen our understanding of our traditional values. Trying to ascertain the impact of the new technology on those values. And really to develop at the end of this project a kind of tool kit, be it a series of questions or insights, whatever, but a tool kit that will help working journalists in their newsrooms

around the country wrestle with these issues and these challenges as they begin to take shape in the coming years.

ED FOUHY

I wanted to talk a little bit about what I think the theme of this is, and that is change. A change that's so profound that we're only beginning to have some notion of what it really means. Bill Kovach referred to it as "the kind of change that took place when Gutenberg moved information from the pulpit to the hearth."

But, is change forced on us not just by the technology? I think it comes at a time when the old models that we've been using for news have been examined by our readers and viewers and found wanting, because they don't serve them very well anymore. They told us that in 1992 when they made the talk shows and the Larry Kings, and the University of Richmond debate. The new forums in which they could see candidate views. I think what they are saying to us is that people are demanding a voice in what we do, and the new technology allows them to have it.

I think it's significant that when Peter Hart and Doug Bailey, two highly respected pollsters, took the best pulse I have seen of the country just before the last presidential election, they found what they call "corrosive cynicism." And that's a phrase I've adopted as a touchstone of my project in civic journalism. It's the attitude that we face as we set out to do something to revive civic life and civic discourse.

Because of market pressures, and a whole host of other factors, some of this I only dimly understand, the vital role that I think network news played for 20 or more very terribly turbulent years in this country, has now been changed. I don't think that network news any longer sets the agenda. And I think something very important in this country has, therefore, been lost.

During the years of its primacy, my network colleagues and I, working as journalists in a democratic society, operating under the protection of the Constitution, we produced newscasts which consisted of information.

I've now come to the conclusion that both of us, print and broadcast journalists, are losing our viewers and our readers for the best of reasons. Because we have lost touch with them. Because our values are badly out of synch with theirs. Network news no longer provides the information, the shared knowledge. And that has occurred as people have acquired the means and the will to seek out information for themselves, and to find it.

We journalists, I think, are culpable because we've been taught by our brethren in the marketing department to treat the readers and the viewers as sheer numbers, as demographic groups with greater or lesser purchasing power, instead of as citizens who have a need for information so that we can make intelligent decisions about the issues facing our communities.

Why then should we not expect people to turn away from us and to retreat into their own very narrow concerns and into the custom-made delivery systems that Ms. Caruso correctly observes will serve those narrow interests? But, when that happens consider what that means for our society. We'll no longer be able to gather the critical number of citizens that are required to make public-policy decisions. Civil life, which is the foundation for self-government, will be destroyed.

As he traveled 7,000 miles through the American countryside of 1830, Alexis de Tocqueville marveled at the proliferation of associations that Americans formed. "Wandering minds which had long sought one another in darkness at length meet and unite," he wrote. He found there was a relationship between associations and newspapers. He called it a "necessary connection." "Newspapers make associations and associations make newspapers," he said.

What he was describing was the civic life that made our nation distinctive, but which has now been changed by the decisions of news executives and by advances in computer technology. Many of those associations have now died out, and new ones are forming in cyberspace, but for the moment at least our civic life is poor.

What do I mean exactly by civic life? I mean participation in the hundreds or thousands of associations that make up a democratic society. Some are political and governmental; others are charitable or religious or merely social. Through these associations it becomes possible for us to discharge the responsibilities that we have as citizens, the need to act together because we are the policymakers in the form of government under which we live.

For many reasons we journalists have stopped delivering the news of those associations to our readers and our viewers. The proliferation of news of computer networks and the on-demand nature of those networks, remove serendipity and therefore threaten to destroy the mass audience, which we've always relied upon, to pay the bills for expensive news gathering, and that the larger society has relied on, so that it can receive the essential information, the shared knowledge. This is the information that's absolutely necessary so that the public may first form, and then act upon, a citizen's agenda. So that the business of self-government can proceed.

De Tocqueville wrote, "Nothing but a newspaper can drop an idea into a thousand minds at the same moment." Since those words were published in 1840 additional means have been found to drop an idea into a thousand minds at the same moment. But, now we confront a future where a thousand ideas can reach a thousand minds all at once.

There are about 30 million American homes equipped to take a ride on the information superhighway. Perhaps four million have access to the superhighway, or as we like to call it in Washington, "The NII," the National Information Infrastructure. That's the way we talk in Washington. If those millions, and the ones who will soon follow them, embrace this technology—and why shouldn't they?—journalists may become marginal, and we could lose not only our business, we could lose our essential societal role as providers of information citizens need in order to make critical public policy decisions.

Now, whether because of the top-down nature of mass communications or because of voter laziness, or because of the ruthlessness of our society—there are any number of reasons—millions of people have simply withdrawn from the arena of public discussion and judgment. By doing so, they also leave us. They don't need us anymore, because they're no longer players in the civic arena.

Now, how does civic journalism help us to come to grips with what technology has brought to us? It does so by injecting public concerns into the newsroom. The sociologist Herbert Ganz found that 70-80 percent of the news is concerned with the comings and goings and doings of public officials. As Russ Neuman and his colleague Ann Krigler have written, "The media agenda is preoccupied with the specifics of the day's or week's events, especially in the activities of public officials. In contrast, the public's interest in the daily workings of government and foreign affairs is mitigated by pressing, personal and immediate concerns."

Now, does that mean that civic journalists should ignore the doings of public officials, that we should pander to the desire for neat and simple and essentially simple-minded solutions to complex public policy questions? Of course not. But it does demand, I think, a rethinking of our role as agenda-setters, within the boundaries of existing journalistic principle.

Time does not permit me to expand on this process. Suffice to say that there are people in this room who have taken the models that have been created and are working to adapt them to their communities, to their newspapers, to their television stations. As they try to reconnect with the concerns of their readers and viewers, they're defining the nature of civic journalism. It is basically in my view a reassertion of the traditional role of journalists. It stresses the old-fashioned values. Let me list a couple of them.

Accuracy. Accuracy in a world where hype often rules. Independence, in a world where journalists too often succumb to the temptation to become palsyswals with politicians. Seriousness, in a

world of superficiality and tabloid news. And context, in a world whose attention span is said to allow no sound bite to run no more than eight seconds.

Civic journalism provides many opportunities for us all to exercise these values. And in doing so to reinvent a reason for citizens to need what we are selling. It seems to me if we do not change, if we do not recognize the absolute necessity for change, we stand a very good chance of becoming increasingly irrelevant, except as another rather minor form of entertainment in a society where there are already many other more attractive forms of entertainment.

JEAN GADDY WILSON

We create a number of things in *New Directions for News*, so let me think with you for a minute about three very strong shifts that are changing everything: The environment, ecology. That's shifting and changing everything. Then there's a social shift, a cultural dynamic that is absolutely changing everything, not only in this country, but around the world. And the last shift, the one that we've been talking about, is information technology. Those three things spin us forward in a time warp that's going to make the last 15 years, we assume, look like it was a slow roller coaster.

I would like you to engage for a moment in thinking about the social dynamic occurring in this country.

We found, in a project called *Creating New Newspapers for the New USA*, a very different country emerging. We only went out to look at five under-represented groups and media—women, half the population; young adults, a third of the population; racial, ethnic immigrant groups, a fourth of the population. And, you know, 8 percent of us are now foreign born. (Name any chemical equation that doesn't change when 8 percent of it changes, unless that's an inert material.) The plus 50's, one-fifth of the population. One-sixth of the population, kids.

We have never lived in a time like this before. Technology made it possible. Antibiotics, birth control, biology—those technologies then bring us to the shift in information.

Back to the racial, ethnic immigrant groups. These groups do not hold press conferences. Outside this room exists a world, actually a country, that is creating itself outside the line of vision of the rest of us. And the rest of us we found on the road is that people expect media to be able to understand, to give understanding to the world people live in.

I thought a lot about how we in journalism are not explaining our age, not even the outlines of the landscape in which we live. Over and over on the road our audiences from all of those groups, many experts said, "We deserve better journalism. And we would show up for it if it were intelligent, as intelligent as we are."

The video cameraman that I had with me is a legend. And he would call me saying, "You can't believe what we're getting. You can't believe it." I said, "What are you getting?" He said, "They're so smart."

In Los Angeles, when I joined him, we were in a poverty area. We'd seen any number of children, in a city where 87 languages are spoken in the school system—by the way it's 119, I believe, in New York—Lee Wilson, the video photographer, turned to me with tears in his eyes and said, "For 30 years I've been in the Wrong Business, capital 'W,' capital 'B.'" I said, "Why do you say that?" He said, "I've been finding the things that are wrong. Every person we've seen is living a life that I've never helped portray. That is America, and there is a huge shift toward the future that I have not gotten."

I said, "How old are you?" He said, "52." I said, "Good, you have time." And I would say that to us. We have time. The machines will only enable. But the reason there is disenfranchisement is because we have not kept up, we have not kept current.

W. RUSSELL NEUMAN

One of the issues that Denise articulated very forcefully is the notion that if there's this fire hose and this interactive data bank of gigabits of information, the citizen becomes his or her own editor, his or her own journalist by electrically

connecting the reader or viewer to the morgue and the on-line flow of the wire, of raw information that's coming down from sources with different motivations, both the editor and the journalist are taken out of the loop.

The other aspect of that is perhaps the use of electronic communications can bring editors and journalists more vibrantly into the loop to do even more in the way of editing, interpreting for special groups, and bringing the critical mass financially for a small mass of interested people to work with each other and a source—an editor, a journalist, a group of journalists to focus on a topic of special interest. This is the blurring of the distinction between the newsletter and the newspaper. Which way will it go?

Q. & A.

Richard Meislin—Rich Meislin, *The New York Times*. I think one of the things that you find out when you spend a lot of time on-line is that you don't want to have everything in the world coming at you. I spend an enormous amount of time on the Internet. I'm on several mailing lists. I get probably 150 pieces of mail a day from maybe four and five different lists. I have access to a zillion different news groups on topics that I'm interested in.

What I would most like to have at the moment is an editor who would go through all of this junk for me, package it in some way that I could use it, and say "Here's what you really want to see." One of the perplexing things about all of these discussions that I've had recently on the subject are that you get to the point—people seem to think that democracy requires that you be flooded in information. And that the role of the editor is eliminated. And I just don't see that as true. If anything, access to such a huge amount of information makes you want to have an editing function even more. And I think it's more that we need a change in mindset that allows us to hook into that, rather than seeing ourselves as something that's becoming obsolete. It's more a matter of changing frame.

Caruso—The thing that scares me most is someone who sort of feels like I'm straddling the fence between technology and journalism. There is such a fundamental disconnect between most of the

journalism community and those 20, 30 million people who are on-line. They actually don't know what they're seeing. I know what I see because I know that most of what I get is not very interesting, and I know that there's a lot of junk out there. But it sounds good to them because it seems more direct, because they can do it right here. And you can have chats with people and you can do all this stuff. And those are all separate functions, yes.

It terrifies me to log onto my e-mail everyday. It's like, "Oh God, what am I going to have to deal with?" I get at least 100 messages a day too. But, there is something there for journalists to do. The editing function—I meant it when I said it—it's a fabulous opportunity to find a way to take an essential human skill that everybody wants. I want an editor, everybody I know wants an editor if you're on the Net. And use that as your platform to show people how important journalism is, and how important the filtering and editing function really is.

William Allman —Bill Allman from U.S. News On Line with a story from the trenches. We have an on-line forum. And, in fact, we've experienced some of the things we're talking about today. One of the problems with creating these on-line communities that are interactive is that you create them and then you have no control over them. People talk about whatever they want to talk about. And they talk about things you don't even want them to talk about and much more.

And it's an interesting editorial problem because you want to shape the debate in there, but you can't really shape it because you can't tell people to shut up if you want them to, or not shut up or encourage people to talk.

U.S. News On Line has a library and an interactive part. And we upload things in the library on-the-record kind of speeches, transcripts of tapes, extra information that would help people read stories. We did a story on disabilities, I guess, awhile back. And one member got very exercised about it and posted a very long message about this story. And wanted to upload in the library. Her complaint was messages scroll off after awhile. In other words, first in, last out, or however it goes. After a certain time they disappear, and she was concerned that this message would disappear, and she wanted to know whether she could put her message in a library section.

That raised a lot of interesting questions for us. Do we want to put this in the library, or did we want to make it perma-

nent? She was arguing, "Well, you're permanent, why can't I be permanent?" It was a very interesting discussion we had about all this. Made more interesting by our legal counselor who said that if you upload this, then you're actually editing this. And if you're editing this, you are responsible for the content. So suddenly there's a legal issue. If you start playing with it, then it becomes yours and then you have to check all this stuff. And we get hundreds of messages a day. We can't check all that.

So, you really are letting the genie out of the bottle here.

Fouhy—I would think that this would be stimulating to you. I can't imagine why you find this threatening.

Allman —I don't find it threatening at all. I don't mean to give the wrong impression. We love it, it's fabulous to get this kind of interaction. But, it is a very different kind of journalism. It's exciting. But you lose that control. And that's what's kind of interesting about it.

Jay Rosen—Jay Rosen from the Project on Public Life in the Press. I wonder if I might offer a distinction that might help our discussions, and that is between journalism and the media. The media, all those means for collecting audiences and connecting audiences and connecting individuals. It's technology, it's commercial, it's driven by very large social forces. We used to think that the media were more or less equivalent. If you looked at Agnew's attacks on the media in '69, you would see that he was talking about the news media. Because at that time that's how we thought of those two things.

When Dan Quayle attacked Murphy Brown he was talking about the media, but definitely not the news media. So journalism is something else. It's a social practice that goes on within the news media and that's connected and has always been connected to our notions of citizenship and public life and democracy.

Now, I haven't heard yet, and I don't know if anybody who's a journalist in this room, has an intellectually nimble, compelling, creative and publicly defensible conception of what citizenship is, as opposed to consumerism, as opposed to mere membership in this society, as opposed to simply being a person, a private individual. Without that kind of understanding—what is citizenship, what is the meaning of it for journalists—it seems to me it's going to be very difficult to navigate this new world. We've heard several times that the function of the journalist is analyst editing, what I would

call reducing information. I think that's all true. But there's no way to know what a proper analysis is, how the editing function is to be carried out, how to reduce information well, unless you have some idea of what you're doing this all for.

There's no such thing as analysis with a capital "A" or editing with a capital "E."

And so in addition to talking about the new technological environment we're moving into, it seems to me though we have to give some intellectual weight and ethical content to the notion of citizenship. And that the process for journalists as opposed to the media will depend on our success in doing that.

Michael Janeway—Mike Janeway, Northwestern University. I would echo or perhaps rephrase what Jay just said, and I agree with the spirit of it and the content of it. And I think being careful of these terms in these discussions of the new is very important. It seems to me that in talking about democracy in these discussions we tend to talk about the one component of it, the participatory and populist aspect of it, which in terms of the new media is very exciting and very energizing.

There is another component, with respect to the press, and that is the role of watchdog, the issue of government being accountable. And I haven't yet heard an awful lot, at least as regards to the electronic aspects of the new media on that score. When Buzz Merritt talks about what's going on in Wichita, that's something else. There he's building a new kind of link between the participatory populist understanding of democracy, and the mission of the news organization and holding government accountable.

What I'm wondering is whether the panel or anybody else can articulate a dynamic for the new media in the watchdog role as distinct from encouraging the participatory aspects of democracy.

Fouhy—Let me try and respond to that, Mike, by telling you an anecdote I learned from Lou Hellman at The Tallahassee Democrat. The city government approved the construction of a new power plant. Apparently the power plant is city owned. Unanimously passed the City Council. But people who got information—they brought in all the experts, said there wouldn't be more air pollution and all that sort of thing. But all of these smart people then got on the Internet and there were what?—140, I think—government databases available on the Internet the last time I looked. And they found their own expertise. They were able to access in a

way that people wouldn't have been able to do before. Information that helped them to mobilize public opinion to stop the construction of that.

Now you could argue that that's just another way of creating government gridlock, but is that the kind of model you're asking about?

Janeway—Yes. And one can imagine other models, too, such as the electronic bulletin board becoming a kind of grassroots movement in a given area on an issue.

Fouhy—My point was that it enables ordinary citizens to become watchdogs.

Neuman—Participation is one thing. The news organization, its ability to act as a watchdog, is something else. And how do we get from the participation opening up of access to something like people's ability to play the role of watchdog?

David Lewis—David Lewis, Nieman Fellow. With the information superhighway dividing readers/viewers into smaller and smaller niches of people who are looking for particular kind of news, what happens to the watchdog capacity if they're not looking for things which they're not interested in, and which maybe they should be interested in? I'm curious what happens to the journalist's role as watchdog.

Caruso—That's the big question. And that's why hopefully people want to know what's happening on a broad scale, not necessarily on a narrow scale, enough that newspaper and other mass media will stay alive for awhile. But it's a really important question, and it's one that I was addressing when I was talking about serendipity and the problems with on-demand information, is that there is no facility to do that right now unless someone creates one on-line. And I think that's the role of an editor who says—and I don't mean in the sense of a person, but an organization—that says, "I will provide this watchdog function on the Net. Subscribe to my news group and I will publish this kind of stuff." But then you still don't have an assurance that everyone will see it.

Ureneck—Let me just deepen the problem a little bit in the context of what Jay said earlier. It seems to me one of the strengths of the old media is that it was local, it was original, it was somehow lined up with geography. And that's how we govern ourselves geographically. And one of the challenges of the new media is that it creates virtual communities that are unlocked from geography and doesn't align with how we govern ourselves. It

makes this question of public journalism on the new media even more difficult.

Matt Storrin—Matt Storrin, Boston Globe. When I go to these conferences, both the panelists and the audience are always information carnivores. And I worry a lot about the general audience. As any newspaper editor can tell you here—And I don't think newspapers, for all their faults, are terribly inefficient means of getting information. There's a lot in there, a lot for everybody. And all somebody has to do, if they don't have a subscription, go into a store and drop down 35 cents or 25 cents and buy a paper. And they're not doing that in increasing numbers.

And at the same time that these exciting changes that we're talking about here today are going to happen, we also know that the passive medium of television, as we've known it, is also going to expand [into] many more choices, many more channels. Some of them interactive, yes, but some of them not. And is there a fear that this is just going to further put the masses to sleep? And a lot of what we're talking about here today will not have the audience to support it. Or will it be the medium of the very elite?

Lewis Friedland—Lew Friedland from University of Wisconsin. I want to point out one thing about Silvio Berlusconi and Europe in general is that he owns three networks. He owns three out of six television networks and most of the major studios. If you look at the privatization of television in France and England, we see the same kind of phenomena. So it's sort of interesting to me that we have this dichotomy here between the fragmented Internet users on the one hand and public watchdog institutions on the other.

But, in fact, we have very large media institutions in this country. And I think most of them are capable of fending for themselves pretty well when it comes to gathering news. What I think has declined worldwide, in Italy, and in this country, is any public media sector. We really have effectively no public media sector anymore in the United States for all intents and purposes, unless you consider, certainly in television, unless MacNeil/Lehrer per se stands for the public media sector in the United States. And the BBC and other venerable public media institutions in Europe are also on the decline. So, I would just like to throw one other thing out in this discussion. That maybe if there was more competition between a vibrant public media sector and the media corporations that we have now, and a group of citizens who had access to this

information, that perhaps everybody would keep everyone a little more honest.

Cole Campbell—Cole Campbell, Virginia-Pilot in Norfolk, Virginia. What I keep hearing in this discussion here, and in other readings of the discussion, is that there are two primary drivers. And we've heard them again today. One of them is connectivity, connecting with people who are like yourself to hold conversations with people who are like yourself. And I think there's a lot of room in there for mediating journalists to add value, to add accuracy, informed opinion and all this to help with these conversations to make them more meaningful.

And the second real driver, as I understand it, is information searching. I want to find a particular fact, whether it's to fight something in an environmental battle in my hometown, or because I have a particular interest. And newspapers have never been the best source for searching for information. We've always been beaten by libraries, for example. So, I still think the great unwashed masses, who are grazers for information, who are browsers for information, will find newspapers or other forms, extremely valuable to them if we're relevant. It's the relevance questions that's the crucial issue. If we are relevant, I think that's what civic journalism and public journalism gets at. How can we be more relevant and understand their lives?

Victor Navasky—Victor Navasky from The Nation. I think that point about ownership is very important. But I would make an additional distinction in that the question of what kind of civic society we want is the question of values. But I hear Ed Fouhy's list of the need for accuracy, independence, seriousness and context, and I agree with all of them. And then I say, but I'm interested also in controversy, I'm interested in dissent, I'm interested in social outrage in the journalism that we have at social injustice. I'm interested in muckraking, I'm interested in alternative opinions being part of the society that I would value.

So the question then comes, is it just the difference between one set of values and another set of values, or is there some sense in which you think that there can be a value neutral assessment of values, as it were? And then how does that relate to the new technology? And is the new technology content-less? Is it content neutral? Or does it have an implication?

Caruso—Well, technology doesn't go search your employee's files, your boss does. So I would have to say from that



Reception as seen from stairwell at Taubman Center

point of view that I do believe to some extent that technology is neutral. I believe, and I've been writing about technology for 10 years, I've never seen a technology that couldn't be abused as well as used. And I think that there's a real tendency to not want to look at both sides

of those issues. Either people tend to cover technology in a cheerleader sense or they cover only the dark side of it. And the point is that it's a tool. And we're beginning to see more and more now that it is a tool because so many more people can use it. ■

Three Worries Behind the Dazzling Promise

BY MAXWELL KING



There is a wonderful array of exciting possibilities in the development of new electronic media. There is the promise of a technology that can make more information and debate available to the public, that can liberate reporters to do more effective and conclusive research, that can offer an unlimited newshole to every newsroom in America.

But there are some profoundly important worries as well. Economics will drive most of the developments that take place; it is always economics and commerce that drive the uses of new technology. For that reason, there will be contention for control at a variety of levels.

It seems to me that there are three such levels that journalists should be particularly concerned about:

1. Regulation. There already are attempts at the federal level to begin regulation, and there will be many more at federal, state and local levels.

There are two models to reference here: the broadcast industry, which is licensed and regulated, and the publication industry, which largely is not. The key in dealing with the prospect of regulation is the issue of content. To some extent, broadcast licenses are dependent upon a governmental review that extends to content.

It is critical that journalists ensure that any governmental review of new media not extend to content. It will be important to follow the publication model here—no licensing or content-based regulation—in order to preserve First Amendment rights in the new media. If we don't, the migration to new media technologies can incorporate an erosion of the First Amendment.

2. Commercialization. Because the development of new media will be driven by economics, journalists must concern themselves with the setting of appropriate standards for separating editorial and commercial content.

In ethical publications and on ethical broadcasts, a strict separation is kept between advertising and editorial matter in order to afford the reader/listener/viewer a clear understanding of what he or she is receiving. One of the chief values provided by the journalist is independence: the reader or listener can use material with confidence that it has not been presented with any unstated ulterior motive. This is one of the core ethics of the profession: that the business interests of the publisher/broadcaster will not color the journalism.

This can be easily eroded. For example, if the newscaster hawks a product on the air seconds after he has finished the news, the integrity of the journalism is compromised.

In the brave new world of interactive media, the potential for burying messages and the commercial pressure to do so will be powerful.

Journalists must act quickly to provide standards for the separation and clear labeling of editorial and commercial content. Again, the newspaper model is most useful here: For years, reputable newspapers have provided clear guidelines for labeling advertising as such and keeping it separate from news, despite considerable commercial pressure to do otherwise. This has protected a key strength of the journalist and must be incorporated into the development of new media.

3. Independence. New technologies may provide ways for individuals and small entrepreneurial ventures to develop journalism that will exploit the

new media in exciting, constructive ways. It is appealing, for example, to think of the Internet's spawning a new generation of I.F. Stones.

But, again, economics and commerce will drive development. At the beginning of a new technological age, some advantage usually goes to the small, nontraditional practitioner. But soon, as more capital and other resources are needed for development, economics can tilt more power to the powerful. In an age when much of the communications business already has conglomerated into a few large corporations, this should worry all of us, not just a few would-be Izzy Stones.

On a business level, we need to worry about ways to protect the small entrepreneur in an intensely competitive field. In the newsroom, we should ensure that the new technology will help tilt power back to the individual reporter or photographer in a field that is becoming alarmingly top-down in its thinking and practices. On the street, the great fear is that this new world will move the power of information from the cheap seats (25 to 50 cents a day) of the daily newspaper to a pricier environment in which a new underclass—the information have-nots—is disadvantaged.

The Nieman Foundation has made a strong start in getting the profession of journalism to examine its values in this exciting, dazzling new era. Perhaps it can lead the way to a fuller understanding and more effective standards for safeguarding these values. ■

Maxwell King is Editor and Executive Vice President of The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Will Commercial Forces Overwhelm Needs of Public-Interest Journalism?

Moderator

Delano Lewis, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Public Radio.

Challenge

Kathryn Montgomery, Co-founder and President, Center for Media Education.

Responses

Andrew Nibley, Editor and Executive Vice President, Reuters NewMedia Inc.
Lewis Friedland, School of Journalism and Mass Communications,
University of Wisconsin-Madison.

KATHRYN MONTGOMERY

This past January I flew out to Los Angeles to attend the information superhighway summit, where Vice-President Gore addressed the television industry at UCLA. It was kind of a scene to see it sort of overrun by all these Hollywood types in their fancy Gucci suits and sunglasses, in full stereotype. I had never seen so many cellular telephones in one place at one time in my life. There were just hundreds of them, and people were busy making deals inside the auditorium during every possible break.

I unfortunately was one of the unlucky ones without a cellular telephone, and I had to wait with a lot of other people in the same boat, in very long lines, unbelievably long lines, at the few public telephones that were in the buildings. And, as I said to one of my colleagues, now I know what it's like to be one of the information have-nots.

The other thing that really struck me about the meeting was that despite the high level of excitement and enthusiasm over the so-called information superhighway, very few people, even in that group of writers, producers, directors of all of our entertainment fare,

really knew what it was. One of the panel moderators in fact kept referring to it as the super information highway. I guess that's just as good as the other. The only thing they seemed to know was that it was coming, and they probably were going to be able to make a lot of money somehow in it. And they were there to find out how. I know that sounds like a cynical view. Not that they hadn't heard a lot about it. The term had worked its way into the press, spawning endless permutations. We hear about on-ramps to the superhighway, toll booths on the information superhighway, drive-by shootings on the information highway, and now there's even an information superhighway patrol. A recent Wall Street Journal piece concluded that the metaphors are piling up on the electronic interstate like jackknifed trailers and there isn't an off-ramp in sight.

But what's also interesting is that even with all of this media coverage, a Harris poll recently found that not only did few people know what the information superhighway is, but only about 34 percent of the public had ever seen, heard or read about it. And that's really too bad. Because though the public may not be fully aware of it, the American media system, as we all know, is

undergoing a dramatic transformation. And clearly by the early part of the 21st Century, we're going to be seeing an entirely new media environment, and it is sure to have profound impact on our society.

Now, needless to say, there's still a lot of speculation about the nature of that impact, about how it will all play out. But we know that it will be producing fundamental shifts in American life, from work to education to government to culture. And the key question that we are to ask ourselves is how can we ensure that this emerging new communications system will serve and enhance our democracy. And obviously a critical part of that goal is ensuring that we have a healthy future for journalism. Such a future I will argue is by no means guaranteed.

There's a lot of promise for this new interactive digital age. Lots of people are already very much intrigued and dazzled by the democratizing power of the Internet, which is a first glimpse of things to come. As I'm sure you all know, the Clinton Administration's white paper on the national information infrastructure paints a glowing picture of the future benefits of these technologies.

They are predicting that the infra-

structure can be used by all Americans, not just by scientists and engineers, as entrepreneurs, factory workers, doctors, teachers, federal employees and citizens. Americans can harness this technology to create jobs, spur growth and foster U.S. technological leadership. To reduce health-care costs while increasing the quality of service in underserved areas. Prepare our children for the fast-paced workplace of the 21st Century and build a more open and participatory democracy at all levels of government.

Now while many of these predictions may very well materialize, I really believe that we should not make the mistake of believing that simply unleashing these technologies will automatically bring about a transformation of our society. Whether or not the potential creative ideas of technology is fully realized will depend on the public policies that shape them. And I think that the history of the electronic media in the U.S. in the 20th Century is replete with lessons. As each new medium has appeared on the horizon, it's been accompanied by great fanfare, promising to correct all of the inadequacies of the present media system. Every invention from radio to FM to television to cable to satellites has brought with it new opportunities for reinvigorating culture, the arts and education. Each has promised to enhance the democratic promise, and yet in every case, the full potential of the medium has not yet materialized.

Public policy choices at critical historical moments have determined the fate and direction of the media system. Early in the 1930s, when the Communications Act of 1934 was being debated in Congress, there was a public debate about the future, and a coalition of educators, religious leaders, labor leaders, farm representatives, really pushed very hard to get an amendment passed to set aside 25 percent of the broadcast spectrum for other than commercial use, for public use, non-commercial use. They were lobbied heavily against by the commercial broadcasters and ultimately lost the battle. We ended up with a system of radio and subsequently television which was completely shaped

by advertisers, and I think we've lived with the legacy of that decision.

In the late 70's and 80's, we remember the beginnings of cable, which was also going to revolutionize television. We heard a lot of blue sky predictions. There was much hope that cable would dramatically improve TV, provide access for many more voices, more diversity, a flowering of vibrant programming. And while the system that has evolved has provided some alternatives to broadcast TV, and I will note C-Span and CNN as examples, neither did it materialize in the way that had been predicted.

Now, we're at another pivotal historical moment which is pregnant with possibility, but also with danger. Policy decisions are going to be made in the next two to three years and are being made now that will determine how this new media environment is going to be shaped, what its primary role will be in our society, who will access to it, and on what terms. And depending upon those decisions, this emerging new media system could either be a powerful democratizing force, or it could seriously weaken the nation's social and political fabric, and I think we need to be able to look at both the bright side and the dark side.

I do see this as a moment, though, to really reinvent television, to reinvent the kind of media system we have. It also should be a time for a lively and broad public debate about the future of the media system. This new telecommunications system will be, and some of us are calling it, the central nervous system for our society. It's going to be essential to be plugged into it. I would argue that the debate over the future of the media system is as important as the debate over other issues such as health-care reform or NAFTA or the environment.

I'm going to echo some of what Allee said at lunch, because I see that up until now, the issue for the most part, and there are some exceptions, has been framed very narrowly in the press, covering primarily business activities, usually on the business pages, or in business television programs, as a battle among competing corporate media gi-

ants. Or it's been on other pages of our press magazines and newspapers, sort of covered as a technology whizbang story of all the new consumer products and services. Seldom is the role of the media system in a democratic society addressed, seldom are the critical policy questions raised. And even though the Clinton Administration has launched a major initiative on the national information infrastructure and there are bills in both the House and in the Senate that are setting the terms for this emerging new communications system and altering existing relationships with a lot of lobbying from the industries, as you know, I would say that if the public is in the dark about the information superhighway and what it is, they haven't a clue about the policy choices.

So my first challenge to you is to begin to more aggressively cover the critical public policy debate over the national information infrastructure, and to broaden that debate to raise large societal issues, to move it off the business pages. I know that's a challenge to do, because it's a technological story, it's a complicated story, it's an economic story, but I think it's really in all of our interests to try to make it a story that the average person can understand and try not to get locked into the technospeak that makes a lot of people's eyes gloss over.

I really want to issue a special challenge to the broadcast and cable journalists to cover this important story in terms of its broader social issues beyond the story of warring media moguls. I think it's ironic that the BBC recently did a whole documentary about what's happening to the American media system, but we haven't seen really that kind of coverage on television here.

I think it's also going to be very important to seek out the most provocative, innovative uses, examples of uses of this new technology beyond what's being marketed by the media corporations to try to sort of build a vision of something that's an alternative to the sort of dominant paradigm that we're seeing.

In terms of policy issues, I'd just like to suggest several major questions, and there are plenty of questions, that will



Delano Lewis: you hear private enterprise

be significantly affected by the decisions being made right now, policy decisions, but that are not receiving widespread public attention. And without aggressive coverage of these issues, I'm worried that by the time the public gets involved, it may be too late. The decision will be made and they will have foreclosed on opportunities.

One question is: how can we ensure that all members of the public will have affordable access to news, public affairs and other critical information needed to function in a democracy? The tradition of broadcasting in the public interest, over-the-air broadcasting and print newspapers [has been that they] are accessible to everyone at low or no cost. But as new electronic communications systems, cable and fiberoptic in particular, supplant print and over the air, accessibility is not guaranteed. We've heard people talk about pay-per-view news. And it's possible there will be pay per minute news. That raises serious questions about who can afford access.

The Internet is always looked at as sort of the model of this really democratizing new medium, but trends toward more privatization of the Internet could move us to a point where we are seeing

metered rates rather than flat rates, which also raises very serious questions about who can afford access. The Clinton Administration is talking about what we ought to do about universal service, translating the concept of universal service from a telephone, so that everybody has access to this new media age. What will it mean? Universal service, universal access. It's being talked about in Washington and there are hearings around the country. But I think it needs to be made vivid and important to the American public to understand what this means. Do we need to guarantee a basic package of information to every citizen and if so how do we do it? Will people need to have access to the equipment? Will they have to go to libraries in order to access this infrastructure, or should they be able to have access at home? Lots and lots of very important questions.

There's also evidence to suggest that as new video dial tone systems are being constructed, they're sort of our first step in the building of the superhighway. There's evidence that suggests that the poorer neighborhoods, that the more undesirable, or less desirable demographic groups, the minority neigh-

borhoods, are being bypassed by these new systems.

Another question is: How can we guarantee a healthy civic or public sector in the emerging telecommunications system? What we're seeing certainly with cable and with telco systems is in terms of predictions, in terms of a vision for the future, appears to be very much dominated by pay-per-view, video on demand, shopping; everybody's already talking about the 500 channel video shopping malls. In all of that, how can we create a healthy civic sector, a public sector that will serve communities, virtual as well as geographic communities? How can we create something like an electronic commons or public spaces? Particularly I'm concerned with providing local information. What's happening right now is a coalition of public-interest consumer and civil rights groups, led by People for the American Way, is pushing for a public right of way on the information superhighway, for reserving a percentage of these new networks that are being built for public capacity so that they can be used by state and local governments, educational organizations and non-profits. So that we can see a real flowering of public use of these services that heretofore have not been really addressed.

And then how do we ensure diversity of opinion, how do we open up the system to meaningful access to new voices? A number of questions are raised around this. While the administration and Congress point to the Internet as a model, people say it's going to have unlimited bandwidth, it'll be fully switched, it's too cheap to meter, we don't really need to worry about these questions. That may take a while to materialize. And in the meantime, video and cable TV fiberoptic systems will be the systems being built. And there are serious questions about such things as architecture. We assume that there will be a switch system where we can communicate one to one and many to many. That is not necessarily automatically going to happen because these systems are being driven by economic interests that produce certain kinds of programming and it's not in their interests to

provide switched services. Anyway, I will say that not only is it in the public interest, but I would say in the self-interest of the journalism community to broaden this debate. We've already talked about some of the developments that I'm concerned about. One is the blurring of news and advertising. That I think is a threat we need to address. I know there is the unprecedented consolidation of ownership in the media industries, and current rules and policies are only addressing that to a small extent. I think it's very important not only that the journalism community cover these issues more broadly but that they actually get involved in the political process on behalf of the profession. Join with the other organizations and institutions, with the libraries, with the educators, with the civil-rights groups that are becoming directly involved in this debate. And I would say that if we don't do that, we may have a great deal to lose.

DELANO LEWIS

I was fortunate enough to be invited to the economic summit in Little Rock with then President-elect Clinton and Vice-President-elect Gore and I was on the first panel looking at the domestic agenda. And sitting very near the President-elect and Vice-President elect was Bob Allen, chairman of AT&T. And as Vice-President elect Gore was talking about the information superhighway, he intimated in many ways that it should be a public-controlled and maybe even public-constructed highway, and you could see Bob Allen's jaw lock, as many of us on the commercial side really were very concerned. Mr. Allen really went after the Vice-President elect on that subject. That was the first little testiness of the summit.

Shortly thereafter, the administration began to shift. I think there was some talk that the reason the superhighway idea came about was patterned after our interstate system, which was funded by the federal government, and it was a seamless highway system, and we ought to have an information system patterned after that model. Bob Allen spoke up and said the worst thing

that could happen with information today is if it would be government controlled. Certainly what's coming out of the administration today is just as Kathryn said, you don't hear that tone, you don't hear that approach. If you listen to Secretary Brown you hear private enterprise, the marketplace, the creation of jobs. You hear a lot of other things, you don't hear the government being the dominant player.

ANDREW NIBLEY

I think one of the good news things for wholesalers of the news is that we can now go direct to consumers. The current system of news, and I think the networks and CNN do a pretty good job within the model they're allowed or the framework that they're allowed to work within, is that they decide what you should see, the nets anyway, for 22 minutes every night. And that's based not so much on advertising but on the public opinion polls, because they have to reach the largest audience because they're in competition for rating points. Which means that I have footage every day from East Timor and Kashmir, and occasionally Kurdistan and places like that, that might be of interest to some people living in this country, but they never get to see it. I think as the pipe gets bigger, we'll be able to make products for a batch of one. And I don't think that's a bad thing, I think that's probably a good thing.

What does worry me is a little bit about what John Markoff was saying earlier, and that is that so far people on the Internet don't appear to be looking for news. We're the ones who provide the nameless headlines for America Online, and in some ways it's a rear window defogger. It's kind of nice to have, but that isn't really why people are there. I have a 13-year old neighbor, who every night at 8 o'clock sharp signs on to the Internet and goes and hangs out, the way that I used to do at a bowling alley or a football field or something like that. It's probably a lot safer than the things I did on the football field. But that's really why she's there, and she has all these friends she's never seen, but they sit there and chat away

for hours on end running up dad's phone bill. I don't think she ever looks at the news, I don't think she really cares about the news. That's on the bad news side.

On the good news side, I think that The San Jose Mercury project, they've actually found that kids, probably the same 13-year olds, are waiting until Sunday afternoon to do their report that's due Monday, and they dive into the newspaper data bank, and get all the information they need. And they can [do] neat things on their computer, and download graphics and pictures and come up with a nice little multimedia report. That's good news for our business, probably not great news for libraries. But maybe government can find a way to cut down on library costs and put it into the infrastructure.

On the other hand, I think that so far the whole on-line database experience has been at least with the early pioneers, the CompuServes and the Meads, and even to a certain degree Prodigy, are pretty much used by people who look like me, balding guys with Milwaukee tumors who make a lot of money or a fair bit of money. I don't think that there are a lot of people walking around Newark or the South Bronx talking about hard disk drives or 486s or T-1s. So sometimes when I think we're talking about the democratization of information we're talking about a very small subset.

I don't know if this is good news or bad news, but my experience has been [that] the big media conglomerates [will] lose interest in the consumers pretty early on, because they won't be able to find out how to make money on it, and they'll move into the corporate market where there's a lot of money. And I think there we go to the point that was made by the gentleman from The New York Times; there's so much information out there that they will pay journalists to focus the information down and sift through it in a very timely and accurate fashion. Reuters now makes about 93 percent of its money from serving the financial services industry. I think 80 percent of all foreign exchange traded in the world, about a trillion dollars, is traded over Reuters

terminals. This is good news and bad news I think for those of us who came out of the general news side of the business. We were all terrified of this. The good news has been that it actually finances the organization and allows us to have more bureaus and more countries than anyone else and let's us play at the game we like to play at. On the other hand I think it does put tremendous pressures on us to resist our consumers at times, when they say, well, listen, we want you to put out rumors, for example. If you could create some action in the market today, it would be very useful. And we say, we're not really interested in that, and then they say, well, there's other vendors who might be, and you get in a strange sort of dance.

I think in the end though that the integrity of journalism survives because they may trade on the rumor, they may make some money on the rumor today, but if they lose money on another rumor because it turns out not to be true, you are then not to be trusted as an information provider after that. So the commercial side learns very early on that it's important to have an objective source. I think the same sort of thing that has already been done in the financial-services industry is going to be done in the consumer market. That initially anybody can be a journalist. But pretty quickly you're going to run into people whose information is not trustworthy, that there is no integrity. And that's really how the whole process of newspapers evolved. There are tabloids and then there are quality sheets. People are allowed to make choices. People decide which information source they can trust. And I think that's all to the good. And there will be people who just don't, who want the sensationalism, they want to play around with information, want to be entertained by information more than to learn. But I think there will be room for both.

One of the encouraging good news things for me recently was [that] we started putting our pictures up on CompuServe, and initially we had of course all the techies. And then we found the old, the usual sleazos. Every time we had any kind of cleavage, those

downloads for Claudia Schiffer would go up as everyone would get on the electronic board and say, did you see the hot one that Reuters has out of the Paris fashion show?

But the most encouraging thing recently was general news. The biggest, that when the L.A. earthquake came, the number of people who wanted to see still photos of the earthquake even though they were being flooded by television images, and flooded by words in the press and over radio was very impressive. Same thing with Nixon's funeral. The picture of all the wives and the former Presidents standing in a row just mesmerized people. They just kept downloading it. And one nice thing about it is the consumers are your marketers. They tell each other, they get on the electronic bulletin boards or chat in the chat forums, and they say, did you see this photo and they talk about it.

We do have a chat forum ourselves for photojournalists. We expected people to say what kind of film do you use, how many hours do you work at the White House, what kind of camera do you use? And I think about the second question was, is Hillary a bitch? Do you want your photojournalist to answer that, to have an opinion? The answer is no. Well, as soon as you don't have an opinion, then your credibility starts to go down. Why won't they answer the question? Why are they trying to protect her? Blah-de-dah, blah-de-dah. So a very interesting debate comes up.

We talked a lot today about who's who on the Internet. I know when my tech set me up with my account with America On-Line, he said, I gave you A. Nibley is your name, dot com at AOL. And then he said, but I'll give you another name if you want to go through the S & M forums and all those things. And I said, no, of course I don't want to do that. But it does raise the question of how do you know who you're dealing with. People could have multiple identities, they could argue with themselves. You could actually have people trying to sway opinion by arguing both sides of it. There are a lot of interesting issues there.

We like to consider ourselves a pro-

fession and maybe we are. But I got a job because I went in and some editor liked me or didn't like me, but in any event was willing to give me a try. It worked out, because he probably liked the way that I wrote stories. I fit in with the model and I had a career. We're rather protective of that. And some of the concerns today were, what do you [say] when other people suddenly say they're journalists. Well, the only thing that made us a journalist was that an editor hired us and in some cases a government agency gave us a credential. I don't think we should be afraid of the competition. I do think that the quality of the information that the journalist provides or the individual provides will determine the readership in the end and the commercial viability of what they're doing.

I think it's going to present some severe questions for our industry, because we aren't very well knit as an industry. We're very, very competitive. I think because the wholesalers of news will be able to go direct to consumers now, that's going to present some challenges to the retailers of news. For example, we send all our footage to the networks. The networks may very well end up being in competition with the wholesalers. I know when I see Ted Turner on occasion, he asks if we're friend or foe, and it's an interesting question. He's opening up bureaus all over the world; we have bureaus all over the world. If we're allowed to go direct to his customers—at some point we may—the wholesalers may want to saw off giving their information to the retailers, and it presents a really interesting dilemma.

I went to an education company now that's developing a product called Homework Helper, which is a really good product, but in the process they said, well, you know, pick any publication you want to query. And I said, well, give me The L.A. Times. And they called up The L.A. Times, and three of the five stories—and I'm not blaming The L.A. Times—were Reuters stories. We haven't had to deal with this before. You know, as soon as it left our shop, it was somebody else's property, it just went into the ether. At what point do we

withdraw our copy from newspapers, don't let them redistribute it? We would take a big revenue hit at this point, but I guess that who owns the content is going to become a larger and larger issue.

Conversely the other side of the wire service, The Associated Press, is taking all these stories from local newspapers, rewritten it, sent it back to the newspapers, charged the newspapers for it and sent it to their competitors. At some point the newspapers might say well that's our content, we own that. I think the whole issue of who owns the content is going to be a huge one.

Lastly, in a digital environment, how do you know what's your content? Words are very easy to change around. You can change two words and it's yours basically. This week I had to send a little letter to some group in Sri Lanka who was pretty much selling the Reuters service over the Internet. You know, they got it as a correspondent, and they simply offered the whole service at discount rates to anybody. That's going to happen for all of us. Still pictures and video are not immune now that they're digital as well. When they were analog, you could brand it and hide it. But once they're digital, they're out there for anybody to take.

So it's going to require us as an industry to try to form some industry groups to do some self-policing. I also think it's going to be very, very difficult for governments, particularly since the Internet is global, to regulate this, because the United States may have very firm ideas on what needs to be done, but they might be very different than all the other countries, or at least some of the other countries.

LEWIS FRIEDLAND

I want to tell you about an experiment in public media that we're conducting in Madison, Wisconsin.

My examples range from low tech to high tech, but I think one of the most interesting things when I think about them is that the lower tech the example, the more they reflect a model of public journalism.



Lewis Friedland: integrating democratic deliberation into the process

Ed Fouhy mentioned earlier some joint experiments in democracy. One of them is a project called We the People in Madison, which is a project led by Wisconsin public television, with the cooperation of Wisconsin public radio, WISC-TV, which is the CBS affiliate which is number one in that market, and The Wisconsin State Journal, which is the leading morning newspaper. What we're doing is to conduct a series of non-traditional town meetings. When I say non-traditional, I mean non-traditional for television because what is a television town meeting? What do you all think of when you think of a television town meeting? You get a bunch of people together, get them in a studio, try to make them look as diverse as possible, ask them some questions and leave, right? Or the other model is when you get a bunch of experts in a room, and they all look alike anyway, you ask them a bunch of questions and they leave.

The reason we consider ours non-traditional is because we actually integrate democratic deliberation into the process. It's a unique and radical idea; it goes back to Jefferson. Before our town meetings are held, for weeks in

advance we hold citizen panels across the state of Wisconsin where citizens actually will debate the issues that we are going to discuss in our town meetings. Those citizens will then elect representatives, send delegates to our town meetings, who will continue to study the issues and continue to consult with their citizen panels back home, so that by the time they arrive in Madison for our state-wide town meetings, they actually in some ways are better informed than many of the journalists that might have been asking questions.

I'll give you one example. We had one on the state budget just last year, with a citizens panel drilling Governor Tommy Thompson on a whole range of questions. There were homemakers on this panel, guys with caps and tatoos, who were asking him hard questions about schools, about his learn-fare program, about the state budget, about cuts in education. I saw him sweat more than he had in a lot of other news and public affairs shows. I consider that in some ways one of the most interesting and important things that we're doing.

We also follow that up. Continuity is one of the things that is most missing from public journalism. Here today,

gone tomorrow. Today it's health care, tomorrow it's the scandal of the week. Then maybe we're going to get back to another version of a health-care plan two weeks down the road. One of the most important things that we try to do is integrate continuity into this process with follow-ups on our state-wide weekly news and public affairs show, so that when people can hear something once, they can actually hear about it again in a context that allows them to relate it back to what they understand and therefore build a base of knowledge that they can actually act as citizens from.

We're also sponsoring something called the Wisconsin Collaborative Project, which is a quarterly news and public affairs show, which airs on PBS's national program service on a range of themes. We've done programs on women in the '92 elections, high school stories across the country. What's unique about this program and what I think illustrates both a combination of democracy and new technology is that we were with small and medium public television stations from around the country. We have worked with GBH [Boston], we have worked with some of the bigger stations. But we look for partners in New Hampshire and Alaska and North Carolina, people whose voices and faces you do not hear on national public television very often, especially in a news and public affairs context.

The way we put these things together and the reason that we can put them together is because we use a combination of non-linear digital video editing. In a nutshell, it's like applying the word processor to the typewriter. What that means is that we can go to people who maybe aren't as highly skilled as a producer in New York or San Francisco or L.A. or Boston, but might have something very important to say and some very good ideas, and work with them to do drafts over and over again in this non-linear video editing medium. So at least it's fresh, and at least it's a point of view that you would not have heard otherwise. Those points of view would not be on the air.

We are going to hook up these non-

linear systems, these stations. We're conducting an experiment right now with a PBS V-Sat system, which will begin to create a virtual production house across the country so that public television stations that are out of the large coastal axis will be able to share video with each other, using store and forward video servers, which we hope will lead to a kind of co-oping which will begin to develop a kind of shared public television news service in the United States of the type that existed in NPR before it congealed into NPR as an actual network.

We're looking very carefully at small format in digital video. We work in Hi-8 very much because we think it is a more democratic medium. It allows people to tell stories that wouldn't have been told otherwise, and we try to make those small formats work.

Finally, [there] is On-line Wisconsin, the Electronic Journal of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, the School of Journalism. It allows people to tell stories that wouldn't have been told otherwise, and we try to make those small formats work.

This on-line journal is being accessed worldwide right now, through the worldwide web. We're getting about 1500 users a day, and this is without having announced it. Some of them are undoubtedly Wisconsin exiles who are nostalgic and searching the web for something to do. But we hope that some of them are also trying to look at what we hope will be a new form of journalism.

You click into world news. We have nine regional pages and then World Affairs Digest. We have radio reports that are filed from stringers around the world. They are not the kinds of news that you would be very likely to see on even the pages of an international oriented newspaper like The New York Times. We put these pages together using resources at the University of Wisconsin. There are accuracy issues there, but we essentially use our own in-house, meaning on-campus, resources to verify this information.

We have photo essays. My point is that next time a young photographer has something to say to the world, ide-

ally, he or she maybe will have heard of us and we can put them on. And that gives people an opportunity to see something and hear something that they might not have heard otherwise. And that's what we're here for. That's what this new form of public journalism is about. This really is a kind of serendipity, but I want to emphasize that it is an edited form of serendipity, that this is a news journal, this is not a bulletin board. But people can post reader comments. We also have opinion pages.

The beauty of this form as I see it is that it allows us to do something that every journalist talks about and very few of us actually get to do for various reasons.

We can do in-depth reporting and leave it on for people to read. We can actually layer our coverage and give context and depth and perspective. So that for example we're going to begin a health-care debate, a series of pages on health care, which will continually, daily update events, will allow different points of view from single payer to the managed care plan to post their material [or] not to post their material. We will post their material, so that you can actually read the core documents. We're going to have arguments on this forum so that viewers can in fact respond. And we hope that will lead to a much more lively debate. What I like to think of as a democratic conversation rather than simply a processing or flow of information.

That's really the thread that runs through all of these projects—they are about a democratic conversation. They are about finding new ways for people to come together as publics and talk to each other.

Q. & A.

Montgomery—I'd just like to add something to that. One of the things that has been missing is an emphasis on really empowering and mobilizing and involving these very institutions and civic organizations, nonprofits, to become information providers, not just recipients of services. There's been a lot of talk in the Clinton Administration about linking up schools,

hospitals and libraries—I think that's terrific. The industries are very interested in that as well in some ways because they want to be able to provide services to those institutions. But what is possible with these technologies and not just with the computer technologies but potentially with video and fiberoptic technologies as well, is a real opening up of the system that could involve all of these institutions and organizations that have a great deal to offer their communities both locally and nationally, but have not really had the opportunity to do that. In the past, we've had experiments with public access in cable television, but it's remained a very marginal part of the system. And one of the things that we're calling for on video dial-tone systems, for example, are some kind of rate structure that doesn't require nonprofits to pay the same thing that commercial entities might have to pay. Some kind of system mechanisms within the policy, a structure that will allow these organizations to be more fully involved and to be able to serve the public, which there's a potential for.

Q—Last week—I think he's the president of Procter & Gamble—talked about how important it was for advertisers to create their own vehicles now that the mass audience is fragmenting. Among the program types he talked about creating were news programs. I wonder if anybody on the panel has any thoughts about Procter & Gamble creating a news program, whether it's a television program, a radio program, or a newspaper type program?

Montgomery—That's something I didn't get a chance to get into in my remarks. But it's something I'm very concerned with. I was at a seminar five or six years ago, where someone was talking about the future and said, well, it's just going to be like 50's television. And I thought, they mean like [the] wonderful Hallmark Hall of Fame and all these wonderful dramas. But what they meant was an integration of sponsors and programming. And the head of TCI recently said that one of the things we're going to see in the future with these cable systems is hundreds of informercial channels. This blurring of the programming and the advertising I think is an issue that's going to really be troublesome for those of us who do care about the integrity of journalism. I'm also concerned that young people increasingly rely on tabloid TV and other kinds of programming for their primary informa-

tion rather than the traditional print media, for example. As the lines get further blurred, how can we guarantee that what people are seeing and getting as news is news? I think it's very, very troublesome.

Q—I'm a Fellow at the Shorenstein Barone Center. I used to work for ITN in London. I wonder if Andy Nibley has begun to delimit the world ahead. You were talking about these problems of copyright. Here we are talking about a world which [is] developing, much of it free for the moment, on Internet. You [are] developing new products—a lot of companies are developing new products—because you have to because that's the way the market is moving. But I'm wondering if by what you're beginning to hint at, this problem of copyright [is] not just on words. Whether you're actually beginning to delimit how far you'll be able to actually contribute to many of these new technologies, because of protecting your own commercial interests, given that pricing is going to be one of the key problems in the world ahead.

Nibley—We're starting to think about it. One of the models you see now is the mall model where someone like a Microsoft or an Apple will own the mall, and you will buy space in it. And then you will essentially advertise your wares, whether they're video, textual, audio, data, and try to get people to come into your shop as they're working their way around the Internet. I think that's all going to happen. I think it provides opportunities for people who were wholesalers to actually retail their news. The problem is how do we get from here to there. The wholesalers make their living now by providing the information to the retailers. At what point do they decide to pull the plug and simply go it alone and become a retailer by themselves? That's a tricky question.

Or is it more like, to keep the mall metaphor going, do we sell our news in The L.A. Times store and The New York Times store and in the ITN store as well as having our own shop in the mall? It's going to be very, very tricky. You already see the nets starting to brand everything that goes out on their feeds. We're branding our photos. Piracy in the world now of news is fairly rampant, and the technology has just spread all of this information beyond national boundaries. So it's a, it's a very, it's a tricky one. Yes we are starting to think about it, and interestingly enough, lawyers are now very much in the

sort of sales and marketing and editorial strategy groups and have an awful lot to say about how we're allowed to send out information because of the fear that we'll lose control of it when we do.

William Wheatley—Bill Wheatley from NBC. My question is about the civic right of way. It seems to me in many of the older technologies, for example, broadcasting in the United States and elsewhere in the world, you've had limited spectrum. Here, in many instances, the spectrum isn't limited, so that the path should be clear for a right of way. Is it your feeling that what's more likely to happen is that we need an economic right of way, to in some way subsidize these services so that they will be able to compete in this new complex landscape?

Montgomery—Well, first of all there is the potential for unlimited bandwidth, but it may not materialize immediately. With new video dial-tone systems that are being built, a lot of that capacity is going to be used up for video on demand and other kinds of services. So it may be some time before we've reached that point where there is so much bandwidth that no one has to worry about it. What is important is to get a precedent in place and mechanisms in place that will allow the development and flowering of this public civic sector which could very easily be overwhelmed by the commercial and other more dominant kind of programming. I'm not talking about the Internet so much, although I think there are some risks there as well. Even though there is seemingly unlimited capacity there is with privatization, the potential that there could be cost barriers in the future. No one knows exactly how all of this will play out. And what we're arguing for is a debate about these things.

Lewis—Just for your information, public broadcasting has proposed some public right-of-way legislation which would allocate some spectrum to public broadcasting. And when you get into that you're going to get into subsidy questions and the economics of all of this. ■

MIT Lab's View of the Future

*A Variety of Media to Give the Public News They Want
When, How and Where They Want It*

BY JEROME S. RUBIN



Commentary

The News in the Future Consortium at the MIT Media Lab, which began life in February of 1992, was formed to explore the ways that news may

be disseminated in the future. The members of the consortium are 21 media and technology companies from eight countries. The research projects are led by eight MIT faculty members, assisted by about 20 graduate students. Before discussing the consortium's basic premises, some background may be in order.

Michael Crichton, the author of "Jurassic Park," has written that today's American newspaper is "...another dinosaur, one that may be on the road to extinction...gone within 10 years. Vanished, without a trace."

Here is some more Crichton wisdom: "Who will be the GM or IBM of the '90's? The next great American institution to find itself obsolete and outdated, while obstinately refusing to change? I suspect one answer would be The New York Times..."

On the other hand, George Gilder, the supply-side economist, has recently written that "[t]he ultimate reason that the newspapers will prevail in the Information Age is that they are better than anyone else at collecting, editing, filtering and presenting real information..."

But what Crichton really wants is an individualized newspaper. Listen to this:

"Once Al Gore gets the fiber-optic highways in place, and the information capacity of the country is where it ought to be, I will be able, for example, to view any public meeting of Congress over the Net. And I will have artificial intelli-

gence agents roaming the databases, downloading stuff I am interested in, and assembling for me a front page, or a nightly news show, that addresses my interests. I'll have the twelve top stories that I want, I'll have short summaries available, and I'll be able to double-click for more detail. How will Peter Jennings...or a newspaper compete with that?"

In the Media Lab vision of the electronic newspaper, double-clicking won't be necessary. In our vision, people will talk to their electronic newspapers (in ordinary English or Spanish or Japanese) and the newspaper/computer will obey these oral commands. Or, if it is more appropriate in some circumstances, we will communicate with our electronic papers with simple gestures.

Gilder's version of the electronic newspaper is the electronic simulacrum of a newspaper being developed by Roger Fidler at Knight-Ridder's laboratory in Boulder, Colorado. It is a portable flat-panel computer screen. On the face of the screen, there is something that resembles the front page of a newspaper. In Gilder's words, "[i]t contains headlines for featured stories followed by their first few paragraphs and a jump to an inner page. The jump, unlike that in your usual newspaper, is electronic and immediate." This electronic newspaper, even though it is based on today's model, "might contain a trove of news, graphics, audio and even video."

Gilder also sees this electronic newspaper as appealing to "the special interests and ambitions, the hobbies and curiosities, the career pursuits and learning needs of particular individuals." On this point, the desirability of personal-

ized news and information, Gilder and Crichton appear to be more or less in agreement. And to that extent, as I mentioned earlier, their views are consistent with that of the Media Lab.

On the other hand, we do not agree with Gilder that Fidler's tablet will be *the* newspaper of the future. Something along those lines may very well be



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Barry Hetherington © MIT Media Lab 1992

one embodiment of the electronic newspaper, although we would expect something significantly more natural in its user interface. But the important point is that we envision many other embodiments, each of which would be tailored to a different set of circumstances or needs. In our view, there is no single universal solution for the delivery of news; the new electronic technologies will give us the freedom to deliver news and advertising in many different ways. The idea is to deliver news (and advertising) to the individual reader (or viewer or listener) that meets the particular needs or interests of that individual—and to deliver that news at the *time* it is needed, at the *place* it is needed, and in the *form* that is most useful or convenient to the individual at *that time and place*. That is why the program is called *News in the Future*, not the *Newspaper in the Future*.

In the comfort of one's home or office, for example, the device may be a digital TV whose screen is a gigantic flat panel covering an entire wall. For starters, the screen may be filled with a map of the world. News headlines appear on the map at the places where the events have happened or are happening. The most recent stories carry the brightest headlines, and the stories that your autonomous interface agents have selected as being of special interest have headlines that stand out in color-coded, zoomable three dimensions. You tell the television set in ordinary English which stories you wish to see, and the TV obliges—with text or video or audio or a combination, as you wish. You can ask the TV for background information or more detail on certain stories, and all the while you are looking or listening or asking for more information your trustworthy interface agents are noting what you are focusing on or asking for. They *learn* from these observations and improve their understanding of your needs and preferences. If you are interested in national or regional or local news, you simply tell the TV to replace the world map with one of the United States or of New York State or of the New York Metropolitan area or of midtown Manhattan, with the headlines being dis-

played in the same way as on the world map.

In the garden or at the beach or on a train or plane, a newspaper printed on reusable paper (that is, paper with reversible ink) might be the most suitable means of getting the news. It would certainly be more congenial to the human being than a bulky, rigid electronic tablet. The paper would be printed by a digital TV set (in your home, for example). While it would contain a good deal of news of general interest, it would reflect your individual interests in what is selected, what is emphasized and what is omitted by your agents. When you have finished reading your paper, you slip it back into the digital TV set from which it came. All the printing on the paper is "reversed" (wiped off), but you are able to tell the TV set (in ordinary English, of course) to save certain stories or advertisements in its memory. Whenever you wish, you can pluck out of the TV set a new edition of your personalized newspaper, printed on the same sheets of reusable paper.

When driving you may wish to have your news delivered in audio form. The news will be filtered from a variety of wire services and radio broadcasts in much the same way that your video news or your reusable-paper news is filtered. In fact, the filters in your car may be linked to those in your digital TV set, so that each set of filters knows what the other has offered you and how you have reacted.

There are many other possibilities for disseminating news in the future, but the few I have outlined surely give you the message. The electronic newspaper should not be thought of as a device, but rather as a service.

At the Media Lab, the focus is on technology, not public policy. But there are a number of critical issues to be concerned about. Here are just a few:

How do we protect the ownership of information in the great digital highway? How do we compensate the information provider? Will copyright as we know it have any applicability? Will electronic newspapers enjoy the same First Amendment freedoms as today's print media?

Who will own the means of transmission? In the U.S., it increasingly looks as though it will be the telephone companies, with or without cable companies as partners. What are the implications for newspapers and other owners of information? Will the telephone companies, or the cable companies or the satellite companies or some combination become the content providers as well as the transmission providers?

What will the role of advertising be? Will it continue to be important enough to provide 50-80 percent of the revenues of newspapers, as it does today? Will advertisers pay more for targeted ads and qualified leads than an electronic, personalized paper can provide? Will any fall-off in advertising be offset by the elimination (or at least the reduction) of newspaper manufacturing and distribution costs—newsprint, production and printing, delivery of tons of the printed product by truckers and 10-year-old boys on bicycles?

If news in the future is not advertiser-supported to the same extent as today, how much will the public be willing to pay for the information? And if we can charge enough to turn a profit on news in the future, what will the charging method be? Will there be different methods for different delivery means?

Will the magnitude of the effort to provide news in the future require new sets of alliances, mergers, acquisitions? Can we look forward to networks of news providers throughout the world—sharing central resources (like a pool of world news and stories of universal interest, computer technology, joint research and development, etc.), and each of them supplying news of its own area but accessible to all the others? Or will there be just a few colossi doing it all by themselves after having swallowed up the smaller companies?

These and other questions like them are, as I said, not within the purview of NiF. We are exploring technology, not political or economic policy. But they lurk in the background of everything we are doing and we cannot overlook the implications of our technological research for all these questions—and many more. ■

The Emerging Electronic Democracy

Moderator

Lawrence K. Grossman, former President of both NBC News and PBS.

Panelists

Matthew F. Wilson, Executive Editor, The San Francisco Chronicle.

Davis Merritt Jr., Editor, The Wichita Eagle.

Leonard Downie Jr., Executive Editor, The Washington Post

Andrew Blau, Director, Communications Policy Project, Benton Foundation.

LAWRENCE K. GROSSMAN

Twenty-five hundred years ago, the Greeks invented direct democracy, in which the citizens ruled themselves. A little over 200 years ago, our Founding Fathers invented representative democracy, in which we elected officials who made the decisions for us. I would suggest that electronic democracy is representing the third great transformation in our democratic process. It already is showing indications of being, I would suggest, a hybrid between the direct democracy of the ancient Greek city states, and the representative democracy with which we've grown so familiar over the past 200 years.

That is to say, the public has become the fourth branch of government. No major policy decision is made any longer without first testing the waters of public opinion.

Where does that leave journalism and the journalists? I would suggest that far from having the commanding position that journalism used to have, in many respects it is now in the position of a Greek chorus. There's a wonderful Oxford History of Greece in the Horatic World, and [it describes] the Greek chorus as "old citizens full of their proverbial wisdom and hopeless-

ness." If anything better describes current journalism, I can't imagine what that might be. But the question arises, as comes the interactive telecommunications revolution, what will be the role of journalism?

Who are journalists? Are Oprah, and Phil, and Jesse, and Geraldo, and Larry King, and Rush, journalists in this day and age, when most Americans seem to be getting their direct view of what's going on in the world from many of them? It's a home videotape that set Los Angeles afire recently. Is that journalism? Are anchors journalists?

MATTHEW F. WILSON

There's journalism and I think there's electronic democracy, and I don't necessarily think they're the same thing at all.

Electronic democracy is really about decentralizing things. It's about putting computing power and communication power into every home. We have huge presses or we have huge broadcasting antennae that take one signal, one basic thing, and send it to everyone. The electronic democracy changes all that in a dramatic way. It means that now all of you are communicating to all of you. Each one of you becomes a broadcaster.

Each one of you becomes a journalist. Communication changes from being a one, us, to many, you, to being a one-to-one kind of thing.

I think Thomas Jefferson would love it. This is really what the First Amendment was meant to protect. It was meant to protect that kind of communication. I'm not sure at the moment that the government quite sees this as a good thing. There are some moves to not necessarily guarantee privacy in these kinds of communications in the new on-line world.

Talking about journalism in this world is a whole other matter, because I think the way we think of journalism, we write stories, we're good guys, and we send them out and folks look at them, and read them, and derive great knowledge from them, but part of the reality is that we're funded by advertising, and you don't pay the full cost of all those wonderful stories we send out to you. In fact, you pay about 20 percent of the cost of them, and advertisers pay the other 80 percent. But, suddenly, if all of you become broadcasters—and it's very cheap for you to do it (all you need is a personal computer that you can buy for \$1,000 and a modem and a phone line)—and you're all talking to one another. What's left for us? And

where do we get the funding to have all of our talented journalists out gathering news and delivering it to you?

To me, that's the big question. There's an economic question here of how traditional journalism continues. I don't think there's an answer to it.

So, the world is changing in a very rapid and dramatic way. I believe it's going to be good for democracy and good for the country. I'm not sure it's going to be good for journalism, and I don't know if there's a good answer.

DAVIS MERRITT JR.

We've been talking all day about ways of conveying information. The problem I have with that is that journalists really don't have much of a future in the information business as it's developing. Of course, we haven't had [one] for some time, though we only now, and too slowly, [are] coming to that hard and disorienting reality. We can't simply insert the journalism of today into the future, electronic or not.

Journalists as journalists need to define ourselves, not as being in the information business, or in the watchdog business necessarily or solely, but rather define ourselves as being in the business of public life, the business of democracy. Because if people aren't attentive to public life, they have no need for journalists or journalism of any sort. Now, that's both a moral and an economic statement. We're concerned about how we pay for the journalism in the future, and I suggest that if journalism has value to people, it will have economic viability in any technological environment in the future. And, if it does not have value to people—not to journalists—it will not have economic viability in the electronic future. So, the crucial step is for us to make a journalism that has real value to people.

People don't value that which they don't trust, and people don't value that which is not useful to them in dealing with what they see as important to them. And there's ample evidence that people don't trust journalism. There's some very scary evidence of that. Because they don't trust it, it's of decreasing value to them.

In 1988, for instance, [a Yankelovich survey asked] "In which of these do you have great confidence?" Doctors: 71 percent said yes. Federal government: 18 percent. Local government: 15 percent. Advertising: eight percent. Religious leaders: 38 percent. News on television: 55 percent had great confidence in it. Newspapers: 50 percent. News magazines: 38 percent.

They asked the question again in 1993, late last year. Doctors, who had been 71 percent fell to 63 percent. Not bad. Federal government fell from 18 to 12 percent. Local government 15 to 10 percent. They dropped, and that's pretty bad. Advertising stayed level: eight, eight. Religious leaders 38 to 26, but let me tell you this. News on television, which people trusted, had great confidence in it at 55 percent level in 1988, 25 percent in 1993. Newspapers, which were 50 percent, 20 percent. Magazines: 38 percent, 12 percent.

No matter the form of future delivery, if we don't have a product as journalists that is of value, it will not be delivered by anybody for any price.

The notion of public journalism seeks to create that value. It seeks to do it by accepting as its core purpose, as an obligation, the objective of making public life go well, of reinvolving people in public life. Going well doesn't mean going smoothing or quietly, so that's not in the nature of public life, and shouldn't be. But it means accepting, as a primary obligation, the task of exploring the possibilities of resolving the long-standing problems that concern people. It means viewing citizens not as an audience, as readers or non-readers, but as a public, as actors. It means separating the canons of journalism, objectivity, for instance, from some of the silly axioms that have grown up around those canons, such as not caring. For if we don't care whether public life goes well, and if it does not, again, there is no need for journalism or journalists.

Public journalism, whatever you may call it, isn't a formula. It's not a new color weather map. It's not what is commonly thought of as advocacy journalism. It's not nostalgic for any alleged golden age of journalism or democracy.

It's not about simply giving people what they want. Rather, it's a pragmatic recognition that people flooded with contextless, fragmentary, episodic, value-neutral information can't make effective work of their decision making.

Given the standing of journalism today, and the failing health of public life, we have to avoid a dangerous assumption that I kept feeling in the conversation today. The assumption to avoid is that what we are doing as journalists now is right and has an enduring value to people. I think a lot of the facts we know work against that assumption. We can't successfully insert the journalism we do today into the electronic future simply by finding some magical techno-lever to do it with. What we're doing now just isn't working for us and for public life. Telling the news is not enough.

Those of us thinking about public journalism, or banana, or whatever label you put on it, believe that journalism can, and must, have a role in the future. But having one will require a serious and deep rethinking of many of the conventions of today's journalism. That's true cultural change in newsrooms, which of course involves risk. But the risks of not changing the way we do things are far greater for both democracy and for journalism than changing.

LEONARD DOWNIE JR.

Many people in our profession are giving up. They turn newspapers, in many cases, into replicas of television. They believe, as you can find at any journalism convention, that indeed we are dinosaurs and we're dying out. They're maximizing profits while they have a chance before they shut the door. And we have a smart American public, and they can see that this is what's going on and they're disappointed by it.

I believe that the new electronic information age actually creates wonderful opportunities. There is going to be a great demand for information, shared information, reliable information, well-reported information, information in depth, information that is well-analyzed, information that's well-interpreted to

be the basis for the kinds of discussions, the kind of electronic democracy that will then go on.

The electronic democracy does not cancel out good journalism. It will, in fact, be dependent on good journalism. It won't work without good journalism. And so the important thing, I think, for this profession to do is to not give up, but to look for in-

novative ways to once again practice good journalism, and to believe that, in fact, it will pay, that money can be earned to support us all by doing good journalism. And, in fact, taking advantage of the new technology to cut costs to the industry where costs can be cut, which is in the outmoded production areas, the outmoded ways in which we've been delivering information, getting information from reporters and editors out to the public when an awful lot of money can be saved and more efficient delivery can take place beginning with modern presses, but moving on into electronic territory.

That's the philosophy that's driving us at The Washington Post.

We're sticking our toes into a lot of areas of the new electronic future. We've formed a new subsidiary of the corporation called Digital, Inc., which is half staffed by people from the newsroom and half staffed by people whose backgrounds are technologically creative. We're going to create an on-line service that will begin, we hope, to be tested this summer and be available to people later this year to subscribe to. We are not doing it through America On-Line, or the Internet, or Prodigy, or CompuServe. Instead, we've engaged a



Lawrence Grossman and Leonard Downie Jr.: is electronic democracy emerging?

partnership with a company called Ziff-Davis that puts out trade publications, and has come up with a really imaginative electronic interface. It will allow us, we think, to be much more flexible in how this service [runs than] in any current on-line system.

It will have several features that I think are important to accomplishing, not only to make it economically viable, we hope, but accomplishing some of the purposes you've heard panelists talk about. We believe it will enable people to very easily manipulate with a mouse on a screen, to provide a whole lot more context for the news being reported today than is currently available in the newspaper, because the newspaper has limited space. So you would be able to access all stories we've done previously about the subject. Or even tailor your search to the particular kinds of stories you want to read.

We will also provide much of the raw material, much of the source material that we use for our news stories for people that want to look back into that after or before or during reading the news stories themselves. So, we can provide text of all the speeches we're covering that day, transcripts of all the

press conferences, the full reports that have come out, the documents we found, and so on, on the service.

We also want to provide the service in geographical tiers, so that, for instance, embedded in it would be a local service. It will, again, enable us to do things for our local community that we no longer have had room for in the very expensive newsprint

that we print on. So, for instance, we will be able to greatly increase our coverage of civic associations. We'll be able to print their agendas, their meetings and stories about their activities, and even enable them to talk to each other, have their own bulletin boards to talk back and forth among each other, which newspapers used to do. Some small community newspapers can still do [this], but we can no longer afford to do [this] at The Washington Post. And then, at the national level and international level, we would provide other kinds of services like that, in bulletin board services, and so on.

Doing this isn't easy. Doing this means facing difficult issues within a newsroom over how you provide information for a service like while you're also providing the copy for the newspaper itself. It means grappling with issues over how you interact with the public on chat services that are run by a newspaper as opposed to a lack of, one that has no control at all, like Internet. It raises questions about how our staff members participate in such on-line service without crossing the ethical lines in which reporters are not supposed to take positions, for instance, on the issues they cover, but readers may indeed

be wanting to ask some questions that would be intend to try and force them to take positions.

It means being imaginative in the kinds of ventures we enter into in an industry that has always been very chary about getting into any kinds of new technology or other new approaches to doing things, and in our instance, for example, we've even take the extraordinary step just this last week or buying a software company, a company that makes CD-ROM technology, in order to make sure that we can do this in the most imaginative way possible.

I think the biggest question that came up today is money. We can afford to do this in our corporation. Many media corporations don't have that much money and, in fact, their incomes, like ours, are steadily declining from our primary source of revenue, advertising. So, this still raises questions about how we are going to finance these ventures in the future. We still only charge 25 cents for every copy of *The Washington Post*, which is probably unheard of here in Boston, because we want as many people as possible to read the newspaper every day. Are we going to be able to continue to do that in the future? How are we going to price an on-line service to be similarly democratic?

I'm very worried that a lot of the electronic democracy that we've been talking about here for two days actually is the elite electronic democracy, available only to people who can afford high-powered computers and the telephone time to engage in it. This is something we're going to have to wrestle with.

ANDREW BLAU

I think it's worth getting back to what I think of as kind of the first question here: What's the relationship between this electronic media and democracy? Why do we put them together in the same sentence? It's not self-evident to me. Certainly, the evidence of previous technologies—cable television, for example—where you had a lot of the same kinds of promises, I think we've ended up with a lot more talk, and not necessarily a lot more democracy.

In a world of a million channels, how does anyone get heard? If everyone in this room was talking at the same time, no one particular message would get anywhere, and I think that's what we're actually probably headed toward. That's one possibility, a kind of cacophony where information renders everything else moot.

To do that, we need to create new kinds of institutions that create audiences. We talked earlier today about creating brand identity in a world of unlimited channel capacity [with] more information than you can even contemplate.

I'm the token non-journalist on this panel. The role of the reporter becomes the most valuable thing in this setting.

A system has been created for the instantaneous and worldwide propagation of whatever is on your mind, whenever you feel like it. What I've noticed is people ask other people for reports. "I'm going to this meeting. Would someone please send me a report on that? I need some information that I can trust about that meeting." Reporters become invaluable. It's the press as a kind of an institution that really becomes a problem. Or, it's not a problem, it's that the press has a problem.

It seems to me that the press has kind of four roles that are really under attack right now by this technology. One is that it organizes the universe of possible information. It kind of arbitrates or evaluates the truth or importance of that information. It organizes a public out of the universe of people that could be dealing with that information. And, while this may come as a surprise to some of the journalists in the audience, it works to pay journalists for the value they add to this information. All of these four roles are radically undermined by what's happening, and that, I think, bodes very ill for democracy.

Points A and B, organizing the universe of possible information, and evaluating truth. We're talking about creating a point of view, essentially. The key thing that when I pay my 25 cents every day for *The Washington Post*, I'm paying I guess for Mr. Downie's point of view on what's important, and what I need to know about that day. But there

are no similar mechanisms for creating an organized point of view in this setting. Similarly, the kind of the arbitration of truth or value comes to that point of view. Some people have said that point of view becomes the most valuable quality in this new environment.

The third item I mentioned about organizing an audience. That's the notion of cutting through the noise. There are no institutions in this coming environment that are set up to do that. And finally, there's the compensation problem. How do you get paid for the value you add to the universe of possible facts?

The *New York Times* has a problem. John Markoff, well, he may also have a problem, but he's got a different problem. John Markoff arguably in this role has a brand identity. People might go out looking, I mean people today said that they would go out looking for the reports that Mr. Markoff contributes to *The New York Times*. But, *The New York Times* as an entity has really got a problem.

It seems to me we need some new institutions to do that sifting, to mediate these truth claims, to organize information so it's manageable. Newspapers are really wonderful, because they're a very stable technology that manages information in a way that you can handle. You can put it under your arm and you can take it on the subway. We don't have any way of doing that.

And yet, that editing role becomes [the] crucial survival gear in this setting. What we need more than ever are editors. They become the most important value that gets added. In fact, I think we may start to see freelance editors. I said point of view is the most valuable thing. I think you may start to see mechanisms develop where you will pay people for their point of view.

There's a fundamental disconnect about what media does well, and what's needed for democracy that I don't think anyone has bridged yet. Deliberation makes very bad television, and deliberation needs kind of structure and care and tending, and there's no means for that yet.

I think the public needs the press, perhaps more than ever before, but it's not what we have today. The press is kind of the essential mediator or arbitrator. I think there really is a public appetite for solutions, even if there is a distrust of the media institutions we have today. There is a public interest in being involved in creating solutions, and I think that electronic democracy won't work without the press.

Q. & A.

Q—What are your views on how the First Amendment should be applied to the electronic media? And the other question is, recently in the Harvard Law Review, it was argued that the information super-highway will make child pornography easier to make and more difficult to detect from the point of view of law enforcement. How likely do you think this prospect is, and what can be done about?

Downie—I'm a First Amendment absolutist. I think that it should apply to the new electronic computer communication just as it does to all other endeavors. I don't know how much easier this will make child pornography. People seem to have done great with photographs, and so on, before electronic media, and before that the diarists in England were famous for some of the things that they wrote and passed among themselves in Victorian times. So, people who are engaged in perversions or breaking the law will find a way, and I don't think any particular medium should be blamed for it or changed in order to meet those ends.

I think the First Amendment is the single most important thing about American life. I worked for years in the mother country, in England, and saw what a lack of a First Amendment means in an otherwise civilized country. It is very limiting, very seriously limiting, and it ought to hold sway in all kinds of communications.

Grossman—Anybody share my worry, though, Len, that the First Amendment is being used to protect corporate media interests even more than it is being used to protect unpopular speech?

Downie—Sure, corporations will do that. They've got a lot of money and lawyers, and they'll do that, but that doesn't mean that you want to do something about the First Amendment. It means you want to fight those tendencies.

Jay Rosen—Len Downie remarked that a lot of people are giving up in the newspaper industry, and not fighting for public service journalism. It suggests that there's a battle going on, perhaps even a war, in which some media owners are trying one kind of strategy, and others are trying another. And the war could be seen in a larger context as a tension or battle between America's civic culture and the importance of that, and its commercial culture and the importance of that. It seems to me obvious that journalism's prospects lie in the civic culture.

Now, the conflict between the two is in many ways in our society a conflict between the strong and the weak. Commercial culture has a lot of money. Civic culture has a lot less. What most people do when they're in a conflict between the strong and the weak is they look for allies. They organize. They try to make their case. They become political, because they realize that they're in a political situation.

For journalists, this is usually extremely difficult. Journalists, for example, aren't used to looking for allies. They're not used to making their case for public support. Up to now they believed that they could get by on the First Amendment and enlightened ownership. But ownership, as you suggested, in many places, is not enlightened.

So, what do journalists do about that? And shouldn't they join forces with the civic culture, the larger civic culture?

Downie—I have to respectfully disagree, despite the good-heartedness of your approach. It's not really a war. A lot of newspapers are simply running down, and it's actually, it's the weak that are more endangered than the strong. The strong can afford, at least for now, to take a different path. It is The New York Times, and The L.A. Times, and The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal, and variety of others, St. Petersburg Times, financially strong companies, that can still afford to emphasize public-interest journalism as opposed to some of these other gimmicks that are being tried by others to, in their minds, to stave off debt.

So ironically, it's the strong at the moment who can afford to stem this tide if they choose to. Not all do. I'm a prisoner I guess of my age or my background, or something, but the independence of the media, particularly the independence of newspapers is just as strong in my bones as my feelings about the First Amendment. Who picks and chooses which civic-minded people to ally ourselves with? What judgments do we make

in doing that? It's a slippery slope for me. Our independence is very, very important, and obviously when we get down to the last enlightened owner, we're in big trouble, but independence is still very, very important.

Also, the overhead is coming down. Again, that's why I think newspapers that are giving up shouldn't, and why they should be more optimistic, because the overhead is rapidly decreasing, and so it won't require as much money to produce good journalism in the future as it does right now. I think we're sort of in a peak and about to head down, so there should be hope for more of these companies. ■

On-Line Transcript Of Conference

An edited transcript of the discussions will be placed on the World Wide Web, accessible on the Internet via any of the WWW clients: Lynx, Cello or Mosaic.

The transcript will include hypertext links to related materials such as photographs and audio clips from the conference, handouts, biographies, bibliographies and relevant articles provided by speakers and panelists, and any other data or documentation that might be applicable.

The material will be posted on the Web server (the URL is <http://www.nando.net>) of Nando.net, a bulletin board system, on-line newspaper and Internet access service of The News & Observer Publishing Co. of Raleigh, N.C.

A Shakeout of Suggestions

Final Session

Bill Kovach, Curator, Nieman Foundation

BILL KOVACH

Just before the meeting, the brain trust behind this conference, Katherine Fulton and Francis Pisani and Melanie Sill, sat down and tried to put some structure around our thoughts. It seemed to us it seemed to make sense to come out of this conference with some specific ideas about what needs to be done, what can be done, what the possibilities are for some action by journalists. And maybe some institutions, organizations, people to concern themselves with these agenda items.

Ed Fouhy—The thing that worries me, from what I've heard, is this legislation moving through Congress now that's going to affect the national information infrastructure. People like us don't have much knowledge about what's going on. Is there any way for people like us to have any influence so that the public interest journalism is guarded in that?

Kovach—I don't have the answer. There may be publisher groups.

John Sullivan—John Sullivan, National Journal. My colleague/competitor, Mr. Merry, has published a fabulous issue on this whole subject.

Robert Merry of Congressional Quarterly—We did do a special issue called The Information Arena a week ago. Basically, it tries to explain the state of play in terms of that legislation. One way of looking at it in terms of what they're trying to do would be to look at a couple of things that are happening in two states

by way of comparison. One is North Carolina and the other is California.

North Carolina is moving towards attempting to foster a major information highway, if you will, with one of the Baby Bell firms, which is willing to put up somewhere—if I remember the numbers correctly—in the neighborhood of \$150 million, to connect hospitals and schools and libraries primarily. With the understanding that the state, through those civic needs, would guarantee a certain amount of business. That's one prototype, if you will.

The other is California. They're taking a much different approach in which they're attempting to—if I can remember this exactly—foster a connection, a superhighway connection that would include millions of homes, I think from San Francisco south. And it's much more private. And the idea is that it's basically movies and entertainment that are going to be the engine that's going to drive this thing.

And the state itself is not going to be making any kind of guarantees or it's going to be much more in the private realm. The prototypical approach of the federal government is much more along the California lines. So that the Baby Bells would be freed up to move into other realms of enterprise and competition. At the same time, they would lose their monopoly in local phone service. The idea is that this freeing up, this effort to deregulate, would spur the movement towards what will ultimately be the superhighway. That's a very crude overview of where the federal government seems to be going.

Denise Caruso—I don't think anybody is looking at anything with the journalist agenda in mind, because we don't come to mind for them right away. They have their own problems. I think that if we can find somebody like you, Bill, to maybe get on the [NII] advisory counsel it might be a really good thing.

Henry Morgenthau—Going back to the early question about watchdog and lobbying or unofficial lobbying. The public broadcast and a collection of public broadcasting entities, the Corporation of Public Broadcasting, PBS and NPR are very active in this field. Mary Lou Joseph, who handles this for NPR, and has great respect among the other organizations, and is trying to get some kind of consensus. Because there's actually a lot of competition, back biting between these organizations. And also whatever you might think of Congressman Markey's telecommunica-



Bill Kovach: journalists must act

tions and finance committee, they've got a very good staff.

Terry Schwadron—The key thing is the need for training. The idea that there are a lot of new skills that will be needed for journalists to participate and for non-journalists to participate in the variety of electronic media. I think it's assumed that we all know, for example, how to write for the new media, when I don't think that that's necessarily true. It's assumed that we all know how to tell stories that have layers and links and hyper-extended means to connect. It's assumed that we all know how to send messages to people that they're not going to take offense at. When you have to answer people from the public, I think that the specific skills that might be helpful, not only to reporters but to the vast number of people who will somehow be able to participate on this is obviously important.

Max King, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*—To what extent are journalists going to feel they need to, or permit themselves to become engaged in debates that we, as organizations, are covering, engaged in issues that we're covering? I think one of our key strengths is the independence that we bring. And as an increasing variety of channels open up, that independence may be a greater and greater strength. I see a role for the Nieman Foundation in examining that. And perhaps holding some future conferences specifically on that issue and helping the profession formulate, if not some guidelines, at least some thinking on this subject.

And, as technology opens up a variety of new channels, the issue of how we keep the commercial content separate from the editorial content. There's a long tradition in newspapers of doing that, although I would point out that many of them are under more pressure than ever in that arena. There isn't such a long tradition in broadcast, in television and radio.

Sullivan—I think more attention by this journalistic community needs to be given to how this whole thing is financed. Like who's making the money? Because although the Internet is at this point kind of free, a lot of the interactive stuff is not normally using Internet, I

don't think we'll be. And journalists have a real stake into how it's financed in the sense of to what extent is it advertising based, to what extent is the subscriber, the consumer paying for it. If advertising is a major supporter, then the consumer tends to have to pay less. If there's no advertising, the consumer has to pay more. If that's the case there's less access.

If you become reliant on advertising—take the *Newsweek* Internet example—why would anyone turn on and look at one of those ads unless there was a close relationship between the edit and the advertising in the sense that they were both about the same kind of subject. The parallel is already there with the magazine industry right now. You know, you look in a computer book, there's computer edit, there's computer ads. There's a natural affinity between the two. To what extent will you find advertising driving the nature of the edit content in any of this whole new world? We already have the issues right now, but it's just going to be more so.

Lew Friedland—I think there's a whole separate financial issue here about the nonprofit sector and the possibility of independent nonprofit journalism. Either flourishing in an environment that encourages open access—in other words, one which stresses common carriage—or an environment that basically moves more toward the commercialization of all information so that it's either all direct sale of information or advertiser supported.

And I think there are tremendous possibilities for co-ops of journalists to begin to emerge. Something that every journalist that I know, or most good ones have dreamed about for a long time. I'm going to go out with the best of my colleagues, and actually we'll do the news. We'll put it on and we'll sell it directly. Well, I think, that's now possible in a way that it might not have been possible before. Only if the economic and regulatory structures carve that niche out. And I don't think we've done any good clear thinking about what those regulatory structures would have to be for that to happen.

Caruso—It really seems to me that

the independence that we all cherish as journalists won't serve us if we don't get involved in this discussion. You have to find a way to be involved in the discussion and still allow people to have their independence when they're covering it.

Jay Rosen, *Project on Public Life in the Press*—Since this conference is titled *Toward a New Journalists' Agenda*, one of the things we should try to settle on is what is a journalist agenda? The title is slightly ironic since it suggests that there was an old agenda. I'm not aware of one. And the whole idea that there is a publicly compelling agenda that would be of interest, not just to journalists, but would be sellable to wider audiences, is a unique proposition. And if it is true, then you should be able to write it down. And if you can write it down, you should be able to sell it to a number of organizations within journalism, but possibly outside of journalism as well.

King—I would be awfully careful about jumping in at too ambitious a level. I think trying to define the agenda for journalism entirely, starting with this conference, is too ambitious an undertaking. I think it would be far wiser to try to identify four, five or six areas of concern that we could explore further.

I think you've already identified three of the very key issues that face us. One of them obviously is regulation. I think another is commercialization. And for me, at least, a third and perhaps the most important is this issue of engagement threatening our independence by becoming too engaged in the issues that we cover.

David Hall, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*—I would like also to see some harder analysis about current usage and potential audience and usage of these various interactive technologies.

One of the oldest journalism tricks that I know of [is] to take a number that's being bandied around and prove it false. Like the number of homeless or the number of missing children or things like that. I think that some of the assumptions that have been made about the global usage of these various kinds of technologies and how it's going to sweep everything we've done away, are

pretty soft headed and are leading us to jump at some things right now a lot more quickly than we should. I'm not saying that it's not real and it's not going to affect how we operate. I'm suggesting that we need a more measured approach to some of the technologies that we are dealing with, and a harder-headed view of what the potential for them is before we decide how we're going to take reporting and editing resources, and use them in these areas.

Sandy Tolan—One of the things that several people brought up yesterday is the potential impact of the new technology on the watchdog role of the press. And I think that would be a really important thing to focus on.

Don Fry, independent writing coach—Everything I've seen and heard in the last day and a half, if implemented, and I think maybe 10 percent of it will be, will completely change the relationship of news organizations with their publics, with their viewers and readers. And indeed it will change the identity of the communities we serve. And I think we need to talk that out in great detail.

Dan Stets, Nieman Fellow—I'm from The Philadelphia Inquirer. At some point [we] should discuss the role of the reporter. Noam Chomsky visited us and was talking about [what] technology had done in manufacturing. Some had thought that technology would empower workers to have more control and more creative input into the manufacturing process. In fact, the opposite has happened. Technology was used to pass control to management and to diminish the role of individual workers.

I'd suggest that computers and a PC on every reporter's desk is potentially a very empowering thing and it leads to a lot of independence. But there seemed to me to be trends in the other direction. People are talking about media specialists and reporters who will be photographers, cameramen, radio reporters. This strikes me as not a very realistic approach.

Matt Storrin, The Boston Globe—I do think the coverage of the broader political and cultural impacts of what

we're talking about here are virtually unknown to the general public. I think we need to talk about ways to get editors and publishers to pay more attention to this. And perhaps the Nieman Foundation wants to consider establishing an award or citation every year for coverage of that type.

Victor Navasky, The Nation—It seems to me that what's missing here is any interdisciplinary advantage. I'd be interested in having philosophers present if you're going to discuss what the values of this profession are going to be down the road. If you're going to talk about the impact of the new technology on content, how do you measure impact? You could use social scientists to do that. You can project what kinds of tasks remain to be done. And other foundations can pick them up and you can decide what conferences you can most usefully run.

Frank Gibney, Nieman Fellow, Newsweek—Down in the nuts and bolts realm, there's a whole other generation of journalists growing up with computers. They'll be computer savvy when they get to the newsroom. There needs to be some discussion about how that generation, and indeed how we do our jobs, using computer tools. We need to deal with the veracity question. We need to discuss how we're going to set up the structure for basically verifying that the reporting that's done is ethical and correct.

Merry—I guess I'd like to see the discussion begin to focus a little bit more on the question of what are our opportunities here. The fact is that it's not going to be that much different for our business as it was any other time in its history where the challenge was to determine what kinds of information needs exist out there. And then seeking to meet them. It's not that much different from Gordon Bennett sending fast boats out to meet European ships and sending them back to New York so that he could scoop the competition in terms of European news.

Some areas that I would suggest we might concentrate on then is, well, what can we do to enhance the value of the information that we collect? Archival information, for example, is one thing

that hasn't been discussed too much at this conference. But, I'm wondering what we can do, both to enhance the archival information we have as people increasingly begin to tap into information sources via a computer, and to enhance that information. For example, perhaps something that I concentrate on a little bit because at CQ we view ourselves as a publication of record for Congress and, therefore, we create an ongoing record of what Congress does. But, newspapers create ongoing records about what's going on in their governments and their legislatures and other civic organizations. So that's one example of the sort of thing that when we get to a point where people are going to be buying information by the bit, what can we do to enhance the value and the magnitude of the bits that we have to make available to them.

William Allman, U.S. News On Line—I think a big thing that's missing is the recognition that all of us produce a product right now which will change profoundly when the superhighway comes up. A role defined by the technology we produce it in. We produce a magazine. Someone else might produce video. But superhighway is multimedia. And so the challenge is you're going to have to have video with your print, and print with your video, and interactivity. All the characteristics of the superhighway are going to radically change what all of us do in this room now, because of its interactivity, because of its control factor and the impact on commercial [life], because of the fact that you're going to have to produce a variety of material that you don't already have now in some ways.

That middle ground is taking the packages that we produce now. And that package is really going to change. And that's something we all should think about because that's really the next future. The next two or three years is what everyone is going to have to deal with. ■

The conference then split into five groups to discuss plans of action. Katherine Fulton analyzes their ideas in an article starting on the next page.

Basic Conclusions and a Plan of Action

*A Summary of the Findings of Five Working Groups
That Met at End of Sessions*

BY KATHERINE FULTON



When Professor Jay Rosen pushed his microphone button on Saturday morning, he put his finger on the problem. "Since this conference is titled

Toward a New Journalists' Agenda," the New York University teacher said, then "one of the things we should try to settle on is what is a journalists' agenda? The title is slightly ironic since it suggests that there was an old agenda. I'm not aware of one. And the whole idea that there is a publicly compelling agenda that would be of interest, not just to journalists, but would also be salable to wider audiences, is a unique proposition."

Just how unusual had become clear by the end of the Nieman Foundation conference. Participants struggled to state the stakes for public-interest journalism in the changing communications landscape. Many good ideas surfaced about what individual journalists and journalistic organizations can do—and we looked at some of the most interesting new interactive multimedia work.

But, for me, the clear imperative that emerged was the need to identify common interests and to coordinate collective action—to keep trying to create a journalists' agenda. It was fascinating to watch how this notion played out in a room full of very smart people steeped in traditional journalistic values of independence and competition.

The very first question during the open discussion session came from Ed Foulhy, the television journalist who now runs the Pew Center for Civic Journalism. He was worried, given what he had learned the previous day about

federal legislation on the national information infrastructure. "Is there any way for people like us to have any influence so that the public-interest journalism is guarded in that?" he asked.

Bill Kovach, Nieman curator and one of the people most concerned about the impact of journalism on democracy, answered, "I think that's a good question. I don't have the answer."

Round and round the room, an idea here, some information there. But it soon became clear: Here sat some of the most informed people in the nation, many of the most distinguished leaders of the profession of journalism, and they hadn't much of a clue about the legislation now moving through Congress that would reshape the 1934 Communications Act and shape communications in the 21st Century.

The problem goes beyond skimpy press coverage of the broader social and political issues involved in the transformation of telecommunications. The admirable press values of independence and competition have, in this instance, created a blind spot and prevented leaders on the editorial side of the industry from getting involved in an historic debate.

Denise Caruso, Publisher and Editorial Director of the newsletter *Technology & Media* and a specialist in new



Katherine Fulton: collective action is clear imperative

media, ticked off the federal policy issues under discussion: "Universal access, open access to vendors and to people. Privacy, security, intellectual property and actual applications and how the network gets snapped together." All of them, arguably, vital to the future of public-interest journalism. So she issued her challenge: independence "won't serve us if we don't get involved in this discussion."

Later, Jay Rosen told me of the image that popped into his mind after he listened to this exchange: A journalist is sleeping in a house that's on fire. Someone sounds the alarm, pleading with

the journalist to help fight the fire. The journalist answers, "I can't. I'm covering it."

For anyone who wants to rethink such assumptions and seize the opportunities of this moment in history, the Nieman conference provided a feast of ideas and a sense of urgency about tackling them, as the transcripts excerpted in this issue of Nieman Reports ought to make clear.

"Journalists need to get more sophisticated electronic news launched before conglomerates get into the news business," one participant commented on the conference evaluation form. "Can you imagine *The Microsoft Gazette*?"

Where To Start

One of the Saturday working groups stated that the challenge facing journalism is the need to build a "culture of awareness in every newsroom." Every news organization of any size needs to understand the technological shift, cover the changes thoroughly, have the new tools at its disposal and experiment with them aggressively.

Specific Suggestions

- Journalistic leaders need to speak out about the stakes for public-interest journalism in this historic transition, both inside and outside their newsrooms, working especially hard to build a shared vision within news organizations. But that means that leaders themselves must make the time to reflect on the issues and to get over their ignorance of technology. Victor Navasky, editor of *The Nation*, drew some painful laughs when he said, "My own project would be to start an intern project for people 60 and over, where we could be trained to use the new technology."
- Indeed, several speakers argued that newsrooms must invest much more heavily in training as well as equipment. Professor Tom Johnson of San Francisco State University said newsrooms need a technology trainer for

every 75-100 people, and explained how computer-assisted reporting is the analytical work that will distinguish journalism in the new media environment. John Markoff, who covers the Silicon Valley for *The New York Times*, gave an eye-opening tour of what the personal computer can do that no newsroom mainframe can manage, and reminded journalists that information-intensive businesses like those he covers put \$100,000 of equipment routinely on a white-collar professional's desk.

- Access to technological tools, and the understanding of how to use them, will make it possible for journalists to become more entrepreneurial and creative. This means the obvious—trying to figure out new ways to package more useful information and new ways to make more information accessible to the public. But it also means learning to think about the job of the journalist in completely new ways—understanding, as artist Allee Willis put it, that inventing the automobile did not mean putting wheels on a horse. If journalists don't do this experimenting, the speakers kept warning, people without journalistic values will. At the same time, one participant wrote this reminder on the conference evaluation form: "Journalists really need to remember that the new technology is simply a tool. It will only be as good as we are. It certainly won't solve the problems of bad journalism."
- Finally, conference attendees seemed to understand the necessity of covering technological issues more thoroughly and in more depth. "I do think the coverage of the broader political and cultural impacts of what we're talking about here are virtually unknown to the general public," said Matt Storin, Editor of *The Boston Globe*.

These various suggestions seem to me unassailable—and no one voiced any opposition to them. Yet no one could say definitively, of course, how much or how little is actually being done along these lines in the nation's newsrooms. The sense of the conference was: Not yet enough. Not nearly enough. And not quickly enough. At the same time, there were signs of hope and progress. Len Downie, Executive Editor of *The Washington Post*, reported on how his newsroom has just been equipped with personal computers instead of a new mainframe computer—because a few reporters and editors took control. "And in the end," Downie said, "the people responsible for technology elsewhere in the corporation said, 'Thank you. We thought you were really stupid all these years. And that we had to serve you in this stupid environment. And the fact that you really wanted this, we didn't know.'"

Starting From Ignorance

Downie's remark echoes for me still. "We didn't know." Downie himself didn't know, until his staff educated him. His bosses didn't know until the journalists spoke up.

As I think back on the Nieman conference and the ideas it generated, I'm struck most of all by what journalists collectively don't know and don't yet have a plan to learn.

Our ignorance about the major regulatory debate—about who our allies are, and what the key issues are—is just the start.

We don't know how independent journalism will be differentiated from propaganda and paid advertising in the emerging on-line marketplace. Or how serious, probing journalism will be paid for as the current mass advertising system shifts dramatically. Or how to ensure that public-interest journalists and public officials will sometimes be heard in the rising din.

We don't know—and aren't trying hard enough to find out—how the new technologies will transform the relationships between journalists and citizens, and between citizens and their political system.

In this time of proliferating media experiments, we don't know enough about who's doing what and what they're learning.

We still don't know what the stakes are. As one participant wrote, "Collectively, a single action isn't clear—what's needed is more work to define what the issues and impacts are so that we can take action. We can't act before we know better what we're struggling for. We need a vision of what would be best for journalism in the new media age. We don't have it yet."

But who's going to try to figure out what's best? Among the major journalistic think tanks, who's going to do what? How can we ensure that precious resources aren't wasted on overlapping projects? The answer is, we don't know.

Bill Gates may not know exactly what he's going to do, either. But if *The New Yorker* is to be believed, "Microsoft has two billion dollars in cash, and no debt."

An Agenda to Create An Agenda

What have we got? How can public-interest journalists, and journalistic enterprises interested in the public interest, be more than the sum of our parts, instead of less? How can we come up with a "publicly compelling agenda?"

One idea on this score originated at the conference. Bill Kovach told participants at the final session, "One of the things we have to do is to begin to coordinate our work, to talk among ourselves and try to find some kind of a logical, rational, sensible division of labors." By the time the conference ended, Kovach had begun to connect the people who might call together major journalism organizations, think tanks and funders for a summit meeting to discuss some of the suggestions conference participants made.

At such a meeting, the Nieman Foundation, which exists "to elevate the standards of journalism," might agree to conduct studies and hold conferences on ethical concerns, or on the value journalism adds to a democracy, or on new economic models to support public interest journalism.

The American Society of Newspaper Editors Committee on New Media and Values might take on the job of researching the current legislative and regulatory debates, to determine how the new laws might affect the First Amendment and the practice of journalism. What better place to wrestle with the potential conflicts of interest between covering those battles and participating in them?

Someone else might volunteer to set up a major searchable database and on-line bulletin board discussion group on new media experiments. That way people all across the country won't have to reinvent the wheel or spend their time trying to keep up with all the small, scattered on-line forums that already exist. Creative people are making new discoveries every day—and we need to make it easier for them to share them.

Yet another group, or combination of groups, might work on a research agenda—to determine what original research needs to be done, and what is being done or planned by universities, journalism schools, journalism organizations and businesses involved in telecommunications. Then, the group would figure out what the holes are, how to get them filled and how to get the key results summarized and into the hands of the already swamped people making decisions.

Together, the summit participants might make a plan for how to continue the most meaningful conversations about the technological transformation—inside newsrooms, inside the journalistic profession and in the society as a whole. Who will hold what conferences, and when? How can they be publicized and designed to include an ever-widening circle of participants?

These, then, are some of the challenges before us—and some of the reasons there has never been a more compelling and exciting time to be a journalist.

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Conferees' reflection is inverted in water glass.

Gene Roberts On the Future

In a speech at a symposium at San Francisco State University April 23, Eugene Roberts, who will become Managing Editor of *The New York Times* in the fall, noted that it was fashionable to predict that newspapers are doomed in the age of computers.

"A more likely prognosis," he said, "is suicide."

"We sabotage our newspapers by giving them a corporate look and feel, rather than letting them be as individualist as the communities they serve... We starve our newsrooms with meager budgets that drain away the vitality we need to attract and hold readers. We undermine our ability to respond to the infinite unpredictability of the news."

As Executive Editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Roberts led that paper to 17 Pulitzer Prizes. He is a 1962 Nieman Fellow.

News Junkie Interviews Himself on Ethics

BY JOHN SEIGENTHALER

Aging editors with high blood pressure, low sperm counts, gray in their hair and time on their hands tend, in retirement, to get hooked on the news of the day. We always were journalism junkies, second-guessing ourselves before the first edition rolled and third-guessing ourselves after the final edition was on the streets.

But the over-the-hill-post-maturity-pre-senility news addiction is something different. We aren't on hard drugs, and aren't just popping aspirin. We are somewhere between the heat of passion and the chill of impotency when it comes to reacting to the content of the news, the play of news, or the ethics of how journalists work.

It is a confusing habit, maybe like getting a fix on methadone. A permanent semi-high, without the sheer joy of the editor's kick or the chronic complaint, the reader's kick. In an effort to try to understand the nature of the addiction I conducted the following self-interview:

Q.—Now that you are no longer a working editor, do you think you read and look at news more like an average reader, like Joe and Jane Six Pack?

A.—No. I've still got the daily habit and have to have several fixes a day. But I am not as intense a critic as when I was a questioning journalist. Neither am I as passive a critic as a doubting non-journalist.

Q.—Some of your former editor-peers now think that Joe and Jane Six Pack are going cold turkey on the news because they are convinced that journalists have no ethics. Do you agree?

A.—I certainly agree that many readers and viewers of the news believe that.

It isn't so. Journalists I know have a high sense of ethics.

Q.—You know that some editors want a strongly worded new written code of ethical conduct. Do you think it is needed?

A.—I don't. The problem is not that journalists don't have ethical standards. The problem is that they don't let the public know how highly they value ethics. Or what ethics means to a reporter or editor.

Q.—So what would you propose instead of a new code of conduct?

A.—There are five points every journalist worth his or her by-line believes in: First, serve your readers as the First Amendment gives you the right. Second, be fair. Third, be accurate. Fourth, correct errors. Finally, avoid any conflict or potential conflict of interest.

Q.—I suppose you did a good job of explaining your five points to your readers when you were a reporter and editor.

A.—I did a lousy job. Most editors do a lousy job. When I did get around to explaining the newspaper's ethics, it was usually when I was on the defensive, when the paper was under attack.

Q.—So explaining journalistic ethics to readers has come to you too late to do anything about it—after you are no longer an editor?

A.—With a receding hairline and spreading bald spot comes humility and wisdom. I hope not too late.

Q.—Your five points don't even touch on sticky subjects like confidential sources.

A.—That's because they are sticky. Different newspapers and television outlets have different rules to deal with sticky subjects. Some newspapers, for

instance, won't allow a reporter to grant a confidential relationship to a source without the approval of the newspaper's management. Some news organizations won't rely on any confidential source. Some will allow needless reliance on confidential sources anytime. Some have a two-source rule. Others hold that a single, proven, reliable source is adequate. Some editors have burned their confidential sources after a reporter granted confidentiality.

Q.—How can you solve a dilemma like that?



John Seigenthaler, a 1959 Nieman Fellow, is chair and founder of The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University and Chair Emeritus of The Tennessean in Nashville, where he worked for 43 years. He was founding editorial director of USA Today and worked for ten years in that post before his retirement from both The Tennessean and USA Today in January 1992.

A.—I think fairness and accuracy, taken seriously, will cover it.

Q.—Why do people—the news-reading-and-viewing public—have a better feeling about the ethics of other professionals—doctors, lawyers, even accountants—than they do about journalists?

A.—I can explain it to my own satisfaction, but perhaps not the public's satisfaction. Doctors treat patients and try to cure their ills. If they maltreat the patient, physically, emotionally or financially, they may violate their code of conduct. Lawyers and accountants have clients. If they fail to properly represent clients or rip them off they may violate their code.

Q.—And journalists?

A.—Journalists have a duty to readers—not to cure them or represent them, but to inform them; to tell them what is going on in the community, the nation, the world. They must often be aggressive, assertive, even manipulative in order to inform their readers. If a story is controversial, or investigative, or tragic, or personal, some readers may think it unethical to publish it. The truth is that the journalist who informs serves the reader—and his or her own sense of ethics—in the same way as the doctor who cures. Or the lawyer who represents.

Q.—Let me follow up on that. Polls show that the public doesn't want all this personal and political stuff that appears in the media.

A.—Polls show that many—and at times a majority—don't want it. But the journalist has an ethical duty to serve all readers and viewers. Sure, I read a good deal more of it now than I need. Some of the tabloid-excreted news that filters into journalism's mainstream gets there because editors are unwilling to function as filters and keep out the junk. And sometimes editors don't draw a line between gossip and news. So the reader has to take over the function of editor and filter out the junk. That, of course, will diminish the role of the editor.

Q.—But wouldn't it be a mistake to leave it out?

A.—It sometimes is a mistake to put it in.

Q.—You said a moment ago that editors have a responsibility to give readers what they need. That comes close to sounding as if you think editors should give readers what they want.

Q.—I said need. And I meant need. If they need it, or find it informative, enlightening, educational or entertaining, great. But editors do have a duty to constantly evaluate the changing needs of readers.

Q.—What do you mean, changing needs?

A.—For most of my life as a journalist our most faithful and dedicated readers were women who were homemakers. They were in the household and the paper was their all-day companion. Now their daughters are in the workplace during the day and at home at night. They have different news needs—wants, if you will—that the news media now must serve. Many readers don't have as much time to read today. Lifestyles change and the needs of readers sometimes change with them. News professionals can't ignore those needs. Another point—for years newspapers virtually ignored life in inner cities. Readers needed the information. We didn't provide it. In some cases that is changing. It needs to change more.

Q.—Some of that sounds as if you are a refugee from USA Today.

A.—Only because I am. It is a newspaper designed to be different. A couple of million people buy it many days. Obviously it meets their needs. That doesn't mean every damn-fool local newspaper editor should carbon-copy it.

Q.—Can you get all the news you need from it?

A.—Many people obviously can. Many people get all they need from TV. But a news junkie can't. I can't get all the news I need from The Wall Street Journal. Or The New York Times. Or USA Today. Or my local paper, The Tennessean. But I'm an addict.

Q.—Have your news interests become more discriminating since you quit work as a journalist?

A.—I don't think so. I notice that when it comes to national and international news I am extremely interested in every major story, ranging from the

new waves of ethnic cleansing, to the South African elections, to the Haiti protests over administration policy, to Whitewater, to the Bobbitt trials, to Tonya Harding...

Q.—Can you seriously mention ethnic cleansing and Tonya Harding in the same sentence?

A.—Not when you load the question with that blast of moral buckshot. I didn't say that ethnic cleansing is the moral equivalent of a smash on a rival skater's leg. I am interested in both, however, and I think readers and viewers are. And I think editors are right to be.

Q.—One more question about ethics. As you read the paper do you find a merger between the business interests and editorial interests?

A.—I notice it more in television than in the papers. The competitive drive for ratings among the networks sometimes is so obvious that it pains me to watch it. As for newspapers, there is no doubt that in the economy of the last three years the advertisers have exerted more influence. Advertorials are reality. But there are lines drawn that make their use acceptable. Journalists have to protect the lines. As the economy eases, it may take off some of the pressure. But editors can't take that for granted.

A.—Let's wrap this up. What bothers you about the news industry today? Any real concerns?

A.—Well, I still get irritated when I see typos, obvious errors, bad leads, leads in the seventh paragraph, and wrong captions. I recently saw a column on President Hoover and the depression with a head shot of J. Edgar Hoover. Had I been editing that paper I probably would have spoiled some makeup editor's family breakfast. But now I shake my head and move on to the next page.

Q.—Those are common gripes that are always going to occur. I asked for real concerns. Are there any?

A.—A couple. It seems to me that newspapers are surrendering their role as the news agenda-setters in too many situations. The Bobbitt trials and the Tonya Harding story are a couple of

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Revise and Boil Down Declaration of Ethics

BY CLARENCE PENNINGTON

Like most written efforts, The APME Declaration of Ethics needs editing. Because of its length, there is too much room for preaching when simple declaring would have sufficed. As an editor and journalist, I need to be reminded of my obligation to be responsible, credible, independent, fair and respectful. I do not need a course in Ethics 101 to tell me how.

The editors need editing. My editing reduced their 3,000-word code to about 800, and it needs work.

One might question the motives of those who criticize The Declaration of Ethics. Why not just remain silent and let those who like it, use it? That sounds like a reasonable position, but the declaration is offered as a national standard. That means all of us will have to defend it to our readers, sources and associates, and in court.

All journalists owe David Hawpe of The Louisville Courier-Journal and his APME Ethics Committee a long and sympathetic look at the proposed declaration. We also owe them our best scholarly comments on improving it.

I, for one, must say it is so long and equivocal that its salient points become fuzzy and its commitments imprecise. Large news organizations need more definitive declarations than small ones, but the declaration need not address, define or justify every journalistic fad, innovation or indiscretion of the past 100 years of American journalism.

It would be best to leave the judgment calls to editors whose job it is to make those decisions and to train or instruct their staffs in the many variations and nuances of responsible, responsive journalism; then readers and our detractors could not accuse us of

having so many exceptions and options in our Declaration of Ethics that any scoundrel could find refuge in it.

Lawyers must not dictate to newsrooms, but neither should they be ignored. Attorneys do not like commitments in writing, because they have to defend them before judges and juries. My attorney, David Marburger, advised me against using my own one-page code. I asked him if he could approve a code that said, "Do no harm."

"Too long," he said, "your duty requires you to do harm to murderers, crooks and other wrongdoers." I did get him to approve a declaration stating in its entirety, "Be fair."

Nevertheless, I agree that we cannot fear legal action so much that we fail to establish a moral ground and an ethical foundation for ourselves, our associates, our sources and our readers.

Newspapers and editors may compose masterful journalism ethics codes, but they will not succeed until individual journalists become enthusiastic participants. As always, we must earn readers' trust one journalist at a time.

Both veteran and youthful journalists first do a personal "gut check" when facing an ethics hazard. Some journalists don't know their organization's standards, others have forgotten them and a few don't care. We must devise a declaration of ethics that most journalists can grace with their signature, and the public can accept as practical and useful. The APME declaration fails on both counts. Journalists in several areas of the country already have rejected the declaration, including 86 percent of those surveyed in Ohio.

In a nutshell, my major concerns about the declaration, in no particular

order of importance, are the following:

1. There are so many modifiers and qualifiers used that readers, sources, staff and lawyers could accuse us of lack of commitment or unwillingness to be precise.
2. Long, involved descriptions of ethical positions give opposing lawyers ammunition with which to ridicule and make us appear insincere and even foolish. I know that wasn't intended, but it is too prescriptive.
3. When APME sends a declaration to member newspapers to use as a guide for their own ethics code, it will not be used if lawyers for members advise against it and demonstrate its weakness. We must be able to counter that there is always some risk in written declarations but the content of the more precise, "approved" declaration is not excessively risky and the advantages of this code outweigh the danger. We would not be able to do so with the declaration in its present form. It needs shortening and a drastic rewriting.

The declaration can be an important document in the practice of journalism. Associated Press Managing Editors officers should table an up-or-down vote on it for one year while it gets the attention it deserves. ■

Clarence Pennington is editor and publisher of The Review Times in Fostoria, Ohio.

Hit-and-Run Journalism

*A Basic Premise Now Seems to Rule the Media—
People Are Guilty Until Proven Innocent*

BY JEROME BERGER

Faced with heavier traffic on the information superhighway, once-cautious journalists have shed the basic concepts of the craft that called for careful confirmation of facts in exchange for the rush to print or to get on the air. This new journalism is leaving a path strewn with wreckage that grows longer by the week. No one, from entertainer to athlete to politician, is immune from a new basic premise of the media—in today's America, people are guilty until proven innocent.

The list of victims in the last year alone encompasses athletes as diverse as Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan; entertainers such as Michael Jackson, and political figures such as Bill and Hillary Rodham Clinton and Vincent Foster.

The latest—and perhaps toughest example—surrounds O. J. Simpson, football hero and television commentator, now accused of murdering his former wife and her friend. The once-confidential process of investigating a crime was played out in the harsh glare of klieg lights that included the obligatory stakeout at the gates of his palatial Brentwood, California, home. Simpson's bizarre flight from arrest was deemed newsworthy enough that NBC pre-empted large segments of the fifth game of the National Basketball Association finals with virtually no squawks of protest from fans for coverage that amounted to little more than helicopter shots of a car driving down a Los Angeles freeway before parking outside a door. Even the much-respected National Public Radio carried a report that said Simpson had "eluded" the press when going to his former wife's funeral—as if he had a duty to talk to the

media before leaving for the services.

And despite the nearly universal claims of respect and admiration for Simpson, reporters and anchors eagerly accepted the one-sided flow of leaks from the Los Angeles Police Department that served to raise doubts about Simpson's story well before he was formally charged. The closest thing to sympathy they could muster was questioning whether a jury would ever agree to sentence the man to death. All this before his formal arraignment!

While the story justifiably captured the attention of the media and the public, there is no wonder that a letter written by Simpson and made public during his flight and widely characterized as a suicide note should declare that "no matter what the outcome, people will look and point."

The common thread in all these cases

is finding the principals guilty of sins, real or imagined, in the court of journalistic opinion. Some, like Harding and Simpson, eventually find their way to the real courtroom. Others are left with a reputation in tatters, still others aren't able to defend themselves at all.

Unless the media take steps to rein in the excesses, the result could be the same facing any hit-and-run driver: being found guilty by a jury and being forced to give up their freedom.

The unhappy phenomenon stretches from the White House to Town Hall and every time the scenario is the same. A politician or activist, aggrieved by a policy or personality dispute, "drops a dime" on his or her opponent by offering on the phone not-for attribution tips with little or no substance. The reporter, eager for a scoop to advance personal or professional agenda, rushes



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into print or on the air, often with only a perfunctory check of the facts. Protected by the Supreme Court and wary of losing an exclusive, the reporter opts to place the burden of proof on the accused.

The skillful manipulation of reporters is abetted by an important truth. The one thing reporters are most loath to stomach is being beaten to a story by a colleague, even if the work is of questionable value. The American Spectator was among the most recent to skillfully play on the phenomenon, using advance copies to boost visibility of its own questionable story about President Clinton's alleged Arkansas dalliances—which in turn prompted CNN and The Los Angeles Times to rush to release their own versions of the story before a final check might have discovered the gaping holes.

The roots of the bitter "gotcha" mentality were sown at the start of the television era by Richard M. Nixon. From his first attacks on Helen Gahagan Douglas as "The Pink Lady" in the 1950 U.S. Senate race or his savvy use of images in the legendary "Checkers" speech to counteract the charges leveled at him, Nixon was a master at creating a take-no-prisoners climate. He was helped along immeasurably by Tony Schwartz's 1964 "Daisy" commercial for Lyndon Johnson—where the image of a little girl counting daisy petals was slowly replaced by that of an atomic bomb explosion—that left Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign in a radioactive heap. Add the refinements of Nixon's 1968 campaign, the venomous Watergate era and birth of interest-group attack ads in the 1980 Senate races and the scene was complete.

But it was not until 1987—when the press took Democrat Gary Hart up on his challenge to "follow me around" and discovered he had an affinity for Monkey Business—that the relationship turned personal. The once unaskable question—"have you ever committed adultery"—was posed by a Washington Post reporter and the race was on. No longer would any segment of a public person's life be closed to media scrutiny. And no longer would reporters be scrupulous in pinning a story down

cold before using it. The Miami Herald's failure to cover the back door of Hart's Washington townhouse remains as an "OOPS" footnote to the demise of a political candidate.

Today, the Hart Affair is the good old days. Although a jury acquitted William Kennedy Smith of rape in Palm Beach, Florida, the court of public opinion has been harder to convince, especially in the case of his uncle, Senator Edward M. Kennedy. And while the standards of evidence were not quite the same, the Senate's decision to confirm Clarence Thomas as a Supreme Court justice was as divided as public sentiment. Partisans will forever argue about the confirmation cases of Robert Bork and John Tower but on one point, all can agree; reporters virtually tripped over each other in search of the nastiest morsel, usually offered on a "background" basis by the target's foes.

So it was almost inevitable that in 1992 Jennifer Flowers would burst on the public conscience in the pages of The Star, the supermarket tabloid long known to prefer three-headed alien stories to political news. Recalling the hand wringing that followed the 1988 campaign, mainstream newspapers and the television networks strained, for at least a day, to avoid wallowing in the muck. Eventually they printed the story for which The Star paid good money. To keep pace in today's information glut, anything goes. The tabloids are no longer the cousin you don't talk about. They are an equal player at the table.

The influence actually is subtle—the desire for a quick hit, even if it means going with a single source or with uncorroborated stories; the accent on personal foibles, always harder to prove than black-and-white misdeeds. The outcome usually is devoid of subtlety.

Increasingly, the exposés offered as fact amid screaming headlines and hard-charging video are the carefully packaged products of attorneys, handlers and assorted public relations professionals. The principals are virtually never available for direct questioning, lest they commit the unpardonable sin of "stepping on the message." Perhaps even more ominous are the words of attorney Eric Naiburg, who defended Amy

Fisher, the Long Island Lolita, whose tawdry romance with a married man captivated the newspapers and became fodder for three made-for-television docudramas.

"The truth is between me and my client," Naiburg told a conference of journalism educators last summer. "If I give you deliberate misinformation on behalf of a client and you print it, that's your problem."

The pressure is heightened by the increased use of radio and television talk shows, billed as the new "Electronic Town Halls," but in reality a closed circle of disaffected Americans ready, willing and able to believe anything bad about elected officials. A 1993 survey of talk show hosts that I conducted found audiences are firm in their belief that the media suffers from a liberal bias, a conviction played to by conservative hosts. That's accomplished by a careful rationing of facts under the guise of news, although more than one-third of the hosts considered themselves "personalities" and only one-fifth characterized themselves as "journalists."

Compounding the perception problem is the relative lack of knowledge among reporters about basic legal terms—or a bald-faced willingness to corrupt the meaning in pursuit of a story. Take for example a March 20, 1994 Boston Herald story that offered "five favorite excuses" for politicians and other public figures to fall back on when problems mount. Number One on this list is "A subpoena is not a conviction," followed by "I thought a person was always considered innocent until proven guilty in this great country of ours."

The Washington-based reporter who wrote the article defined the latter as "an all-purpose excuse to be used when all else fails. But this last-resort defense tends to have a short shelf life—just ask Tonya Harding." It defines the distinction between a subpoena and a conviction as an "old saw."

In effect, the lying lawyer and reporter who shuns legal niceties combine to demean both the legal process and the reporting profession, a state of affairs that has helped to place both reporters and lawyers near the bottom

of the list of trusted occupations.

Which brings us to the variety of stories sprouting up under the Whitewater rubric, a package that, so far, shares one common theme—no solid evidence. It, like the "Travelgate," "Haircutgate" and "Nannygate" stories before it, has been advanced by a trinity of conservative muckrakers eager to repay the slings and arrows launched by Democrats during 12 years of GOP rule. They are The Wall Street Journal editorial page, which pioneered the "reported editorial" and whose editor, Robert Bartley, once told a new hire that "the ideology finds the news;" The American Spectator, which produces reports sorely lacking in basic journalism principles such as multiple sources, and The Washington Times, which has frequently lent itself to whisper campaigns of dubious veracity. But the more mainstream media has hardly acquitted itself with honor.

Start with the sad case of Vincent Foster, friend, business associate of the Clintons and deputy White House counsel, who found himself overwhelmed by the play-for-keeps ethos of official Washington. Foster's suicide note lamented that in Washington "ruining people is considered sport," while charging "the WSJ editors lie without consequence."

Within days of his death, ruled a suicide by the National Park Police, stories began appearing with the underlying Watergate question about the President's knowledge. Conspiracy theorists—in the pages of The Washington Times and the Rupert Murdoch-owned New York Post—reveled in the opportunity to question where and by whose hand Foster actually died and it fell to ABC, rather than the tabloids, to run an autopsy picture showing powder burns on Foster's hand.

The allegations naturally created the same type of climate that Foster lamented and within weeks Clinton bowed to the inevitable and agreed to the hiring of a special prosecutor to review the Whitewater and Foster cases. That probe would later branch out into the Clinton's financial records of the late 1970's and the exceedingly sloppy damage control efforts launched by the

administration.

The death relit the fire under a story that had been pursued with little success since the 1992 campaign. Were the Clintons guilty of financial hanky-panky in an Arkansas land deal with a savings and loan operator? Extensive reporting by The New York Times, among others, failed to turn up anything dramatically different from the accounting offered by the candidate.

But the campaign took on new life late in 1993 by latching on to a classic piece of attack journalism—allegations by two Arkansas state troopers that they helped Clinton hide sexual dalliances not only as governor, but even as President-elect. The story, given widest play in the conservative Spectator, also caught the fancy of CNN and The Los Angeles Times, who were left with egg on their faces when the troopers' credibility evaporated within a week, time that could have been used to try to verify the allegations. And the first clue about the quality of the story should have come from the ultimate source, long-time Clinton foe Cliff Jackson, who successfully scuffed up his arch rival during the campaign by revealing a letter that showed Clinton's efforts to avoid service in Vietnam.

But a closer look at Jackson's motivation should have sounded alarm bells. "Sick, bitter, obsessive, depressive—harsh words coming from Arkansas folks including some of Jackson's best friends," according to a January Washington Post profile.

That it did not stop The Spectator is hardly surprising. Writer David Brock has become the right's road warrior, taking on targets of conservative wrath with a vengeance, labeling Anita Hill a woman scorned. His magazine piece is a poorly sourced, barely researched jeremiad—no check of hotel and telephone records—relying on two men with grudges against Clinton and two others who shunned speaking on the record. Little wonder their credibility dissolved almost immediately upon review.

Of greater concern are the December 21, 1993 Los Angeles Times story and a March 18, 1994 New York Times piece that combed the decade-old records of Hillary Rodham Clinton's

forays into the commodity trading markets. Both reflect another unfortunate trend in hit-and-run journalism, the unwillingness to admit a story did not pan out. Instead, whether in a move to justify the time and expense or to prove its resolve against political pressure, more and more news outlets are following through with the equivalent of a "when did you stop beating your wife?" story. They also reveal an arrogant belief that local news outlets are incapable of conducting worthwhile journalistic investigation.

The only evidence The Los Angeles Times could develop in the vast verbiage of its December 21, 1993 "Troopergate" exposé was "numerous calls by Clinton" to the woman he was accused of seeing in his hotel rooms and back seats. One of the alleged sexual partners in the charges against Clinton told the newspaper "it is infuriating to me that someone is obviously being paid a lot of money to tell you a lie."

But that amounts to solid evidence compared to The New York Times article, which found Mrs. Clinton had turned a \$1,000 investment into a \$100,000 profit. It contained a series of innuendoes and suggestions of improper business relationships between the Clintons and friends who held prominent positions in the Arkansas business community. Perhaps one of the longest stretches was the implication that the only reason the governor of a small state catered to the business needs of the state's largest employers was because of the trading relationship the company's legal counsel had with Clinton's wife.

While never directly accusing Clinton of gubernatorial improprieties, the story repeatedly refers to the family's financial gains stemming in part from their relationship with "one of the state's most powerful and heavily regulated companies," a firm which "benefited from a variety of state actions." Noting "the ties between Mr. Clinton and [Tyson Foods Inc. attorney James B.] Blair's client remained strong as well," the story never produced a solid example of criminal conduct or even unwarranted favoritism directed to a major employer.

It was left to Mrs. Clinton to leave the press corps with some words to ponder. Her appearance before a ravenous press corps was the single best White House effort in an otherwise inept defense. There she lamented the politics of "personal destruction" and the fact that no public figure has the right to a "zone of privacy."

"I can't really help it if some people get up every day wanting to destroy instead of build, or wanting to undermine. That's something that I try not to think about or dwell on and try to do what I'm expected to do," she told reporters.

Reporters are far more adept at resolving their own reputation problems and far less scrupulous in pinning down alleged ethical improprieties among their own. Take the strange case of a U.S. District Court Judge Kimba Wood contradicting a front-page New York Times story in which an anonymous source had mouthed the Clinton Administration's handling of her failed attorney general nomination. The source—who claimed to be "involved with her White House discussions and said she had authorized him to represent her"—turned out to be her husband, Time magazine's chief political correspondent, Michael Kramer.

With the exception of Washington Post media reporter Howard Kurtz—who exposed the unseemly decision of a reporter to use another medium to launch an anonymous assault on an individual—the story barely registered on the media's ethical radar screen. "Michael was caught in a conflict...of being the husband of a nominee and a political columnist for this magazine," Time Managing Editor Jim Gaines told The Post. "He was trying to protect his wife, as anybody would do."

The method he chose was trying to force the administration to release the news of Wood's falling victim to "Nannygate" before the network's evening newscasts, a move that would have spoiled the administration's own efforts at news management, which sought public focus on family leave legislation. Comparing his family's non-payment of Social Security taxes to Zoe Baird's hiring of an illegal alien as her

child's nanny, Kramer anonymously chided the White House by saying "If you can't make the distinction between somebody who did something wrong and somebody who didn't, what good is the moral authority of a president?"

The same question could well be applied to the media as it lurches from "crisis" to "crisis" with minimal proof. According to a February 3, 1994 Times-Mirror Center for The People & The Press survey, it is a question that has not been lost on a broad segment of the public. While very few people followed the somewhat bizarre withdrawal of Bobby Ray Inman as a nominee for defense secretary, fully 59 percent said press coverage of the personal lives and ethical behavior of political leaders is excessive. A similar percentage labeled the press fairly responsible while an uncomfortably large 29 percent believe the press was not responsible in its coverage.

These statistics provide cold comfort as the media wait to find out if their verdicts pan out. After all, the media were eventually proven correct after its saturation coverage of Tonya Harding, and the possibility exists that many of the other tales of misdeeds will be borne out. Few people accused of wrongdoing spill their emotional guts to the media. But the healthy skepticism that reporters must bring to their task does not mean they must accept half-truths and self-serving allegations with the reverence given to the tips offered by Deep Throat. Rather we must remember that those offerings did not see print until corroborated by at least two other sources.

Until then, maybe we should adapt the solemn words used to open each episode of the *Dagnet* television series: "The story you are about to see is true. The names have been changed to protect the innocent." Perhaps it's time for a new disclaimer: "The story you are about to read could be true. We don't know who's innocent, but the story was too good to pass up." ■

News Junkie

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examples. It seemed to me that on many days, when TV was running the Lorena Bobbitt case live, there was no real story that deserved major play. It struck me that editors were saying to themselves, "If television has this story on all day long I can't act as if it isn't important. TV was setting the agenda. I had the same feeling about the Harding story on some days. CBS sent Connie Chung all the way to Portland to stand breathless and live at rinkside to tell us whether Harding fell on her butt that day. She finally got an "exclusive" interview by agreeing not to ask tough questions. I read the papers some days and told myself that CBS was milking the story for ratings. Editors were telling themselves, "if Connie Chung is there live, I can't act as if today's developments aren't important. So, I thought, TV set the agenda on those days. If I am right, that change bothers me.

Q.—For all your second and third guessing, your gripes and real concerns, don't you think the future for the news industry is bright, considering the wonderful opportunities that will be available on the information super highway?

A.—If the method of delivery puts newspapers on a government-regulated superhighway, it will be the greatest ethical challenge print journalists have ever faced. Every time history has given us new technology governments have tried to regulate it—and often have succeeded. The new regulations won't read like the Alien and Sedition Acts. But ultimately they could be that dangerous. By the way, your questioning has gotten softer since you quit reporting.

Q.—Watching Connie Chung live from rinkside will do it. By the way, do you know you are just as opinionated as you ever were as an editor?

A.—Toking the news line will do it to you. ■

A Cartoon, an Apology and an Answer

On June 3 New York Newsday printed a Doug Marlette cartoon critical of the Pope. After a storm of protests the paper ran an apology. Responding, Marlette wrote his answer, which Newsday published June 16. Here are the cartoon, the apology and Marlette's answer.



An Apology

Memo to Readers

On Friday, New York Newsday ran an editorial cartoon in this section, which depicted the pope wearing a button that said "No Women Priests." It bore the caption, "Upon this Rock I will build My Church." While conceived as a critical comment on the recent papal declaration that women can never rise to the priesthood, the cartoon was perceived by many readers to ridicule the pope and the Roman Catholic church. This was not New York Newsday's intention.

An editorial cartoonist's chief tools are symbols and imagery. With them, an artist telegraphs a message—pointed, funny or both. It is unfortunate, and we regret, that many readers were given an unintended message in Friday's cartoon.

An Answer to Newsday Apology

BY DOUG MARLETTE

A cartoon I drew recently lit up our switchboard at Newsday like the night sky over Baghdad during the Persian Gulf War. It showed the Pope wearing a button that said "No Women Priests." There was an arrow pointing to his forehead and the inscription from Matthew 16:18 "Upon this rock I will build My Church."

Some Newsday readers, seething with outrage, bombarded the publisher, the editors and me with complaints. "Sacrilege!" they cried. "Anti-Catholic! I'm canceling my subscription." "You're calling the Pope a rockhead!" protested another. One reader accused me of insulting Polish-Americans as well as the Pope. One lady said it was offensive to Catholicism and the Pope, who, as she explained, "may be our highest ranking priest." Obviously this was not a debate conducted on a lofty Jesuitical

plane. In fact, I have had more sophisticated theological discussions with snake handlers.

A couple of days later I got a call from Newsday's editorial page editor. "It's been a rough weekend and I have some bad news. We're going to run an apology for the cartoon."

"That is bad news!" I said. It is always bad news when a newspaper apologizes for expressing an opinion—bad news for the First Amendment, bad news for journalism and bad news for readers. I am paid to express opinions in an interesting, entertaining and provocative way. Newsday apologizing to our readers for that cartoon is a lot like the New York Knicks apologizing to the state of Indiana for Patrick Ewing's series-winning slam dunk against the Pacers.

"Why?" I inquired.

"It was a mistake to run the drawing," he explained.

"A mistake?" I replied. "How can

expressing an opinion be a mistake?"

Granted, there is something about good cartoons, the powerful, archaic language of images, that gets under the skin of people in a way that written opinion doesn't. I guess that's why we haven't read any apologies for editorials lately. Or apologies for endless stories in *Newsday* about condoms in schools, Joey and Amy's trysts, the state of John Bobbitt's privates, homosexual marriages or many other issues offensive to certain Catholic sensibilities.

"You crossed the line," my editor insisted.

"What line?" I asked.

"It was an offense to Catholics," he answered.

"Which Catholics?" I asked. Catholic friends of mine roared with approval at the cartoon. Priests and nuns laughed out loud at the cartoon when it was described to them at a First Communion ceremony the day before.

Newsday's view of Catholicism, I suggested to my editor, is as narrow and congested as the Long Island Expressway. The Catholic Church I know is big enough and secure enough to laugh at this cartoon. The Catholic Church I know and frankly admire is, as its name suggests, "universal" enough and diverse enough to encompass Catholic opinion as wide-ranging and contradictory as that of Cardinal Spellman and Dorothy Day, Mother Teresa and Father Coughlin, Cardinal O'Connor and Pope John 23d, William F. Buckley and Tennessee Williams.

Unfortunately, *Newsday* editors did not hear from Mother Teresa, Pope John 23d or Tennessee Williams. They heard from furious readers who said such criticism of the Pope is disrespectful. I disagree. I have drawn cartoons on this Pope for years. I have drawn positive cartoons of the Pope, when he was standing courageously toe to toe against Communism's Evil Empire, and I have drawn cartoons critical of him for his positions on population control and women priests. It is not disrespectful to satirize and criticize. On the contrary, satire shows true respect because it takes seriously public figures and the stands they take.

For the record, I like this cartoon. I

am proud of this cartoon. It is funny and it hit the bull's-eye. I do not apologize for drawing it. It is no more anti-Catholic than the cartoons I have drawn criticizing Farrakhan were anti-Muslim or those criticizing Jerry Falwell were anti-Baptist or those criticizing Menachem Begin were antisemitic.

I suspect the reason the howls of protest were so strident was that the cartoon was so on the mark and so...well, Catholic. According to polls over 70 percent of Catholics support the ordination of women. That's certainly more support for women than my own Baptist church can claim. We Baptists, according to polls, view the ordination of women with about as much enthusiasm as the sprinkling of infants. (Of course, Baptists also believe Jesus turned water into Welch's grape juice.) So, my cartoon seems more Catholic to me than Baptist. Although Baptists who number among their faithful President Clinton, Vice President Gore, former *Newsday* publisher Bill Moyers, Jerry Falwell, Jesse Helms and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. can boast almost as lively, conflicted and variegated a religious tradition as the Holy Roman Church.

Historically Baptists believe, though this has been obscured by the antics of some of our more visible and mean-spirited brethren like Falwell and Helms, in the importance of individual conscience, what we call "soul freedom," or the competence of the individual before God. This simple belief placed us from the start at the far end of the Protestant Reformation, along with other religious existentialists like the Quakers and Unitarians. We Baptists affirm the efficacy of individual experience, "the priesthood of all believers" as we call it, turning our backs on institutional authorities and mediators of the Holy, like popes and priests, even editors. It should come as no surprise that it was Baptists in Colonial Virginia, no strangers to persecution, who played a key role in giving this nation its First Amendment.

I have drawn controversial political cartoons professionally for 22 years, first at *The Charlotte Observer* in my home state of North Carolina and then

at *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Drawing opinion in the buckle of the Bible Belt, we got our share of complaints, criticism, petitions urging I be fired, subscription cancellation threats from religious zealots, even death threats. My cartoons were held up on Jim and Tammy Bakker's PTL show and denounced as blasphemous until their televangelism empire was brought crashing down by the confessions of a Long Island woman, Jessica Hahn. Angry viewers would call my newspaper. "You're a tool of Satan," they said. "That's impossible," I replied. "Our personnel department gives tests screening for tools of Satan. Knight-Ridder newspapers have a policy against hiring tools of Satan." They were not amused. Of course, as we have learned this week, religious zealots are not noted for their sense of humor.

One of the cartoons I won the Pulitzer Prize for showed Jerry Falwell, that Pontiff of American right wing Protestantism, as a snake in the PTL Garden of Eden saying "Jim and Tammy were expelled from the garden and left me in charge." Falwell demanded an apology. His supporters called in shouting "blasphemy!" quoting scripture about the immunity to criticism of God's anointed. I explained that I felt the cartoon was scriptural. There is a rich tradition in the New Testament of referring to religious professionals as snakes. Jesus called the Pharisees, sort of the Moral Majority of his time, a "brood of vipers." John the Baptist and the Old Testament prophets were even less "sensitive."

But in all my years of drawing sacrilege and blasphemy, serving as a tool of Satan and squabbling with editors and publishers over some of those cartoons, not once was a public apology issued for a drawing that ran. Until now.

Since moving to New York five years ago I have run into more censorship and timidity about free speech than I ever encountered in my native South. Surprised? I suspect it is because my editors in Charlotte and Atlanta, though by no means perfect, took these matters more seriously. Because they were Southerners they took their religion more seriously. They certainly took the First Amendment more seriously. Be-

cause we Southerners were not raised in a culture suffused with lip service to liberalism and our ideas on race, civil rights, civil liberties were not spoon-fed to us but had to be earned, and for many of us those lessons were costly, our sense of commitment to freedom of expression is less an abstract notion than it seems to be here in the Northeast. Free speech, for us, is not just a liberal whim, a pretty ideal, a cocktail party pronouncement, something we write about in editorials but wuss out on when the heat is on. Perhaps because in the time and place we came up in, during the crucible of the civil rights movement in the South, these ideas lived and breathed and were fought over and acted out in the flesh and blood of our lives. For us, free speech, the right to dissent, freedom of expression, freedom to assemble, the right to vote, these were truly matters of life and death. And their absolute importance to the life and health of a community is not just in our minds now, but in our hearts and in our bones.

Censors no longer come to us in jackboots with torches and clubs and baying dogs and the unbidden knock on the door in the middle of the night. They come to us now in broad daylight, in bow ties and galluses with yellow legal pads and marketing surveys, with focus-group findings and concerns for advertising dollars and bottom lines. They come with degrees from the Columbia School of Journalism and with Pulitzer Prizes to back them up. They are known not for their bravery but for their efficiency. They can only show gallantry when they genuflect and grovel to apologize. They apologize to all Catholics because they believe I offended the Pope. I drew the cartoon because I believe the Pope offended all Catholic women.

In a time when the Church is struggling, attendance is down, financial support is waning, the number of priests entering seminary is dwindling, parochial schools are closing, I expect a certain defensiveness from the faithful. But these readers who hounded Newsday for retractions should be ashamed of themselves. Catholics should know better. Theirs is a faith

which has suffered historically for its right to express its views freely. From the days when the Church was driven into the catacombs and the crucified bodies of the believers were strewn along the Appian Way to more recent times in places like the Soviet Union, Northern Ireland and in El Salvador, where priests and nuns have been murdered for preaching the Gospel to the poor, Catholics have suffered when freedom was suppressed. Even in this country not long ago a Catholic couldn't be elected president. There was even a time when nuns were pelted with rocks in our nation's capital and forced to hide in attics to celebrate liturgies in secret. It should not be forgotten that Catholics and Jews were not allowed into the Massachusetts Bay Colony until Roger Williams opened Providence Plantation to all those persecuted for their beliefs. Of all people, Catholics should understand the importance of the freedom to express unpopular views without apology.

Since Newsday management is mainly a boys club, not famous for its empathy with the concerns and strivings of women, their lackluster support of women priests is not surprising. Their

From the days when the Church was driven into the catacombs and the crucified bodies of the believers were strewn along the Appian Way to more recent times in places like the Soviet Union, Northern Ireland and in El Salvador, where priests and nuns have been murdered for preaching the Gospel to the poor, Catholics have suffered when freedom was suppressed.

theological naiveté and failure to grasp the richness and complexity of the Catholic faith during their terrible ordeal of trial by phone call is understandable. But what I find most disturbing and beyond comprehension was the lack of fealty of professional newspapermen to the First Amendment.

Isn't this why we have a First Amendment in the first place? So that we don't feel the necessity to apologize for our opinions? We don't need constitutional protection to run boring, inoffensive cartoons. We don't need constitutional protection to make money from advertising. We don't need constitutional protection to tell readers exactly what they want to hear. We need constitutional protection for our right to express unpopular views. The point of opinion pages is to focus attention, to stimulate debate and to provoke argument. If we can't discuss the great issues of the day on those pages of our newspapers, fearlessly and without apology, where can we discuss them? In the streets with guns?

The Church has always been slow to move on these human matters. After all, it took them until 1993 to forgive Galileo, who whispered in defiance behind the backs of his inquisitors after he was forced to recant the truth, "But still, it moves."

And the same can be said of the Church. "But still, it moves." So I will make a prediction.

There will come a day when a woman stands at the altar of the Holy Roman Church and with all the Catholic world watching, with her fingers blessed by a bishop, she will fully take her place in the Priesthood of Christ and turn bread and wine into the body and blood of our Blessed Redeemer. And it won't be long from now. It may be after the Pope has passed on. But I will bet that most of the people who called in complaining and the editors who apologized for this drawing, will live to bear witness to that day. In my opinion, the Pope acted with all the authority of his magesterium but in his denial of women their right to the priesthood I do not think he acted as Christ would. But after all, I am a Baptist. And we Baptists believe in the priesthood of all believers. ■

Foreign Policy by Popular Outrage

Deborah Amos, correspondent for ABC's Turning Point, delivered the 13th annual Joe Alex Morris Jr. Memorial Lecture on April 7. She is a 1992 Nieman Fellow. Morris, a 1949 graduate of Harvard, was killed covering the 1979 revolution in Iran while on assignment for The Los Angeles Times. The lectureship was established in his name by his family, his Harvard classmates and friends and his fellow journalists. Following are excerpts from her lecture and from a seminar at the Nieman Foundation.

LECTURE EXCERPTS

I first ran into the phrase "the CNN Curve" in an article in *The New Yorker* last year. It was a long piece about the undercurrents of the Balkan War and the failure of European and American diplomacy. The definition was precise: a torrent of pictures [on Cable News Network] of dismembered or tortured innocents that could create pressure for using whatever it took to halt the violence. Foreign policy by popular moral outrage.

The CNN Curve described what appeared to motivate first Western European governments and then the Bush Administration following the successful end of Desert Storm. That conflict rooted the Iraqis out of Kuwait but it also prompted the Kurds in northern Iraq as well as Iraqi Shiites in the south of the country to revolt against Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi Kurds had been fighting Saddam for years and they had themselves been the victims of a systematic genocide. But for the first time there was a chance for a real revolt. The country was in chaos. At the same time there were plenty of Western television cameras in the region. The Gulf War was over and the story took on a momentum of its own. The first pictures of the Iraqi Army decimating the population in the cities of northern Iraq, the images of thousands of refugees on the march towards the Turkish border, provoked an outcry in Britain. Before long those same pictures were showing up on American television and they were getting the same reaction.

The politics of that uprising was not understood very well by the viewing public, but the pictures were clear enough. A response to that revolt wasn't part of the game plan for the alliance that had shown such remarkable cohesion during Desert Storm. But public reaction was swift and strong, and governments were scrambling to fashion a policy to stop that slaughter and stop the pictures on the evening news.

Operation Provide Comfort was born out of that experience and what we got was a no-fly zone in northern Iraq, a refugee policy, a humanitarian aid policy, and a trip by the then-Secretary of State James Baker. It was a moment when the power of television journalism was at its height. In Britain, at least, government ministers began to complain that they were no longer free to consider a policy, but they were forced to react under the weight of public opinion.

The CNN Curve was still in operation by the time that President George Bush sent U.S. Marines to Somalia. Another torrent of pictures, hungry innocents again, created the pressure to use whatever means it took to halt that misery.

For Washington, it was Somalia that activated the corollary of the CNN Curve. If the first rule of the curve was that torrent of pictures, then policy makers in Washington understood that the second torrent of images was likely to be of body bags containing young soldiers being unloaded in some home port. These images were likely to create a reverse spin and with it, political retribution. The Somali operation was soon to end in failure under the second rule of the CNN Curve.

European governments had already learned the lessons of the CNN Curve and were the first to get out ahead of it. The war in ex-Yugoslavia was their classroom. The European press in France, Germany and England hammered away at government policy that allowed genocide to continue unchecked. Each night the television screens were filled with images of that horror, of refugees fleeing from the worst of ethnic cleansing.

This time no one could say that they didn't know. Television reporters filed with the same passion that had driven them on the mountain tops of northern Iraq. The print reporters filled the newspapers with background reports on the history of the region, analysis and insights. Public opinion began to build. But this time the reactions were different. In Washington, Paris, Bonn and London the old fear of appeasement had given way to a new fear, and it was the fear of a quagmire. That fear came at a time when institutions like the United Nations and NATO were unable to handle the crisis, atrophied from their roles during the Cold War.

Western governments complained about the power of television images to shape policy. But the truth of the matter is that Western policymakers have learned to get out ahead of those pictures. Now, governments only see the risks of action rather than the risks of no action.

Last year in Paris, while covering the French elections, I had an opportunity to talk to a policymaker in the French Foreign Ministry. I had been puzzled by a French announcement some months earlier of French unilateral action in Bosnia. It was a curious policy an-

nouncement that was never carried out and I wanted to know why they had made it at all. The official was rather proud of the story and was certainly willing to share it with an American reporter. He told me that they decided to make the announcement when public sentiment for action in Bosnia was becoming unmanageable. The threat to go it alone focused French attention on the cost of involvement, he told me. The pressure was released, he said, and the French could pull back on a new commitment. Very simple.

Q. & A.

Q.—It's not clear to me whether you feel the demise of the CNN Curve is really some sort of progress.

A.—I am conflicted myself about foreign policy by moral outrage. The problem with deploying troops for reasons of outrage rather than national security is that the commitment is not very deep and that you might be willing to kill for such a policy but not be killed. And Somalia was the perfect example of that. I certainly support the policy for the Iraqi Kurds and it was a shame the way that was handled.

Q.—In the Bosnian problem there have been such horrible images and news and things that are always happening that has everyone horrified and nothing is being done. And maybe in other circumstances equally horrifying images and something has been done. Do you think that is really because of the images and the news or it's because it's something else?

A.—No, that's my point. I think that most policymakers were caught off guard as short as two and a half years ago, three years ago, and have learned to not react to it. What I'm saying is: I don't think it happens anymore.

Q.—Deborah, you seem to be saying that journalism exists to affect policy and you seem to express disappointment that journalists today may not have the same opportunities today to affect policies as perhaps they did, you said, prior to Watergate. I would like to ask you why you think journalism or

journalists should affect policy and why the old yardstick of just quote covering the news is not sufficient.

A.—I sort of felt that affecting policy had to do with covering the news. However, when there are such blatant, terrible things going on in the world, one begins to think that by simply showing those things, that someone will stop it, that genocide is bad, and that if enough people see it, that it will be stopped. And it's shocking when it doesn't happen. Your point about what journalism is for is well taken. And I didn't want to suggest that our job is to change policy. But we certainly are part of the debate over policy. And I think that that is less and less.

SEMINAR EXCERPTS

Q.—I think a lot of organizations are finding that more experienced journalists increasingly don't want to go to South Africa or Berlin or wherever, and that foreign jobs are being cut back, but foreign jobs are also not being filled. There are Latin American jobs, South American jobs, that aren't getting filled.

Q.—At my newspaper [The Boston Globe], they ended their London Bureau because they decided there was no news there.

A.—Absolutely. That's a Cold War bureau and everybody's closing down London for the same reason.

Q.—People thought about where they were going to live and what their lifestyle was going to be, not what they were going to be covering. The fact there was no news meant you could spend more time enjoying London and Europe.

Q.—One of the things that I'm probably going to come away from this whole Nieman experience with is: almost all of us have had some sort of foreign reporting experience. More than that, I've been impressed by the large number of women in our class and some of the people who have come through to talk to us who have been foreign correspondents. And that's not the stereotypical image that one has of the trenchcoat-wearing white man. And I wanted to get you to talk a little about that and about

being a woman covering international news with the level of credibility that you have back in your shop. And also if you could speculate why there seems to be so few minorities, blacks.

A.—Well, it's a good question and let me start with the last question first, because I don't really know why that is. And I'll go back one step further. I was one of those people who saw that foreign reporting was a way to be a reporter. I was a reporter and decided to go to NPR, and went off staff to go to live in Amman, Jordan. I picked out a place where there weren't very many foreign correspondents because I was new. I did it for no money. If I had a family, there was no way I could have done it. They didn't even give me a contract in the beginning. So I went for free essentially. But it was a way in. That was in 1985 and in the Middle East in particular more and more women began to show up. And what we all understood was: we had access that our male colleagues did not. By '88 our editors began to understand it. And I remember hearing that editors were looking for women to put in the Middle East because they finally did get it, that you could get better stuff out of us because of the access that we would have to both men and women in that part of the world. By the Gulf War the numbers were remarkable and you could see it in the American press corps. You could see that the British had one woman. Yugoslavia has changed that. Yugoslavia in the British press is primarily being reported by women.

Q.—Afghanistan was, too.

A.—The Gulf War was a war that was a popular one for all the reporters. So the gorillas came. For the American press there were enough lady gorillas that there were women who went to report that. However, I'll tell you, one phenomenon about the Gulf War: it was mostly women in the front end, people who went in September as the invasion started. That's when the women arrived. When the Bigfoot plane came in January, that's when the men arrived. ■

Back to the Present— An Update on the Mexican Press

BY RAYMUNDO RIVA PALACIO

For scores of Mexican newspapers, life was coming to a natural end in 1993. With the country in a recession, commercial advertising was reduced. More importantly, government advertising, which is the main source of revenue for the majority of the newspapers, also fell. At the same time circulation dropped and every newspaper in Mexico City had to cut its staff.

Even *El Financiero*, the country's leading financial daily and its healthiest newspaper economically, was forced to halt new projects, implement draconian economic measures, and sell 10 percent of the family-owned shares. (The publisher's family still owns 80 percent of the shares.) Other newspapers were less lucky. *La Prensa*, a popular tabloid, second in circulation only to the sports daily *Esto*, was transformed from a cooperative into a private company in order to be sold.

In response to the new realities of a free-market economy, a number of newspapers began to explore ways to increase their capital and their market share. Two of them, *El Financiero* and *El Universal*—the latter enjoys the largest circulation for a broadsheet in Mexico City—studied the possibility of selling their stock publicly. *El Financiero* also signed a weak alliance with an important financial group from Monterrey, while *El Universal* exchanged board members with Multivision, a Mexico City-based wireless TV network. *El Norte*, a well respected Monterrey-based newspaper, began publishing a daily in Mexico City: *Reforma*. The original idea was to sign a joint venture with Dow Jones & Co., but in the end they agreed only on *Reforma*'s carrying Wall Street Journal material.

A handful of Mexican newspapers were getting ready for the challenge.

But the early hours of 1994 changed the mood of the country, when guerrilla troops marched into five towns in Chiapas, a southern state along the Guatemalan border, in the first armed peasant movement since the Mexican Revolution of 1910. The rebellion galvanized Mexican society and the press. What have we done? What went wrong? Mexico was supposed to have become a First World country after the Free Trade Agreement. What happened?

The guerrilla war failed to achieve its goal of a national uprising, but it did shock Mexicans into reflecting deeply on who they were, what they had done, what they wanted to be.

The war in Chiapas, which devolved into a tense stalemate, was just the beginning of a very traumatic first quarter of the year. It was followed by the murder of the governing party's official candidate for the Presidency, Luis Donaldo Colosio, which sent waves of sadness, fear, shame and uncertainty over the country. It was the first assassination of that kind since 1929 and the national impact was the equivalent of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in the U.S.

Suddenly, all Mexican parameters and points of reference were moved. Mexico was supposed to be a country where such killings did not happen; Mexico was supposed to be a country where political rivalries were settled through political means; Mexico claimed to be the most peaceful country in the Americas. But its paradigms no longer existed. In three months, Mexicans lost their 55-year-old political innocence and were trying to survive in a whole new

national environment. All members of society were confused. The press, too, sank into this morass, without knowing how to respond.

In the Chiapas war, as in Colosio's killing, the Mexican press showed all its shortcomings. Unlike the general impression that exists in Mexico and abroad, those major events did not change the media's rapport with the government. The wide coverage of those news stories did not help to make a better or a more independent press in Mexico. Indeed, that was a point that was not even raised or debated.

The chain of corruption between scores of newspapers and the government remains stable. Hidden subsidies, such as soft loans for paper and newsprint purchases, kickbacks and perks, are maintained at a sound pace.

The idea of a more independent press was only a cosmetic impression. There was more information because of the unusual events. Indeed, there was harsh criticism, but it came from those outlets that have been harsh critics all along, such as the weekly magazine *Proceso*, *El Financiero*, and the newly born *Reforma*, which hired several of *El Financiero*'s important contributors.

Newspapers subsidized by the government maintained their loyalty. They published not only stories fed directly to them by government sources, but also disinformation (as in Colosio's killing) and propaganda, mainly to dis-

Raymundo Riva Palacio, former editor at El Financiero, now works as Assistant Managing Editor at Reforma, an independent newspaper in Mexico City. He is in charge of the investigative reporting team, as well as the newspaper's polling department. He was a Nieman Fellow in 1992.

credit the Church (in the Chiapas case). Both events proved how far the press runs behind the society it pretends to serve.

In the war in Chiapas, the few independent newspapers violated their standard of balanced coverage. They went too far in their support of the guerrilla army, thus creating the impression that they were justifying the violence. Their columns were filled with human-interest stories and, in several cases, with unverified information that was presented to the readers as fact.

The coverage was so huge (La Jornada, for instance, devoted 36 to 48 pages almost every day during the first month), that independent newspapers lacked coherence. Too many stories were printed, and too many were simply repetitive. The result was a fragmented product, strong for immediate purposes, but weak and useless for those who wanted to get the overall picture of the war.

Chiapas was too big an event for reporters and editors to handle. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the few independent newspapers did have an important impact: their systematic criticism regarding the military solution the Mexican Government pursued helped shape public opposition.

Strangely for a society that hardly reads papers, the independents were the main sources of information for Mexicans, who openly distrust the television networks and are dissatisfied with radio coverage.

Television coverage went from a professional product the first day of the uprising to a shameless job afterwards, for the most part disseminating only government press releases and failing to show the other side.

Since Mexico no longer has public television, the unbalanced coverage was even more notorious. The very first day of the uprising Televisa, the strongest network, covered all aspects of the conflict, reporting what the Zapatistas had to say. That was the first day of January, when top executives were on holiday.

Two days later, everything changed. Televisa moved shoulder to shoulder with the Mexican Army, which allowed the network to travel in military heli-

copters and armored vehicles. The close relationship led to a permanent prohibition against Televisa's visiting guerrilla-controlled territories.

The two other networks, Television Azteca and Multivision, were not far behind. Government press releases dominated their broadcasts and on more than one occasion Multivision's leading anchor refuted his interviewees' arguments on the air because they referred to the Zapatistas as a "rebel army."

Electronic media in Mexico relies very much on the government's wishes and orders because they operate through concessions given by the authorities. Theoretically, the government is able to withdraw broadcast permits. The government did not have to threaten the networks because in many instances they were leaning toward government propaganda, a pattern not unusual in Mexican television.

Radio stations were a different story. Radio stations began broadcasting all sorts of information during the Chiapas war, until the subtle mechanism of censorship was put in place by the Orwellian office in charge of monitoring all broadcasts in the country: Radio, Television and Cinematography, an office from the Secretaria de Gobernacion, which is the Latin American equivalent of the Ministry of the Interior.

RTC sent faxes to a good number of radio stations "suggesting" that they should not refer to the Zapatistas as anything but "law violators." The major radio stations complied.

With the electronic media's loss of credibility, the print media gained terrain. Mexicans turned enthusiastically to news outlets with independent information. But after the initial awareness, the papers began to lose new readers. La Jornada fell to 80,000 a day; Proceso to 170,000.

Why?

The papers were unable to provide stories beyond the spot events. They did not produce original, interesting, ground-breaking stories about what lay behind the uprising and the governmental response.

The same phenomenon was repeated with the Colosio murder. Independent newspapers such as El Financiero and

Reforma sold out in Mexico City newsstands before 8 o'clock in the morning. Subscriptions rose substantially.

Also, the same journalistic phenomenon was repeated. The lack of investigative reporting techniques made reporters hostages to rumors, half-truths and many lies. The media, independent or loyal to the government, were unable to stand back from the traumatic impact of the killing and were dragged along with society into the darkness of the confusion.

One month after the killing, the press insisted that the assassination should have been solved; otherwise there was an ongoing cover-up. As a result, over 70 percent of Mexicans believe that the order to kill Colosio was given by President Carlos Salinas, the PRI and/or the Mexican political system.

Thus, the press oiled the speculation, promoted national fears and helped increase the uncertainty. It has not helped society understand what is going on, mainly because the press itself has not been able to understand society. In any case, far from being a useful beacon of truth for Mexicans, it is providing the smoke that hides the light.

It is too early to see how big the impact those two major events will have on the Mexican press. However, it is possible to foresee that, for some newspapers in Mexico City, this was their last chance to survive. Those who leaned toward the government in the first quarter of 1994 lost as much credibility as the government did, and they shared the fall. For them, casualties of modern Mexico, the injury might prove fatal.

For different reasons, the independent newspapers are not safe either. Their coverage will be reviewed. Their bias will be confirmed, their journalistic limitations will surface, their technical inabilities will be shown.

Despite their economic and credibility problems, the independent papers may be the principal ones to survive the strongest test Mexico has had to face since 1910. Being independent will be a powerful starting point in a new Mexico that demands new rules, under totally different circumstances. ■

SUMMER READING

Being Funny is the Best Revenge

Leaving Home

Art Buchwald

G.P. Putnam's Sons. 254 Pages.

\$22.95.

BY BRENDAN MAHER

In a recent interview William Maxwell remarked that if "you search in the background of any serious writer, it isn't very long before you come upon a major deprivation of one sort or another—which the writer through the exercise of the imagination tries to overcome, or compensate for, or even make not have happened." This may or may not be true. Unfortunately for the implication that such deprivations create writers, the same assertion is almost certainly true of bus-drivers, politicians, lumberjacks, journalists, professors, and of mankind in general. Who cannot find a major deprivation of some sort in his or her early life, and thereby explain the achievements or failures of later years?

In spite of this, the fallacy of reasoning backwards from effect to cause is hard to resist. It is particularly hard to resist when first opening the autobiography of a humor columnist as famous and talented as Art Buchwald. All the temptations are there. On the first page Buchwald tells us that his mother was permanently hospitalized with severe chronic depression shortly after his birth, and that he never visited her during the thirty-five years of her life spent in institutions. He expresses guilt about this omission, and attributes his own subsequent episodes of depression to that guilt combined with the feeling of deprivation caused by the lack of a mother.

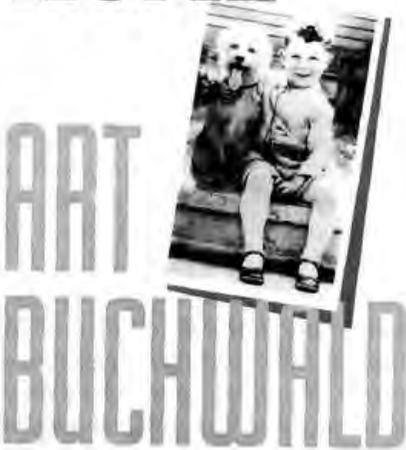
At this point the reader may well put the book down for a moment, gaze into

the middle distance, and reflect that there is no subtle psychological puzzle to solve here. It is the familiar story of Pagliacci, the clown with a broken heart. Was not Mark Twain reputed to be a pessimistic curmudgeon? Are not all humorists really fighting some personal demons of despair? Has not Art Buchwald turned to humor to cope with his depression and to blunt the sharp edge of the feeling of deprivation? Can we not safely go once again from effect to cause? And so on.

Picking up the book, the reader reads on towards gradually developing disappointment. The first disappointment is that this is not a well-written book. It consists of eleven chapters organized chronologically to cover the first twenty-four years of Buchwald's life. It concludes at the time of his employment by The Paris Herald-Tribune where he was paid to write a column on restaurants and entertainment in the city. In broad brush, his volume first covers his childhood years in foster homes and orphan institutions together with his simultaneous acquisition of street wisdom in New York City. Next came his decision to drop out of high school to join the Marines, and his experiences in the Pacific campaign. Three years as a special student at the University of Southern California were terminated by a decision to go to Paris to be a writer. Here he leaves us.

Unfortunately, the snippet style that works well for him in the humor col-

LEAVING HOME *A Memoir*



umn fails in the autobiography. The effect is rather like leafing through an album of column-length press clippings, pieces complete in themselves, but tied together only by chronological proximity rather than by a discernible theme that might tell us something about the meaning of the events that they commemorate. The writing is pedestrian, there are no memorable phrases to be found. Many incidents are recalled with direct-quote dialog, a fictional device that he uses brilliantly in the humor columns. When used in a memoir, it seems certain that either Buchwald has a formidable audiotape memory or that

the dialog has been invented to characterize his own remembered perception of the event. This leaves the reader with the mildly uncomfortable feeling that what actually happened has been filtered by Buchwald into a kind of docu-fiction. We wonder what really happened, and what the others thought of him at the time. Success casts a forgiving glow over prior discourtesies to others. At least, that is the way the successful usually see it.

Trivial incidents and major events are given equal billing. It is enough that something happened to Buchwald for it to be worthy of record. Adolescent tricks, deceptions, drunken follies and successful chutzpah rank with decencies, the deaths of brave men, the courageous persistence of his sisters in the face of poverty, and the kindnesses of strangers. But the problem is not the equation of the big with the small; it is Buchwald's apparent indifference to anything much that happened to others. A solid core of egocentricism pervades the book; it is an egocentricism that Buchwald acknowledges cheerfully, but leaves the reader predictably unsympathetic to the vicissitudes of his life.

Buchwald's writing does tell us something about the motive springs that propelled him from one thing to another. These do not seem to have much to do with depression. There are more echoes of Dickens's "Copperfield" and "Oliver Twist," or O'Connor's "The Duke's Son," than there are of Pagliacci. It is an old story, and not confined to those who find themselves actually being raised by adults who are not their parents. Somehow, the hero child has been illicitly placed in an environment that is less than his or her deserts. Somewhere, some place, the real parents live in a mansion or castle, perhaps with a title but certainly with wealth. In childhood, the young hero is necessarily lonely, placed as he is in the company of those who cannot appreciate him. In due course, by pluck and merit, the child grown to adulthood returns to the proper place in society.

Buchwald tells us of the breakup of his childhood home following his mother's entry into hospital, the ulti-

mately unsuccessful struggles of his father to keep Buchwald and his three sisters together, and the final decision to place them in institutional and foster-home care. Buchwald's loneliness in the drab realities of a series of foster homes led him to invent a more satisfying world of daydreams. These involved commonplace boyhood fantasies of becoming a great sports figure (Joe DiMaggio), a great movie actor (Mickey Rooney), and a great writer (Booth Tarkington). But the favorite dream-story was that he was really a son of the Rothschild family, kidnapped by his nurse and sold to a couple named Buchwald going to America. France's most famous detective had been hired by the true parents: One day this detective would find him and he would be returned to France, family, and fortune, where he properly belonged. This fantasy formed the basis of occasional accounts of himself that he told to others, to be greeted most often with natural incredulity.

Humor, he tells us, became a shield and a weapon that he forged for use when he was about six or seven years old. "I adopted the role of class clown. I made fun of authority figures, from the principal of the school to the social worker who visited me every month. It was a dangerous profession I had chosen, because no one likes a funny kid.... It is only when you grow up that they pay you vast sums of money to make you laugh." We hear this strain again when Buchwald the student describes his contempt for those who had more than he did, a contempt expressed as mocking humor of the wealthy fraternity-boy, convertible-driving students that he met at USC.

So—the reader might now guess—Buchwald was basically a true egalitarian, using humor to fight privilege, not depression. This, at least, seems to be what he is telling us. But, wrong again. Writing this much later retrospective of that period of his young life, Buchwald is frank. He ascribes his mockery to envy of the wealthy, to his wish to be in their company himself, to his anger and to his desire to get even. "For me, being funny is the best revenge."

It appears that for many years he was waiting for the French detective to find him. Getting tired of waiting, he went to France to be found, and—as we are never permitted to forget—was discovered and admitted to the company of the rich and famous with whom he had rightfully belonged all the time. Nothing wrong with that. He did what he set out to do, got where he was going, and did so on his talent.

The side effects of the journey are not all pleasing. Name dropping is irritatingly frequent. Buchwald has delivered packages to, greeted by, dined with, spoken to, sat next to, or had cocktails with New York Mayor John Lindsay, Ben Bradlee, Vince Lombardi, Ethel Kennedy, Doris Warner, Joe DiMaggio, Mario Cuomo, William Styron, Alfred Lunt, Bert Labr, Ethel Merman, Dorothy Lamour, Bing Crosby, Cecil B. De Mille, and the list goes on. He describes with genuine relish the various standing ovations, awards, recognition dinners and the like with which he has been honored. In case the obtuse reader has failed to notice, Buchwald confirms that he has found "rubbing shoulders with the famous and talented a very good experience, and one that I still enjoy."

Unfortunately his admirers will have to hope that there is more to the heart and mind of Buchwald than is to be found in this book. Can a writer with a gift of humor of Buchwald's quality really be as self-satisfied and shallow as appears in these pages? He writes wonderfully funny columns, and they have been published as books that have delighted an international audience. This book, I fear, will appeal mostly to his friends and relatives. Surely there has to be more to him than this. Perhaps it will emerge in later volumes. ■

Brendan Maher is Edward C. Henderson Professor of the Psychology of Personality at Harvard University. After teaching at five other universities, he is still intrigued and enthused by the life and lore of academia.

A Breathless Look at the State of the Nation

Divided We Fall

Gambling with History in the Nineties

Haynes Johnson

Norton. 432 Pages. \$25.

BY DALE MAHARIDGE

What is wrong with the United States and how to fix the myriad problems is the subject of Washington Post journalist Haynes Johnson's "Divided We Fall."

This joins a growing shelf of 1990's books that prescribe solutions for an ailing America, and I was eager to read it when I got home from a trip to New York. By chance, I was walking down Broadway and stumbled into a talk Johnson gave as part of his book tour, to some 100 people at a bookstore.

Johnson was part journalist, part preacher, part professor and the crowd was receptive. They clapped when Johnson said his research showed the solution "isn't up to Washington, it's a question of us."

I went down the stairs of the busy bookstore, emerging on Broadway. At the corner of West 83d, almost directly below Johnson, the backs of listeners were visible in the windows. Had they turned, they would have seen a homeless man pluck a carton of Chinese from a garbage can, eating it slowly. For five minutes an assortment of well-off people, including a man walking a white poodle, streamed passed the dining street person. No one saw him.

We're a nation of people who don't want to see or hear, and I wondered what Johnson had done to invite others than those already converted to the message. He gave a good talk, but a good talk does not guarantee a good book.

Writing about the economy, the homeless, drugs, crime, racism, education and other issues in one book is difficult, at best. If you write about everything, you end up being so thorough in your 1,000 pages that the book pre-

sents the danger of causing bodily injury if accidentally dropped on small children; if you're too academic, lacing it with footnotes as thick as mosquitoes in the Okefenokee Swamp, you will be read by an audience consisting of duty bound spouses and tenure committees.

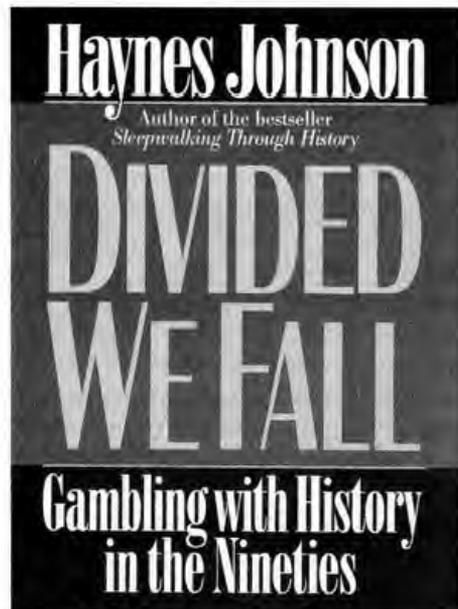
Johnson doesn't make these mistakes, but he fails in other ways. He boils the grave issues into three books within a book. The first two are sweeping examinations of the state of the nation; the third breaks down the issues of schools, race, crime, class, etc.

The biggest problem is that the reader is rushed breathlessly from interview to interview, never really getting close to any one story. Johnson is strongest when dealing with individual stories, but he leaves good ones too soon. One hungers to know more about fewer people.

"Divided We Fall" is a book for the converted. It's useful for journalists, because it is an excellent collection of data about the 1980's and 1990's.

But to reach a broader audience, Johnson needed to slow things down. The same advice for writing a book like this applies to writing these kinds of social issues stories for newspapers: The writer must focus on a few people who are emblematic of a larger problem. You bond the reader with a character or characters to pull them into the story: then you salt in the numbers.

Johnson, however, was busy racking up frequent flier miles as he crisscrossed the country. The reader is taken to Alabama, Connecticut, Iowa. When he talks with Los Angeles gang members, he does so in surface interviews set up by officials. I wanted him to follow those gangbangers home, to see how they exist. And when Johnson goes to



the farm belt, we never get a sense of place. He comes close when he goes on a ride-along with the U.S. Border Patrol.

In a late chapter, Johnson includes an overly long interview with President Clinton as they flew over the country in Air Force One. We hear a lot more of what we've been reading about from the President in the papers—the need for change. Clinton clearly perceives what is wrong with the nation.

The problem is Johnson was correct in his talk—the answer doesn't lie with those in Washington. It was below, on the ground, in the homes of a handful of people who could speak for the rest. ■

Dale Maharidge, Nieman Fellow 1988, teaches journalism at Stanford University. His current project for Mother Jones magazine and Times Books is about ethnic change and the coming white minority society.

Behind African-American Humor: Protest

On The Real Side

Mel Watkins

Simon & Schuster. 625 Pages. \$25.

BY KEVIN B. BLACKSTONE

A popular text on black bookshelves recently was Ralph Wiley's treatise, "Why Black People Tend To Shout." Mel Watkins and his editors at Simon & Schuster could have taken that cue in titling Watkins's scholarly exploration of African-American humor. The new book from the old New York Times Book Review editor very well could have been called *Why Black People Tend To Laugh*. Instead, they chose the title, "On The Real Side." It is a phrase borrowed from one of America's greatest comedians, Richard Pryor.

It is apropos, however, that a refrain from Pryor titles Watkins's work. After all, Pryor is one of the finest practitioners, keepers and innovators of the black American comic tradition. He is, as one comes to understand in Watkins's work, the ultimate example of the culture of African-American humor.

Pryor, like most African-American humorists, isn't funny for funny's sake. There is plenty of purpose in his comedy, just as there was in that of his ancestors. There is protest. There is ridicule. There is subterfuge. There is revolt. Then, there is amusement.

Pryor and his peers are part of a tradition as old as the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Watkins argues strongly, too, that their humor is rooted in the antebellum South. There was nothing, of course, farcical about being a slave. It was dehumanizing. It was cruel. It was as unfathomable as humankind can get.

It is, however, in such situations that man calculates psychological, if not physical, escape. Thus was born the tradition of African-American wit and humor.

We came to know it first in the stereotypical character, Sambo. He looked lazy. He appeared shiftless. He was, in

fact, a revolutionary whose behavior thwarted the plantation economy and angered plantation owners, though they laughed at his apparent stupidity. But as Watkins notes, "The chicanery and deception established in the initial contacts between black slaves and white masters added a note of comic absurdity and dissemblance that...still surfaces frequently in jokes about interracial confrontations emerging from the African-American community."

Watkins underscores his point by recounting a tale about a black maid who worked in a home near an Army camp during World War II. Her employer, displeased with her work, asks, "Do you suppose we'll be able to get more work out of you girls now that they've moved all the colored soldiers away from this camp?" The black woman responds, "I don't know, ma'am. They ain't moved none of the white fellows away."

The white employer may well find no humor in the maid's response, but most black laborers would. That is their humor.

Watkins work is spiced with such sharp tales and routines. Some are from well-remembered comics like Bert Williams, Mantan Moreland, Pigmeat Markham and Moms Mabley. Others are those famous from contemporary times, like Pryor, Flip Wilson, Bill Cosby, Eddie Murphy and Whoopi Goldberg. Quite a few are from unknowns, too, their folktales and routines seeping through the laugh tracks of time.

Much of traditional black humor, of course, has been misunderstood because so often it has been misinterpreted. That is one of Watkins's main points. The Jim Crow character that brought minstrelsy to the stage and

screen was, as Watkins recites, the creation of a white performer trying to imitate what he thought he saw a black man do.

The irony about minstrelsy is that the African-American entertainers who tried to rescue it, either in blackface on stage or as houseboys in film, long were looked upon by their own as buffoons. In reality, as Watkins shows, they were trying to redefine what they should have been able to define in the beginning. White entertainers had robbed black jokers of their tradition as easily as sports commentator Dick Vitale has ripped off and reinterpreted the on-court banter of black basketball players for his profit.

Humor, after all, especially the black American brand, is often rather personal. Black comedy was born in the cotton field and the slave quarters and refined in the back room and the ghetto. It flourished not for the likes of charcoal-faced white mimics or white creators of Amos 'n' Andy, but with authentic crafters of black folktales, writers of black literature and makers of black films and music.

It wasn't, however, until Pryor and his peers in the Sixties—Dick Gregory, Godfrey Cambridge, Cosby, et al.—began to unmask the satire and wit of black American humor that its complex personality began to be understood. Black humor, in effect, cleared up with the times, and the times with it. As Watkins explains, "It was a crucial breakthrough, not only in the public expression of genuine African-American humor, but also in the forthright communication between the races."

Until then, white audiences listened to black comics, but didn't hear them. Everyone, however, heard what black

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Thinking Globally From Trivia ad Nauseam

Global Dreams

Richard J. Barnet and John Cavanagh
Simon & Schuster. 480 Pages. \$25.

Global Paradox

John Naisbitt
Morrow. 304 Pages. \$23.

BY MARCUS BRAUCHLI

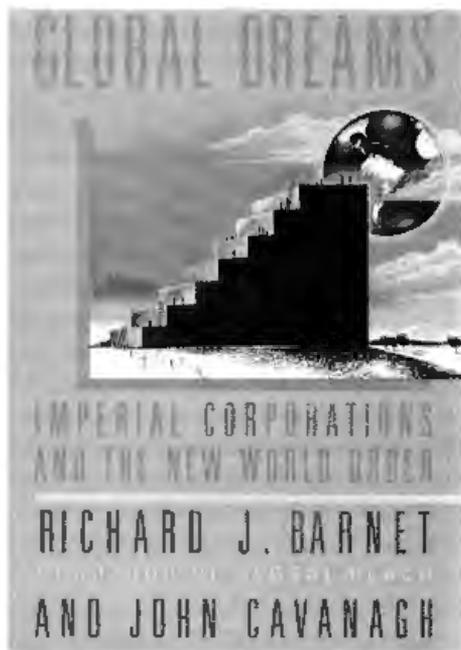
What you are now reading, I am typing at 90 words a minute. At this rate, I will have written 3,600 words by the end of an hour. By the turn of the century, I will have written the longest book review in history, some 173,836,800 words! Of course, that's assuming I don't get bogged down by sympathy for my readers (unlikely), stop for a snack (probable) or exhaust my weary, glitch-prone computer (inevitable).

This is the kind of thinking that John Naisbitt, the author of the bestseller "Megatrends" and of a new attempt at clairvoyance, "Global Paradox," is guilty of. It's blind optimism. He blithely extrapolates globe-arching trends from plain statistics, oblivious to the world's realities (hungry, grammatically challenged writers working on old computers, for instance).

Looking at the rapid growth in computer-network subscribers, he predicts that 1.5 billion people will inhabit Internet cyberspace by the end of the century—though he takes no account of the paucity of computers (and often electricity) where most of the world's population lives. Seeing the splintered former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, he enthusiastically projects that the world soon will have 1,000 countries—happily ignoring somehow the brutality and warfare that often accompany national birth.

Such logical silliness undermines Naisbitt's seriousness but doesn't subtract much from the main themes of his book: The world is becoming vastly more integrated—and to the small, agile and informed will go the spoils.

That the world is becoming more closely intertwined and layered is an important, if obvious, finding. Indeed, it is so important and obvious that two other authors, Richard J. Barnet and John Cavanagh, have produced a book of their own on the



subject, "Global Dreams." Unlike Naisbitt, Barnet and Cavanagh focus on a handful of successful industries and corporations that have discovered just how small and interwoven the world is and become fast, smart players in it.

That both these books include "Global" in their titles is indicative of their tone. The events and patterns described are trends, their authors assure us, that aspire to significance stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific and beyond to the Indian Ocean. "We are all participants in one way or another in an unprecedented political and economic happening, but we cannot make sense of it," Barnet and Cavanagh warn us on the first page of their book.

They spend the next 480 pages proving that they, anyway, can't. In a rhythmic drone of shapeless facts, they throw together profiles of some of the world's more interesting companies—Sony, Bertelsmann, Philip Morris, Ford and Citibank. A reader interested in any of them would be better served going to the articles and books from which much of

from the author of the New York Times No. 1 best-seller
MEGATRENDS

JOHN NAISBITT

GLOBAL
PARADOX

THE BIGGER THE
WORLD ECONOMY,
THE MORE POWERFUL
ITS SMALLEST PLAYERS

the material seems gleaned. David Halberstam did a luminous job describing Ford, for instance, in "The Reckoning," and James Lardner captured Sony brilliantly in his book, "Fast Forward."

But if you like low-value-added trivia gleaned from other sources—especially the daily press—then both these books may be for you. In *Global Dreams*, you will discover that the average American consumes more than 18 pounds of snacks a year—the equivalent of 294 small bags of potato chips. You will learn how much imported tobacco U.S. cigarettes contained in 1950 (six percent), but you will not learn how much they now contain.

If Barnet and Cavanagh recite facts blandly, though, John Naisbitt brings them to life. He describes trips to China, Singapore and other more remote regions of the world, drawing conclusions about everything he sees. Most of them are simplistic, and—in keeping with the title of his book—he favors what he calls paradoxes ("The last great Communist country becomes the world's biggest

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Women Interviewed About the Plight of Men

Good Will Toward Men

Jack Kammer

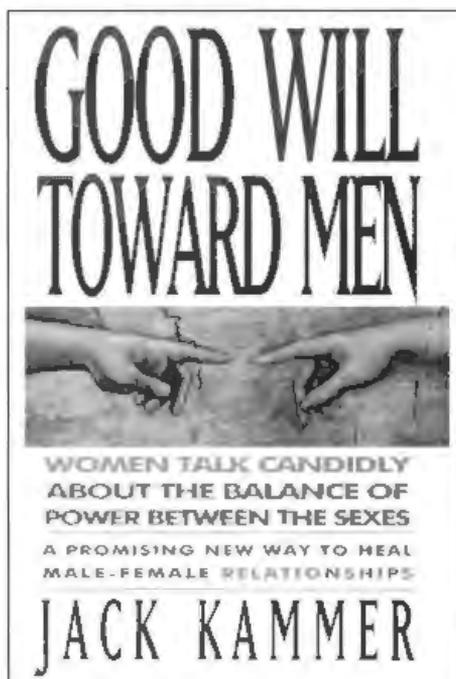
St. Martin's Press. 231 Pages. \$21.

BY PATRICIA O'BRIEN

It's hard to quarrel with the way the author frames his intentions in this book. He wants, he tells us, to make women more thoughtful about the vulnerabilities and problems of men. But how he goes about it leaves a lot to be desired.

Jack Kammer, a former radio talk show host and freelance writer specializing in gender-based social problems, interviewed close to two dozen women, including therapist Judith Sherven, anthropologist Helen Fisher, Karen DeCrow, the former president of NOW, and Char Tosi, the founder of a group called "Woman Within." The structure is strictly question and answer, with Kammer piloting the "conversations" like a flight instructor who can't keep his hands off the controls.

First, the good stuff. Sexism, Kammer points out, is a two-way street. And until women focus on the plight of men trapped by traditional masculine roles that, he argues, allow them less freedom of choice and expression than women, there won't be much hope for easing gender tensions. Fair enough. And Kammer doesn't get rhetorical; wisely, he keeps his tone soothing. But he clearly believes men have been destructively maligned by none other than the feminists who have focused on the plight of women for the past fifteen or twenty years. It may be news to Kammer, but he isn't the first to point out that cultural and political "truths" based on the presumption that all men are either brutal, insensitive clods or are eager to squash women into inferior roles are gross distortions of reality. Thoughtful feminists (and there are many) have been saying this for years.



It's too bad the author chooses to ignore some of the facts that exacerbated many of the tensions between men and women in the first place. It needs to be pointed out, for example, that while it is true men don't always get a fair shake in custody battles (why is it so hard to admit a father can be as loving and caring as a mother?), it is also true that far more women than men are plunged into poverty after divorce. In economic terms, the ones that so frequently crush women's lives, there is no equity yet. Women still earn less for the same work, and they still rarely make it into the top tiers of their various professions. The so-called "glass ceiling" is real. Men may indeed not always have "power" in the traditional sense—but they've indisputably got more than women.

Two rather glaring flaws mar

Kammer's book, the first of which is its frustrating structure. The question and answer format feels old-hat, very seventies; a way of getting it all down on paper without actually writing it. It would have been much stronger if Kammer had written his own narrative based on the interviews with these women—then the book would have had a spine it sorely needs.

The second flaw flows from the first. In interview after interview, Kammer presents himself as a searcher for truth, but, in fact, he appears to know exactly what he wants these women to say. They end up sounding like a gaggle of Stepford Wives as they say it: Women have become triumphant victims in the gender wars—and men are too afraid to protest. Men don't feed powerful, even if women say they are. Moreover, women control everything from sexual access to what topics men feel comfortable talking about.

This is not to say their observations aren't (when they sound like themselves) sometimes sharp and interesting. It's worth reading about Helen Fisher's musings on the roots of patriarchy, for example, and Jane Chastain, on what it's like to work in the all-jock world of sportscasting. But a lot of the material ends up sounding "cooked" in a way that would make a good journalist uncomfortable. Because Kammer's questions primarily frame the author's own agenda, they don't elicit much fresh insight. Allowing a sharp clash of ideas would have been both more interesting and more honest.

There is, for example, the interview with Sandra Rippey, a commander in

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The Legend of Nellie Bly Lives on—and It Stands Up

Nellie Bly

Daredevil, Reporter, Feminist

Brooke Kroeger

Times Books. 631 Pages. \$27.50.

BY JUDY POLUMBAUM

What U.S. journalist hasn't heard of Nellie Bly, the derring-do reporter who drummed up circulation for Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* with the most famous newspaper stunt of the Victorian era—circling the globe in less time than it took the fictional Phileas Fogg?

It comes as a surprise, therefore, to learn that no full-fledged biography of America's most famous female journalist existed until the publication of Brooke Kroeger's marvelous, meticulously documented study. Relying largely on Bly's voluminous legacy of newspaper writing, a smattering of letters and stray documents, and a trail of litigation over sour business dealings, Kroeger provides a multi-dimensional portrait of a woman whose inclinations and activities were astonishingly revolutionary for her time.

In her heyday in the late 1800's, virtually every schoolchild knew the name Nellie Bly; and she still claims quasi-mystic status in the annals of American journalism. In times when women were still called "girls" and girls of purpose were called "plucky," Nellie Bly was one of the pluckiest girls of all. But how well does the legend stand up against the facts? Very well indeed. Kroeger's biography establishes not only that Bly was quite a gal, but that her significance goes far beyond the round-the-world shenanigans for which she is best known.

Bly was a quintessentially American individualist; yet, for all her vanity and ambitiousness, she also was a person of complexity, compassion and courage. As a journalist, she was singularly gifted and enterprising—if sometimes erratic,

self-indulgent, and fast and loose with the truth. As a feminist, she defied convention in both personal and public realms. Her attitudes and accomplishments put her in the forefront of a burgeoning social movement for women's equality: In becoming America's most celebrated practitioner of a flamboyant and personalized style of journalism, she demonstrated what an independent woman could do through sheer force of will, and opened up new frontiers for women in the newsroom in the process.

Bly's determination and convictions were rooted in instinct and practice; her professionalism as well as her feminism arose not from intellectual theorizing or calculation, but from her own experiences and observations in the school of hard knocks. Kroeger attributes Bly's strong sense of justice and fiercely independent spirit to the early loss of her wealthy father, the subsequent decline of the family's status, and her mother's disastrous remarriage to an abusive drunk. This marriage ended in divorce, a drastic and shameful recourse for the times. Bly stuck by her mother and became caretaker to her siblings, a role she retained for decades, although the family solidarity ultimately dissolved in a bitter legal feud.

Bly was born in western Pennsylvania in 1864, although as an adult she was not above doctoring her age and other details of her background. Until she badgered her way into a newsroom, her name was Elizabeth Jane Cochran; to her family, she was "Pink." She first left home to enter a teacher's preparatory school, but dropped out for lack of



funds, due at least in part to the negligence of her guardian. She later sued him, the first indication of a prolific litigiousness which proved a godsend for her biographer, for court records helped Kroeger fill many of the blanks in Bly's public history—although not all.

The most amply documented aspect of Bly's life is her newspaper career. It spanned four decades, with time out for an unhappy marriage, unfortunate business dealings, an expatriate sojourn in Europe and charitable endeavors. The most ambiguous aspect is Bly's love life, of more than passing interest given her feminist inclinations. She eventually became Elizabeth Jane Seaman,

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Warts and All, the Founder of American Newsmagazines

Henry R. Luce

A Portrait of the Man Who Created the American Century

By Robert E. Herzstein

Scribner's. 360 Pages. \$30.

BY MICHAEL RUBY

Henry Robinson Luce, who would create "the American century," was born in China at the turn of it—a missionary's son who grew up in a walled compound of privilege cut off from the vast peasant world outside his door. This isolation and the idealized China it fostered in the mind of "young boy Luce," as the servants called the first of the reverend's four children, would haunt the adult Harry Luce and, ultimately, his country as well.

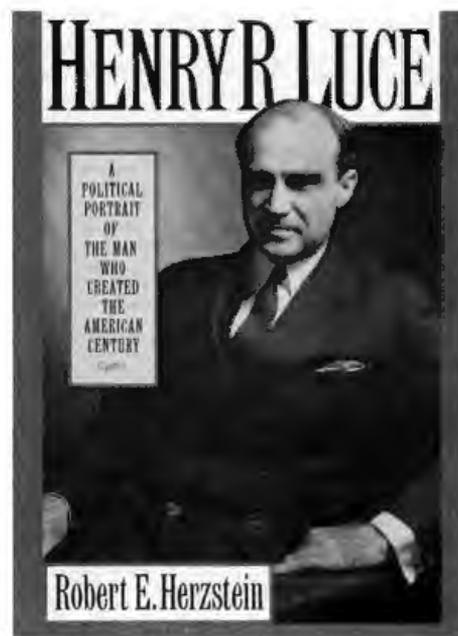
China would be his blind spot, the place to cloud the mind of a man otherwise curious, brilliant and clear-eyed, utterly "devoid of guile or hypocrisy," writes the author of this fine, though narrow, book, which covers Luce's life through the war years. Guileless, perhaps, but rarely lacking a sense of his own worth. Once in church, young Harry noticed a stained glass window with words that included the plural form of his mother's maiden name, Root: "I am the Vine and Ye are the Roots." Turning to his parents, he whispered, "I didn't know I was related to God."

There were times Americans weren't quite sure, either. In an age when phrases like "media baron" become grossly inflated as they are applied to a Rupert Murdoch or the Newhouse brothers, it's always instructive to remember the genuine article. By the time he was 40 years old, the self-made Harry Luce presided over a pre-television empire that included three wildly popular magazines (*Time*, *Life* and *Fortune*), national radio programming and "the March of Time," which appeared every day in 8,000 movie theaters across America. At its height of influence in the 1940's, this iteration of Time Inc. would reach at least a quarter of the American

population. When Luce's enterprise advocated, public-opinion polls moved. (One of the glaring exceptions was Luce's unflagging support for Wendell Willkie, who he thought could beat Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1940.)

Several key figures thread through this book, illuminating facets of Luce's professional accomplishments and political passions. The first of these, the one critical to Luce's original creation, is Briton Hadden. Luce met Brit Hadden at the Hotchkiss School in northwestern Connecticut where both had enrolled. They were polar opposites: Luce was studious, remarkably intelligent, somber and mature beyond his years; Hadden was a free spirit, an amusing, streetwise kid from Brooklyn who was always the center of attention. When they both wound up at Yale, where a mutual interest in journalism was kindled, it seemed to follow logically that Luce would be voted "most brilliant" in the class of 1920 and Hadden "most likely to succeed." Both men traveled abroad after college, Luce returning determined to invent a new form of journalism—a weekly national newspaper that would make sense of a complicated nation and world for a busy public. He and Hadden raised nearly \$100,000 and *Time* magazine was born on March 3, 1923.

It was a success from the start, in part because it married Luce's knowledge of contemporary affairs with Hadden's writing skill. *Time*'s early reputation for cleverness, turns of phrase and pun-making owes much to Hadden, who could claim credit for inventing words like kudos and tycoon. By 1929, the magazine was earning a small fortune. Sadly, that same year, young Brit Hadden took ill and died of blood poisoning—



the last true friend, Herzstein maintains, Luce ever had.

A second character, of course, is Clare Boothe Luce. Harry first met her in 1934, when she was a glamorous and brainy 31-year-old divorcée, a cool customer once described as a beautiful façade without central heating. Luce fell hard, divorcing his wife on October 5, 1935 and marrying Clare seven weeks later.

Clare Luce was many things. She was a playwright and journalist, covering the war for *Life* early on in Europe and later in Burma. She ran for and won a seat in Congress. (In a bon mot Hadden would have loved, she once described a plan by Vice President Henry Wallace to eliminate exclusive landing rights at airports as "globaloney.") Most of all, in private and public life, she was Harry Luce's confidante, ally and co-proselytizer, promoting his causes and even

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On Real Side

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America thought of prejudice and discrimination when at the height of the civil rights movement Gregory told this tale:

A black man enters a Southern restaurant and is told, "Sorry, we don't serve colored folks here." The black man responds, "Fine, I don't eat them, just bring me a medium rare hamburger."

That is the punch line of Watkins's volume, too. That is why black people tend to laugh. It isn't that African-Americans are naive, foolish or simple, though certainly every population no matter its ethnicity has a trace or more of all that. Instead, it is that black Americans, as Watkins writes, "have been inescapably engaged with the absurdity of America's racial arrangements for centuries; survival and sanity dictated that they adopt a comic view of society."

"I always thought," said Richard Pryor on his first album in 1969, "why they never have a black hero. I always wanted to go to the movies and see a black hero. I figured out maybe someday on television they'll have it, man.... Look up in the sky! It's a crow. It's a bat. No, it's Super Nigger. Able to leap tall buildings with a single bound; faster than a bowl of chitlin's...."

"We find Super Nigger disguised as Clark Washington, mild-mannered custodian of The Daily Planet, shuffling into Perry White's office:

"Hey, man, I'm quittin', baby!"

"Great Caesar's ghost, I can't talk to you now."

"Talk to me, Jack, 'cause I'm ready to quit, man. Tired of doin' them walls, every time I finish, Lois Lane and them come slippin' and slidin' down through there and I have to do it over again."

"I can't talk to you now. The warehouse is on fire."

"What warehouse?"

"Warehouse 86."

"Damn, that's where I got my stash.... This looks like a job for Super Nigger." ■

Kevin Blackstone is a sports columnist at The Dallas Morning News and a charter member of the Trotter Group, an organization of black columnists.

Thinking Globally

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market economy," Naisbitt marvels of China). He puts his sometimes less-than-bold ideas into bold type, for easy reading.

But here again, Naisbitt falls victim to his enthusiasm for ridiculous prognostication. He muses how, if China were to lift per capita income to Taiwan's level—he might as well have chosen Singapore's, or the U.S.'s—it would have the largest economy in the world. He predicts that by the year 2000, China will have 500 new or renovated airports. That may be true, by some measure, but I fly into such new and renovated airports just about every month, and that statistic is as meaningless as the airports are backward. (To be fair, Naisbitt identifies many of the potential risks to China's development—Deng Xiaoping's death, environmental degradation, the absence of legal systems—more so than he does in many of his other chapters.)

Moreover, Naisbitt's penchant for spinning facts sometimes gets in the way of his own arguments. A key subtext to Naisbitt's argument is that the world is breaking into smaller and more adroit entities; indeed, the book's subtitle is "The Bigger the World Economy, the More Powerful Its Smallest Players." Yet Naisbitt heaps praise on the now-failed mega-merger effort of Bell Atlantic and TCI, which would have formed a giant, extremely powerful multimedia group. Consistency isn't Naisbitt's strength.

Yet, unlike Barnett and Cavanagh, Naisbitt writes in a fast, readable style. His use of short, breezy paragraphs and heavy reliance on USA Today-style factoids makes for interesting and even entertaining reading. Enough of what he describes is happening about the way he describes it that almost anybody without an encyclopedic memory for facts would probably learn something from it. Just dispense with the conclusions and draw your own views.

The emergence of books like these by Naisbitt and Barnett and Cavanagh shows that there is an emerging consciousness of an integrated world where everyone is on the make. Aside from passing references, though, the books omit a parallel movement to economic integration: nationalist disintegration. For many of the countries these authors describe, the fateful question isn't whether they should race into

an economic future, but whether they can settle differences of ethnicity or nationality peacefully. Where economic integration and nationalist disintegration have been colliding—Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, the Commonwealth of Independent States, even India—nationalist disintegration has been winning.

The result is that these books are light, friendly looks at the world economy and global integration, full of breezy facts and shallow interpretation. ■

Marcus Brauchli, Nieman Fellow 1992, is a reporter with The Asian Wall Street Journal in Hong Kong.

Pulitzer Editorials

America's Best Editorial Writing, 1917-1993 Second Edition
William David Sloan and Laird B. Anderson
Iowa State University Press. 292 Pages.
\$21.95.

Professors William David Sloan (University of Alabama) and Laird B. Anderson (The American University) have performed a major service for newspaper journalism by revising and bringing up-to-date this collection of editorials.

In addition to adding samples of editorials that won Pulitzer Prizes since 1979, the editors have uncovered editorials missing from the first edition.

The prestige of a Pulitzer appears to be transient, and is perhaps declining. The number of editorial-page entries in 1993 fell to only 72. Since 1917, when the first Pulitzer was awarded, judges in seven years, including 1993, failed to award a prize for editorials. The editors explore various theories about editorial writing but come to no conclusions.

A trend away from blandness may be developing. Robert L. Bartley, Editor of The Wall Street Journal, was downright civil in his 1979 examination of U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy compared with his recent fulminations about President and Mrs. Clinton and their Arkansas entourage. This year The New York Times has adopted a sharper editorial bite, but will other editors follow these leads?

—Murray Seeger

Nellie Bly

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wife and then widow of a rich industrialist. Kroeger suggests that Bly eloped with this much older man for the promise of financial and psychological security, which quickly proved illusory. Before and after her marriage, Bly had close male friends, and the evidence supplies intimations of romance and heartbreak, but Bly covered the traces well and we will probably never know for sure.

Bly's reporting career began at The Pittsburgh Dispatch in the 1880's, when a letter from her caught an editor's eye. She broke in at The New York World with her first celebrated undercover exposé, feigning madness to write about conditions in an asylum, and went on to cover everything from society balls and political conventions to prostitution, murder, labor strife and war. Along with her colorful stunts and undercover gambits, she was a masterful interviewer, with no compunctions about asking anybody anything, and a knack for getting people to open up. Her subjects ranged from factory workers and politicians to streetwalkers and serial killers; they included the famous and the infamous, from labor leader Eugene Debs and anarchist Emma Goldman, both interviewed in jail, to suffragette Susan B. Anthony and boxer Jack Dempsey.

By the time she married, Bly had been around the world and become a celebrity in her own right. Her marriage took her out of the journalistic limelight and into new territory; after her husband's death, she took over his manufacturing business and gained a reputation as a successful businesswoman and benevolent boss. However, she lost everything to what she came to see as a conspiracy of thieving accountants, conniving lawyers, and her own avaricious brother—an experience which can only have reinforced her feminist proclivities—and she returned to the work she knew and loved best. She finished her career as a columnist for The New York Evening Journal, doubling as a moral crusader operating what was essentially a private adoption agency to match orphaned and abandoned children with would-be parents.

By the end of Bly's career, women had gained the right to vote, and women reporters were commonplace. Ironically, Kroeger notes, Bly's successors in the newsroom—in ever-shorter skirts—viewed her not so much as an icon but as a relic. Today, more than 70 years after her death, her views seem startlingly modern, and it is not hard

to see her as the path breaker she was. As Kroeger puts it, she helped bring women "out of the journalistic sideshow and into the main arena."

Bly's example is worthy of attention for other reasons as well. She never simply wrote news; she lived the news. In contrast to the detached style that would evolve in subsequent generations, her reporting was characterized by impassioned involvement and bald subjectivism. Not that this was unusual in the rollicking days of the New York circulation wars, but Bly carried the subjective approach to extremes. Her stories were as much about Nellie Bly as about her ostensible subjects; she told how she got places or found people, divulged how she felt, described how people reacted to her, proclaimed what was wrong or right, prognosticated about what would come of it all.

For all its flaws, Bly's writing contained a freshness and honesty that would disappear with the emergence of the canon of objectivity. With intimate, first-person journalism making a comeback today, Nellie Bly's work may be destined for renewed appreciation. ■

Judy Polumbaum is an Assistant Professor of Journalism at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.

Good Will

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the U.S. Naval Reserves. Rippey has strong views. She claims flatly there is no sexual discrimination in the Navy. She declares the discrimination is against men who—in the aftermath of the Tailhook scandal—are now forced to live in fear of what she calls the "bizarre phenomenon" of Navy women who loathe them. She even hints that the allegations of Tailhook constituted a deliberate campaign to demoralize men.

So where is our probing author? Kammer: "Do you think that maybe Tailhook wasn't what we've been told it was?" Clearly horrified, newly awakened to a terrible truth, he quickly answers his own question: "...It seems like an attempt to shame the entire Navy or even to shame all men."

Not much ambiguity there. If Kammer believes something this ridiculous—in the face of overwhelming evidence that the Navy did everything it could to block serious investigation of charges from dozens of

women claiming they were assaulted by Naval officers at the 1991 Tailhook Association convention—then he shouldn't pretend to be conducting an objective inquiry.

To be fair, reporters are not so pure that they don't frequently have agendas themselves when they conduct interviews. But if they're really intent on finding out things, they don't write in advance the answers to their own questions. That would be like showing up for the interview with a paper bag over one's head.

All this said, there's truth tucked away in the corners of Kammer's soft-pedaled plea for "good will toward men." Treating men as "a suspect class," and therefore the villains in every gender dispute, is a tiresome refrain. Yes, men are constrained by their cultural roles, and, yes, the true point of any exploration should be the need for a better balance in understanding between the sexes.

But Kammer frustrates by neglecting ever to really plumb his central point. "Men..." he writes, "are in the most maximum security prison of all, the prison that convinces its inmates that they are right where they want to be, that they are perfectly and enviably positioned to achieve all the success they want, that as economic providers they are admired, loved and appreciated, and that if they ever begin to think otherwise, they must have a 'personal' problem to be denied and buried in shame."

That's worth more than a pause, because the traps for men are real. And breaking out of them—when women and men together try new ways to better their lives—is hard. When the spouse of a medical resident chooses to stay home as a full-time parent, that's good, right? But what if it's the father who stays home? Is that liberating? The wave of the future? Or is it bizarre—a choice to be "buried in shame," as Kammer puts it?

Let's talk about it. Maybe later—in a better book. ■

Patricia O'Brien, a 1974 Nieman Fellow, is a novelist who lives in Washington.

Luce

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outdoing him when it came to rabid anti-communism.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt is a third key character in Herzstein's tale; indeed, in some ways, FDR is at the center of the book, which focuses most heavily on the period from the mid-1930's to 1946. Harry Luce lived much of his life in search of heroes, and with the exception of Theodore Roosevelt, he was always disappointed. Woodrow Wilson, Douglas MacArthur, Chiang Kai-shek—each eventually let him down. Franklin Roosevelt began heroically in Luce's eyes, but the advent of the New Deal put a quick end to that. Luce disliked FDR, at times despised him, and the President reciprocated in kind. Part of it was style: Luce had little use for charm as a tool in personal diplomacy, and FDR simply oozed it. But their differences were principally substantive and political. Luce's magazines, principally *Time* and *Fortune*, were anti-New Deal and often glaringly partisan in promoting Republican Party interests. By the mid-1930's, the gathering storm in Europe was plain to Harry Luce, whose editors began to prepare an isolationist America for the new world role their boss saw as inevitable. FDR, during this period, maintained a studied neutrality.

Eventually, of course, their interests merged. By 1940, both men knew that war was coming and worked to get the country ready for it. But of the two, "the thinking machine," as one of Luce's reverent editors referred to him, had the larger vision of the post-war world and the U.S. place in it. "The American century" began as a phrase in several speeches and culminated in a *Life* editorial on February 17, 1941, that ultimately reached tens of millions of Americans and sparked a fierce debate between internationalists and isolationists. Luce spoke and wrote of a "new world order" that would follow an American-led victory in a war the United States had yet to engage. American culture was already sweeping the world, and Luce saw that merely as the leading

edge of a global U.S. hegemony in virtually every field—from business and agriculture to defense and humanitarian assistance. Corollaries, suggested later in the war, were far less prescient than the original. For instance, Luce predicted reduced ideological conflict and peaceful relations with the Soviet Union—this before he turned sharply anti-communist in 1944—and a prosperous Greater China led by Chiang.

In the Luce drama, China provides the stage for a fourth character, a short, bespectacled fellow named Theodore White. A protégé of Harvard legend-in-the-making John K. Fairbank, Teddy White started to string for *Time* in China in 1939. In the beginning, he and Luce seemed to see eye to eye, sharing an enthusiasm for Chiang and his government and dismissing Mao Zedong's Communists. There was only one problem. When White wrote of China's growing strength, his copy went into the magazine almost untouched. When he filed on the corruption, despotism and xenophobia at the core of the Chiang regime, little of it saw the light of day.

Still, White labored on. The two men finally met in the spring of 1941, when Luce visited China, and they got on famously, the young stringer likening chats with his obsessively curious boss to "conversations with a vacuum cleaner." But the rift between them steadily deepened. White thought that Luce had become a blind apologist for Chiang Kai-shek and that civil war in China was inevitable. It ended badly. In September, 1945, *Time* published a cover story praising Chiang and assigning Mao's Communists to the dustbin of history. White left *Time* within a year and Luce, as much as anyone, helped to incite the "Who Lost China?" madness of the late 1940's and early 1950's that cost many good men their jobs and their reputations.

Luce's strengths as a media titan were also his weaknesses. His notion of weeklies that would explain and interpret complex events for his audience bumped up against his own strongly held views: In *Time* and *Life*, Harry Luce could not easily distinguish between educating his audience on how to think about something from telling them what

to think about it. He practiced selective journalism to a fault. His cheerleading for China, which included raising millions for relief agencies, was plainly inappropriate. Harry Luce was not alone in keeping bad news from the public during the war. Both he and FDR were interested in one thing, winning, and American morale was important to the effort. But the self-censorship meant, among other things, that the extermination of the Jews got precious little attention in Luce's enterprises. "During the Holocaust," Herzstein writes, "not a single issue in *The March of Time* newsfilm series treated the fate of European Jewry."

Warts and all, Luce was an innovator. *Time* Inc.'s publications and the competitors they spawned bear only faint resemblance to the originals, but they still owe an enormous debt to the founder of newsmagazine journalism. News analysis, as opposed to straight reporting, was probably born in the Luce stable. He paid his people well at a time when newsmen and women generally lived on the poverty line, and his company provided profit sharing and medical benefits long before the vast majority of U.S. corporations.

And despite his strident politics, Luce was onto something with his grand vision. For a while there, this pundit or that "expert" dated the end of the American Century to the Arab oil embargo of 1973 or the fall of Saigon or even the market crash of 1987. These judgments now seem positively quaint and categorically wrong. English, American English, is the lingua franca. American culture continues its global journey, this time to old empires and newly free states. American enterprise is more competitive than ever and American soldiers are sought as policemen on the world's mean streets. The latest argument is that immigration trends are ending the American century. Far from it: The multicultural society building in the United States, if we can manage it, will only burnish the sense of American exceptionalism Alexis de Tocqueville noticed a century before Harry Luce gave it a name. ■

Michael Ruby is Co-Editor of U.S. News & World Report and was a Nieman Fellow in 1975.

ALGERIAN EDITOR WINS LYONS AWARD

The crusading editor of a shuttered Algerian newspaper has won the 1994 Louis M. Lyons Award for Conscience and Integrity in Journalism, the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University announced in late June.

Abdelhamid Benzine was the Editor and guiding force behind *Algerie Republicain*, which closed down on April 12, 1994 under hostile government pressure that led to loss of advertising and attacks on the newspaper's staff.

The newspaper was put under a banning edict—a *fatwa*—by the Islamist in Constantine, declaring it to be a “haram” (forbidden) to Muslims. Several of the journalists working for the newspaper have been attacked or killed and one was kidnapped.

The 1994 Nieman Class, which selected Benzine for the Lyons Award, recognized the editor for his valiant and persistent struggle to save his newspaper in the face of insurmountable obstacles. The class was also impressed by Benzine's determination to revive his newspapers, noting that an undated, unsigned broadsheet appeared on April 22, 1994 promising that it would re-appear as soon as possible.

Since its founding, the *Algerie Republicain* has challenged authority and suffered. The recent closure represents the fourth time it has been forced to lock its doors since it first appeared in the autumn of 1938. The first closure took place as a result of the actions by the Vichy government—the so-called “Franco-German Fascists”—in 1939. The second was carried out by the French colonial system in 1955 and the third was by the FLN in 1965.

This year, the Lyons Award committee selected its winner from a record number of submissions from around the world. The award is named for Louis M. Lyons, Nieman Fellow 1939 and Curator of the Nieman Foundation from 1939 to 1964. ■

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RESPONSE

Indian Prime Minister's Visit

When it comes to a matter of paying compliments, the Americans (the Press included), describe the United States as one of the oldest democracies and India the largest democracy in the world. But it is amazing how the American press treated the visit of Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to the United States in May.

The press in India is truly independent (I am not saying the U.S. press is any less independent), but the coverage given to Prime Minister Rao was shocking, to say the least. Here was the Prime Minister of the largest democracy visiting one of the oldest democracies on the invitation of the U.S. President and yet the press and the TV treated his visit in a very casual manner.

It may well be that foreign dignitaries visit Washington every other day. But here was the first visit of Rao as Prime Minister of India and that, too, after the damage caused to Indo-U.S. relations by the statement of U.S. officials that the accession of Kashmir to India was not final. Clearly, President Clinton wanted to erase any wrong impression and re-affirm that there is no change in the U.S. policy toward India. This fact alone called for better treatment of Rao's visit.

Unfortunately, the U.S. media—both newspapers and TV—particularly in the cities that the Indian Prime Minister visited, under-played his meetings and discussions with American leaders.

What the U.S. press lacks is not information technology but objectivity in its approach and attitude to what its own readers expect. To place on the front page items about daily occurrences such as murder, rape and kidnapping and bury in remote inside pages such rare events as the visit of the Indian Prime Minister is unimaginable to a visiting [Indian] journalist like me.

V.V. Eswaran
Nieman Fellow, 1960

NIEMAN NOTES

COMPILED BY LOIS FIORE

Hot Wiring a Jeep in Rwanda

BY RUI ARAÚJO

"You nuts? We are all leaving this hell. Why are you coming?"

I considered the question, then made it clear to the man—he was in charge of evacuations from Kigali—that I was staying, although up to a point he was right.

Political and ethnic confrontation, again, this time in Rwanda, the former "Switzerland" of Africa. The Hutus, who make up 85 percent of the population, and the minority Tutsi, who have dominated the Hutu, have been killing each other since its President, Juvénal Habyarimana, a Hutu, died when his plane was shot down at Kigali airport on April 6. Europeans and Tutsi have been fleeing the country.

We had just arrived at Kigali airport on a special C-130 flight with the red bereted Belgian troops. It was night and we were all tired.

Then from the rear of the building came the rattle of machine-gun fire as more than 50 Rwandan children arrived on trucks, vans and jeeps. They were orphans. Most of them were wounded, lost in a war they did not understand.

The military did not have enough planes to take out in a short time all the black children and the Europeans left in Kigali. As the planes flew off, a remarkable apparition appeared on the ground: a man, sitting against the wall of the airport reception hall, reading a book in the light of a combustible cube.

"I'm afraid there will be another war in Burundi," said my friend Alfonso Armada of the Spanish newspaper *El País*. He may be right. Burundi is almost like Rwanda. Same ethnic groups, same tensions. And the president of Burundi was also killed in the Kigali crash.

"Why don't we all get a good night's sleep?" a Belgian captain said to me.

I could not.

"What exactly is the situation, captain?" I asked.

He took me around the airport. Troops of the Rwandan army were still inside the airport as well as in nearby Kigali. Guerrillas of the Rwandan Patriotic Front were not far away. We could hear their voices. They were just down the road and they were in town, too. The firing continued, broken only by occasional screams of the wounded.

At the airport hall that evening the talk was about what both sides and the United Nations troops could or should do rather than whether there'd be an operation to

cover. The troops were there not to fight but to evacuate the European civilians and some local officials and orphans.

A colonel told the press about a plan to rescue some priests and nuns lost in the country. It was a risky mission. The problem was that only 12 journalists, four from newspapers, could go. All 23 of us wanted to go. The colonel finally decided that since it was a Belgian operation only the Belgian media could go. "The foreign press has nothing to say," the colonel said after I explained that our crew, although Portuguese, was based in Brussels.

Simone Reumon with Rtb (Belgian public television) told me she was going. I could use her pictures. Rwanda was a Belgian story for the Belgian press only,



Rui Araújo in Rwanda

she said. I will never forget her curious sense of fairness.

I spent the night roaming the airport after helping Alfonso send a fax to Madrid. I had a story (the orphans) but no satellite to feed it, no telephone to transmit it, nobody in Kenya to help me, no nothing.

The group left Kigali at 6 a.m. I did not. The morning passed uneventfully. Finally, just before noon, some jeeps and trucks pulled up. It was the last convoy and its goal was to evacuate three people from downtown Kigali. I appealed to the officer in charge to join the convoy.

"If you have a car, I accept you!" the officer said.

I thought he was joking. Kigali was then the most dangerous place in Rwanda. All the Belgian soldiers were equipped with automatic weapons and bulletproof vests. Their jeeps and trucks were armored. I did not have even a car. I must have seemed petrified.

"Will you come? Do you fear death?" he asked.

I said, "Yes, but give me five minutes—to find a car."

I saw an old van abandoned in the parking lot. I tried the car thief's trick—direct ignition. (I don't think my boss would have approved. He hadn't wanted me to take the trip to Rwanda on the basis that it was not of sufficient interest to Portuguese viewers. But I had hitched a ride on an American C-5 cargo plane. Journalistic ethics sometimes don't apply.) The hot wiring didn't work; the battery was dead. I tried another vehicle—

a brand new Mitsubishi jeep. Same trick—two wires plus one. It worked and the procession set off. I gave a ride to six reporters.

Slowly the convoy moved along no man's land, the road that separated the Army from the guerrillas. Corpses were scattered along the road. A young girl's head had been smashed into pieces with a machete. The body of a man who had been shot to death had been eaten by dogs. The corpses told the story: they were born in the wrong ethnic group.

As in Sarajevo and Gorazde, Kigali showed that the United Nations does very little to defend principles and to preserve its credibility.

At the outskirts of Kigali panic and despair ruled. At that point dozens of thousands of Rwandans and six or seven Europeans had been killed. Ten Belgian blue berets died because they surrendered on order of their superiors. They were mutilated and then shot to death—10 bullets each.

The government troops have been denounced as butchers and murderers. I am not sure they were the only guilty parties.

We were beginning to relax and were congratulating ourselves when we were caught in a firefight. Government troops had ambushed Belgian troops.

I cowered behind the wheel. The convoy stopped. I could hear the POW!, POW of the Kalashnikovs. Holes suddenly appeared in the trees. For a long, stupid moment I sat motionless. The red berets fired back. I told Christian Maton, my cameraman, to shoot, to "let it go, use all the tape you want, mon petit!"

Apparently, troops loyal to the Hutus were presenting a calling card to any European soldier, guerrilla or civilian who happened to be in the area.

It was a noisy fifteen minutes. We left the place with some holes in the cars and a story to tell. We were told by a furious guerrilla captain that they got some "friendly" fire from the red berets.

On the way to the place where two of the Belgium civilians were supposed to be, we saw more bodies and a wounded man asking for help. I did not say a word. I was driving. The countryside was verdant and lush. Too beautiful. The rain had stopped long ago but one could smell that land. All that was lacking was people—people walking, dancing, laughing or simply, working. Because of sniper fire we had to take another way to get back to the airport.

Once in the airport, I met Alfonso Armada. "It was fantastic, but very sad," he said to me in Portuguese. That morning he had met some Italian UN troops and went with them to Musha. He got a scoop. An entire village, 1,180 men, women and children, were killed because they were Tutsis.

I did an interview with Litric Danko, a Musha priest. "It was 6:30 a.m. They started to kill everybody with grenades, automatic guns and machetes inside and outside the church. The day after I went to my church. There was a group of 50 kids with their mummies. They said to me 'Father, father, father.' What could I do?" explained Father Danko.

I asked him where he came from. "Serbia, Serbia," he replied.

I left Kigali hours later. I did two stories on Rwanda. As Olivier Todd put it, "the facts are not reducible to words." ■

Rui Araujo is senior correspondent of the Brussels Bureau of RTP, the Portuguese television network. He is a 1991 Nieman Fellow.

1950

John McCormally died on December 22 of lung cancer in Burlington, Iowa. In the truest tradition of a newspaperman, McCormally, the day before his death, wrote his obituary and sent it to Nieman Reports: "McCormally was born October 8, 1922. He was a reporter on The Emporia (Kan.) Gazette when named a Nieman in 1949. He was Editor of The Hutchinson News when he won the Pulitzer Prize for public service in 1965. He was later Editor-Publisher of The Burlington Hawkeye. He resigned the management position in 1979 and wrote a column for Harris Enterprises papers until retirement in 1989. He leaves his wife, Peggy, and seven children." He lived at 2900 South Main, Burlington, Iowa 52601.

1954

Richard Dudman learned by chance the identity of the Vietcong officer who had ordered him freed from captivity in Cambodia 24 years ago in the midst of the Vietnam War. He arranged with his former employer, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, to go to Vietnam for a reunion and interview with the officer, now a retired general. The articles appeared in April in The Post-Dispatch and were syndicated by Universal Press Syndicate.

By coincidence, Dudman was honored with the George Polk Career Award for journalistic achievement just as he was taking off for Vietnam.

Earlier, in January and February, Dudman worked at his eighth annual stint as a rotating managing editor for the South-North News Service in Hanover, New Hampshire.

He and his wife, Helen, are scheduled to spend October and November in South Africa on a Knight International Press Fellowship as teachers and consultants to assist South African media in this time of change.

1964

On March 16, The White House announced that **Thomas B. Ross** was appointed Special Assistant to the President, Senior Director for Public Affairs at the National Security Council and Deputy White House Press Secretary. The appointment became effective April 4.

Ross was Senior Vice President and Worldwide Media Director for Hill & Knowlton, an international public relations firm. Previous positions include Senior Vice President of NBC News and Senior Vice President for Corporate Affairs for RCA. He also worked in the Carter Administration from 1977 to 1981 as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs and Pentagon spokesman. Before that he was Washington correspondent, foreign correspondent and Washington bureau chief for The Chicago Sun-Times.

1965

Smith Hempstone, as Diplomat in Residence, taught Kenyan history at the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington in the spring. After ending his tour as Ambassador to Kenya, he taught at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tenn. last fall. Hempstone and his wife, Kathaleen, have returned to their home in Bethesda, Md.

1968

Edmund B. Lambeth, Professor of Journalism at the University of Missouri, was chosen in a national competition to participate in a National Endowment for the Humanities institute this summer on "Teaching Ethics and International Affairs."

1969

Paul Green Houston, 52, died of colon cancer at Fairfax Hospital in Virginia on May 29. A reporter with The Los Angeles Times, he joined the Washington bureau in 1972. Houston began working for The Los Angeles Times as a staff writer in Los Angeles in 1965, and moved to the Washington bureau to cover the California congressional delegation. He later covered all of Congress and wrote the paper's Washington Insight column.

He leaves his wife, Virginia, and two daughters, Katherine and Susanna Houston, of Falls Church, and a sister, Diana Houston of Alexandria.

1972

Mike Flanagan, former Assistant Managing Editor of The Sacramento Bee, committed suicide at his home on May 17. He

was 54 years old. Flanagan joined The Bee in 1983 as assistant metro editor and served as city editor from 1985 to 1989, when he was named assistant managing editor with responsibility for recruiting and overseeing The Bee's internship programs.

Dale Maharidge, NF '88, who worked under Flanagan for seven years, said: "Mike cared deeply about journalism and journalists. He made reporting an intellectual process, increasingly rare in this day of infotainment. And he despised duplicity, weak arguments and the lack of passion. The profession will miss him."

Before joining The Bee, Flanagan worked for The Oklahoma City Times and The Tulsa World. He spent nine years in Washington covering national politics for The World.

He is survived by his children, Michael and Erin, from his 18-year marriage to Pam Jouret Flanagan, which ended in divorce.

1976

Gunter Haaf left GEO Wissen, the science periodical he founded within the GEO magazine group, after seven years to join Natur magazine, where he has been Editor in Chief since July 1993. Natur is the leading German environmental magazine, published in Munich by the Swiss-based Ringier Verlag, an international media and printing company with major printing facilities in the U.S. Haaf, with his background as a science writer (he wrote the bestseller "Rettet die Natur"—"Save Nature"—published in 1981), has already introduced a series of in-depth changes in structure, content, and layout to counter a rapid shift of opinion within the German public.

But, according to Haaf, there still is a very strong environmental movement in both eastern and western Germany; environmental politics has become a mainstream issue among the major parties. Haaf says he likes the challenge of combining in-depth science reporting with political, economic and ethical issues.

Natur's editorial offices are in Munich, so Gunter is commuting for now. His wife, Elga, just finished a four-year study in art therapy. Their children, Nicolas, 16, and Susanne, 15, are finishing high school and play in a blues/rock/jazz band Nicolas founded.

1977

M.G.G. Pillai visited Lippmann House early in May while in the United States for the graduation of his son, Sreejit, from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Pillai said that when he was in New Delhi in December he was able to meet with Nieman alumni **Aron Chacko** (1978), **Chanchal Sarkar** (1961), **Ramindar Singh** (1982), and **K.R. Malkani** (1962). Malkani, Pillai reports, continues to be active as one of the Vice Presidents of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), India's main opposition political party, and continues to edit the party's journal; and Sarkar was recently in Kuala Lumpur for a United Nations-sponsored conference on the environment.

Pillai also found out that **Khen Chin** (1979), has retired as Editor in Chief of The Star in Malaysia but remains on the paper as a columnist and advisor.

1980

Atsushi Kuse writes to tell us of a job change: "I had been working with Dentsu Burson-Marsteller, a major public relations consultancy in Tokyo, as a senior vice president....While working as a senior consultant for public relations and public affairs, I'd been heavily involved in the Japanese politics as an adviser...."

"Early last December, I was officially appointed as a special adviser to the Minister of State for Defense, Mr. Kazuo Aichi of Japan Renewal Party, the core political party of the Japanese coalition government, in accordance with the resignation of his predecessor. I've been working in my new capacity as a special adviser for the Minister for policy and communications...."

"Usually, every assistant to any minister in Japan is appointed from either among bureaucrats or private secretaries. My appointment from the private sector is the first of its kind in Japan and is almost like a political appointment as is the case in the United States. My appointment clearly illustrates how the Japanese politics is beginning to change."

1984

Nina Bernstein has won the 34th annual Mike Berger Award given by Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism for her reports on failures in foster care in New York City. Nina, a special projects reporter for New York Newday since 1986, was presented with \$1,000 by

Acting Dean Stephen Isaacs in ceremonies at Columbia University on Wednesday, May 18.

Bernstein was cited for a two-part series, "Separated at Birth," which told the story of Shirley Wilder and her son Lamonte who, after having been separated shortly after his birth, were reunited by Ms. Bernstein after having not seen each other in 19 years.

The judges said that Ms. Bernstein's extensive interviews "resonate with beautiful writing, curiosity-driven reporting and a trained ear for New Yorkers' reactions to life on the edge."

The award is named for Meyer "Mike" Berger, who died in 1959. He was a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for The New York Times.

Since joining New York Newsday Bernstein has written about child welfare, health care, the legal system and public school education. She has won two awards from the National Education Writers Association, spent a year in Berlin in 1990-91 for Newsday's foreign desk and a month in the former Yugoslavia on special assignment in 1992. She currently is on leave from Newsday as an Alicia Patterson Foundation Fellow to do research on foster care.

1988

Eileen McNamara has left The Boston Globe after 15 years to pursue book projects and freelance magazine articles and to spend more time with her children, Timothy, 8; Patrick, 6, and Katie, 3.

McNamara's first book, "Breakdown: Sex, Suicide and the Harvard Psychiatrist," was published last spring by Pocket Books.

1989

Julio Godoy writes to say that he will be moving from Bremen, Germany, to Bonn to join his wife, Barbara Schulte, who is a correspondent for Radio Bremen and East German Radio Brandenburg. For now, Julio has been commuting from Bremen to Bonn to continue his work at the University of Bremen, where he is "one of four anchorpersons of a radio program in Germany—a program produced exclusively by immigrants.

"Turks, Kurds...black Africans, Arabs, East Europeans (and I) produce it in Bremen, covering foreigner-related themes: racism, neonazism, bureaucrazy...and also nice things...wonderful music..."

1990

We received a letter from **Yossi Melman** saying that "In August 1994 we are going back to our home in Israel after a wonderful sabbatical we have spent in the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. During our stay here my new book, 'Friends In Deed: Inside the U.S.-Israel Alliance,' was published by Hyperion. The book was co-authored with CBS News correspondent Dan Raviv."

1991

Among other things, **Kabral Blay-Amihere** spent his Nieman year writing a journal that has been published in paperback by Trans Afrika News in Accra-Ghana. Titled "Tears for a Continent: An American Diary," Kabral says in the forward that the essays, most of which were written in 1990, "represent my reflections on America and a number of international events. Thus these essays offer a perspective from a foreigner, an African living in USA as very historic events unfolded all over the world."

A Nieman reunion was held at the Santa Fe restaurant in New York City on New Year's Day. The celebrants were **Marcia** and **Jackie Greene**, **Dale Mezzacappa**, **Jody Jaffee** and **Charlie Shepard**, **Barbara Ross** and **Bob Tembeckjian**, **Joan** and **Kevin Noblet**, and **Rena** and **Joel Greenberg**, who were visiting from Israel.

1992

Marcus Brauchli writes that he and his wife, **Maggie Farley**, are both doing well in Hong Kong. They were in Colorado briefly at Christmas, saw classmate **George de Lama** and **Marja Mills** in Los Angeles and "have been from Manchuria to Tibet in China since then."

Classmate **Stan Grossfeld** visited in March when, Brauchli says, "we wandered all over, went to a Peter Gabriel concert (at which we were, to quote the next day's paper, a security problem, because we rushed the stage) and traded stories of Nieman Fellows..."

Dai Qing was chief editor of "Yangtze! Yangtze!," a collection of documents and articles by Chinese scientists, artists, economists and journalists, published in 1989, and released now in English by Earthscan Publications, Ltd. The pieces

oppose the Three Gorges project, a dam planned for the Yangtze River. The book was banned by authorities shortly after its release, but the government did decide to postpone construction for five years.

Dai Qing spent the 1993-94 academic year as a Research Fellow at the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center at Columbia University.

1993

Heidi Evans and her husband, **Josh Getlin**, announce that **Alex Evans Getlin**, a girl, was born on March 2, 1994, in New York City. Heidi and Josh emphasize that Alex formally qualifies as a "Nieman Kid '93" since she was conceived during the last week of the program. Heidi will join The Wall Street Journal in August 1994 to cover urban affairs and American cities.

Barbara Gutierrez, who was promoted to managing editor of El Nuevo Herald in Miami last fall, is leading the paper through many changes—in a compensation plan, committees to improve communication within the newsroom and training sessions for reporters. Because of the growing Brazilian community, the paper now publishes two Portuguese pages within El Nuevo each week.

Gutierrez spent five days in May at the Harvard Business School at a Knight-Ridder-sponsored leadership conference.

Terry Tang and her husband, **Bill Lee**, announce the birth of **John Vincent Lee**, on April 10. Terry is on maternity leave from her position as editorial writer for The Seattle Times.

1994

Kofi Coomson, Editor in Chief of The Ghanaian Chronicle, Accra, won the 1993 "Journalist of the Year" trophy at the National Media Awards ceremony in Ghana last January. Coomson, in Cambridge for his Nieman year, was unable to accept his award in person.

Jinsook Lee, international news reporter for the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation, hosted two classmates during Harvard's spring break in her native South Korea. **Terry Gilbert** and **Maria Henson** traveled with Lee to Seoul, Kyongju and her home town of Taegu. The three Fellows spoke to about 100 students studying English at Lee's alma mater, Kyongpook University in Taegu.

“Nkosi Sikelel’ iAfrika’—Then Tears”

Barney Mthombothi, Day Editor for The Sowetan in Johannesburg, who just completed his Nieman year, voted for the first time in the recent South African election. He wrote the following piece for a writing class after casting his ballot as an absentee voter at the Massachusetts State House.

I was struck by the ordinariness of it all. A cross on a piece of paper and I was out of the building before anyone could shout “vote.” Once outside, I felt so naked, so empty. “Is this all there is to it?” I whispered to myself.

Where was the sense of achievement? The cloud nine feeling? I walked slowly down the steps. This man who has always cajoled me to buy a copy of Militant came rushing up the steps. I don’t know his name, but I have met him on such occasions. A devotee of Nelson Mandela, he would pepper his conversations with phrases like: “You know, Mandela did warn us about that,” followed by the suitable quotation from his hero.

I smiled at him and shook my head.

“So, you’ve voted?” Militant inquired.

“Yeah,” I said, with little enthusiasm.

“So why are you shaking your head?”

“Well, you know,” I cleared my throat trying to sound very intellectual, “this thing lacks context. It feels odd, awkward. We need the waves and oceans of emotions here. I feel like a fish in a desert.”

Three on a Book

Three Nieman Fellows were involved in the development of the publication, “Death By Cheeseburger: High School Journalism in the 1990’s.” **John Seigenthaler** (1959) was the chief advisor during research and writing of the book and has become its principal spokesman since publication; **Joel Kaplan** (1985) was one of the primary writers, investigating the current state of censorship in high school newspapers, and **Alice Bonner** (1978) originated the idea of the book and guided its development, contributing to the writing and editing throughout.

The book, published by The Freedom Forum, 1101 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Va. 22209, is a comprehensive study of high school journalism. ■

“That’s true,” Militant said. “It’s a pity you came so late. Governor Weld came out to take a picture with voters and there was quite some excitement. The guy has never lifted a finger for us, but then he’s in charge here. Let’s wait for the results.” He held firmly on my shoulder as if to reassure me.

I had arrived at the State House immediately after lunch time. A cluster of people were milling around the gate, obviously having already cast their votes. They were doing nothing in particular, standing there as though they found it difficult to let go of that momentous occasion. I was suddenly reminded of a scene back home after a soccer match when fans of the losing team would stand around conducting a post mortem on the game, trying to find fault or nail a scapegoat. But these were not losers. They have regained a substantial part of their being.

I walked up to the gate, my body suddenly feeling heavy and tired, as if pulled down by a mixture of suppressed excitement, apprehension and awe of the occasion.

“This is history,” I mumbled to myself.

“You’re part of history.” I tried to think of all the big moments in history to equal the occasion unfolding before me. But my train of thought was suddenly sidetracked by hands shooting like roots in my direction. Everyone of them, total strangers among them, wanted to shake hands and introduce themselves. A lady friend took me by the hand: “Come, I want to introduce you to my mother.” South Africans have finally found each other.

A South African political activist was standing at the entrance to the polling station. “So we’ve made it!” he exclaimed with excitement. “I’ve come to spoil my ballot,” I said. He laughed. From here on my recollection suddenly becomes fuzzy. I felt as though dazed and walking through a haze, all at the same time. Outside a small group was still refusing to leave.

“Hey you know!” one man shouted to a friend standing next to him. “I never knew this voter education thing was so effective. I called my mother last night and said ‘so who are going to vote for?’ She said, ‘Sorry I can’t tell. It’s a secret.’ I said, ‘But I’m your son.’ She said, ‘No dice, it’s a secret.’”

Walking home I thought of what the day meant, of what it took to get us where we

were, of the sacrifices, the massacres, the Sharpevilles, the Sowetos.

All these just to make a cross on a piece of paper! I thought of the man who gave me my first political lesson, the man who spoke to me about the caucus before I even knew what a political party was. I thought of my father. I wondered what he was doing. He’s a pensioner, so I guessed he was voting. I wondered what was going through his head as he stood erect and proud in that queue.

He’s probably thinking of his father, the grandfather I never knew. It was he who taught my father about politics. It was simply part of the advice that a father gave to a son. “Know where you come from” is what my father says his father used to tell him. And he was well-placed to discuss political intricacies of the day. As leader of the area, he was in charge of everything from solving marital disputes to giving political direction. My father still remembers very well the political meetings held under a tree, and all the dignitaries who would visit the area. These were the meetings where residents would be informed about such things as the defiance campaign and the huge nationwide consultation that led to the adoption of the Freedom Charter.

My father, I thought, has a lot to think about today. He adored his father, and the tragic way in which my grandfather met his death always makes him very emotional. This happy occasion will cause him a lot of pain.

I wondered too whom my mother would vote for. Will she do it on her own or will she consult my father? It suddenly struck me that although my father spoke a lot about politics with us, I never heard any political discussion between him and my mother.

It was while watching the lowering of the old flag and the raising of the new on the evening television news that it suddenly hit me that this was for real.

The rendering of the melodious “Nkosi Sikelel’ iAfrika” by an almost all-white choir had some rough edges to it and the brass band needed some practicing, but I could feel my stomach twirling and turning. I sat there silent and alone.

This was just too much for one man to handle. I gave my emotions free rein.

Tears streamed down my cheeks. ■

26, Including Editor in Residence, Selected for 1994-1995 Class

The following have been appointed to the 57th class of Nieman Fellows:

AMERICAN JOURNALISTS

CHRIS BOWMAN, 39, environmental writer, *The Sacramento Bee*, one of the recipients of an Environmental Nieman Fellowship. Beginning in 1994-95, Nieman Fellowships for environmental journalists are being awarded to one U.S. and one international journalist. Funding is provided as part of a grant awarded to the University in 1993 by the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation for the support of study, research and other activities in areas related to the environment.

MARK CARTER, 30, correspondent, in San Francisco, CNN. Mr. Carter will study subjects such as immigration and economic democracy. In addition he is eager to audit courses which will strengthen his own management skills.

LESLIE DREYFOUS, 30, national writer, Associated Press. A reporter focusing on America's sense of community, Ms. Dreyfous will take courses on urban planning and architecture, business management, social work and law.

PETER ENG, 37, news editor, Bangkok bureau, Associated Press. Mr. Eng expects to focus on foreign policy, economic growth and regional conflicts as they affect Asia. He is also eager to broaden his perspective of the U.S. after a decade in Asia.

MARILYN GEEWAX, 38, editorial writer and columnist, *The Atlanta Constitution*. She plans to concentrate on international trade and economic history, especially that of Latin America, in order to follow the long-term impact of trends like NAFTA.

LISA GETTER, 34, investigative reporter, *The Miami Herald*. As Latin America looms larger in the daily affairs of her region, Ms. Getter is planning to study Latin American history and public policy issues which affect Latin America.

BRAD GOLDSTEIN, 32, special projects reporter, *The Eagle-Tribune*, Lawrence,

Massachusetts. Mr. Goldstein's study plan revolves around the electronic revolution in the newsroom. Among the subjects he plans to study are constitutional law, statistics, social studies and economics.

LORIE HEARN, 40, legal affairs reporter, *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. Ms. Hearn's work is concerned with the law and issues of violence. She plans to search for courses in history, law, sociology and psychology which will help strengthen reporting in these areas.

ANNE V. HULL, 32, reporter, *St. Petersburg Times*. Ms. Hull hopes to take advantage of the African-American studies program to develop a cross-disciplinary curriculum to prepare her for more concentrated reporting on society's disenfranchised and voiceless.

KATHRYN KROSS, 33, producer, ABC News, *Nightline*. Ms. Kross has plans to study recent issues in the law and modern American and European history, and to engage in an independent program to exercise and strengthen her writing skills.

MICHAEL RILEY, 35, bureau chief, in Atlanta, Time. In addition to a varied study plan in public policy and history, Mr. Riley will also study the emerging

computer technology and its communications applications.

KARL SCHOENBERGER, 40, business reporter (Asia Pacific correspondent), *Los Angeles Times*. Mr. Schoenberger is eager to expand his knowledge of Europe in general and Germany in particular in order to explore connections and parallels with his work on the developing economies of Asia.

LOUIS A. URENECK, 43, editor and vice president, *The Portland Newspapers*, Portland, Maine. Mr. Ureneck is the first Editor in Residence in the Nieman Foundation. He will take advantage of his interaction with Nieman Fellows and course offerings to think more about the role of interpretive reporting in American journalism.

JANET WILSON, 35, staff writer, *Detroit Free Press*. Ms. Wilson will focus her studies in sociology, child psychology, neurobiology and anthropology in an effort to develop a better understanding of violence in American society.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS

GEORGE ABRAHAM, 30, reporter, *Khaleej Times*, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Mr. Abraham plans to concentrate on the connection between aviation and international diplomacy. In addition, he hopes to study the New World Order, the role played by expatriates in developing countries, and nuclear energy. Mr. Abraham, a citizen of India, is one of two journalists awarded a 1994-95 Chiba-Nieman Fellowship in memory of Japanese journalist Atsuko Chiba, late columnist for the *Yomiuri Shimbun* and Nieman Fellow '68; funding is provided by The Atsuko Chiba Foundation, Inc.

PAUL CARVALHO, 42, television news and documentary reporter, *Newswatch*, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Montreal, Quebec. Mr. Carvalho expects to focus on the implications of NAFTA and on the communications field and its future. He is the recipient of the 1994-95 Martin Wise Goodman Canadian Nieman

Among the Winners

Doug Marlette (1981), **Zvi Dor-Ner** (1977) and Nieman Reports won Wilbur Awards for "excellence in communicating religious issues, values and themes." Marlette won for his comic strip "Rev. Will B. Dunn;" Dor-Ner, an executive producer, won for the WGBH-TV program "The Longest Hatred." Nieman Reports won for its Summer 1993 issue, "God in the Newsroom."

The awards were presented at a ceremony in Birmingham, Alabama, on April 9. The awards are given by the Religious Public Relations Council in honor of Dr. Marvin C. Wilbur, a longtime leader in religious public relations and volunteer executive of RPRC for almost three decades.

Fellowship in memory of Martin Wise Goodman, late president of Toronto Star Newspapers Ltd. and Nieman Fellow '62; funding is from the U.S. and Canada.

BARBARA CIESZEWSKA, 46, bureau chief in Katowice, Poland, Rzeczpospolita. As one of two recipients of an Environmental Nieman Fellowship, Ms. Cieszewska will pursue a course of concentrated study on the environment. Funding is provided as part of a grant awarded to the University in 1993 by the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation for the support of study, research and other activities in areas related to the environment.

MERVAT DIAB, 35, foreign editor, Al-Ahram, Cairo, Egypt. Ms. Diab plans to study religion-based radical movements in the Middle East, concentrating on the political, economic, and religious factors that lead to the rise of fundamentalism, and on a comparable study of radical groups in Third World countries. Her fellowship is funded through a grant from The Ford Foundation.

BARBARA FOLSCHER, 33, specialist producer, based in Cape Town, Television News Productions, South African Broadcasting Corporation. Ms. Folscher is planning to study the processes of cross-cultural communications, concentrating on information technology and on community development and psychology, as well as on the issues which confront a society undergoing major change. Her fellowship is supported by the United States-South Africa Leader Exchange Program.

CHEMI CHE-MPONDA KADETE, 30, senior staff reporter, Tanzania Standard Newspapers Ltd., Dar es Salaam. Ms. Kadete's study plan includes courses in gender studies, teacher education, management, French language, and drama or song. Her fellowship is funded through a grant from The Ford Foundation.

MANA KOSHIO, 28, reporter/director, in the program production department, Nippon Television Network Corporation, Tokyo, Japan. With an interest in medical systems, Ms. Koshio expects to focus her studies on the laws regarding medical treatments, the economic aspects, and the qualifications of personnel. Her fellowship is supported by the Nippon Television Network Corporation.

KEMAL KURSPAHCIC, 47, editor-in-chief, Oslobođenje, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Mr. Kurspahic is planning an in-depth study of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. His fellowship will be supported by The Freedom Forum.

PAUL STOOP, 39, editor, on the education page, Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, Germany. With a special interest in education, Mr. Stoop expects to focus on educational systems and policies, focusing in particular on U.S. education policy. He also plans to study migration, with an emphasis on the history of immigration in the U.S. and on the developing attitudes regarding ethnicity and national identity. His fellowship is supported through outside funding.

TSANG TAK-SING, 44, chief editor/associate publisher, Ta Kung Pao, Hong Kong. Mr. Tsang plans to concentrate his studies on the evolving role of the media in China, drawing comparisons and contrasts with the countries of the former Warsaw Pact. He is one of two journalists awarded a 1994-95 Chiba-Nieman Fellowship with funding provided by The Atsuko Chiba Foundation, Inc.

ANDRAS VAGVOLGYI, 34, editor-in-chief, Magyar Narancs, Budapest, Hungary. Mr. Vagvolgyi's study plan includes courses on international politics, the media and politics, new communications technologies, film, and comparative literature. His fellowship will be supported in part by a grant from The German Marshall Fund of the United States.

WU XIAOYONG, 41, former news director and deputy department director of Radio Beijing English Service, currently a freelance translator and consultant for the World Bank's Resident Mission in China. Mr. Wu hopes to pursue courses in economics, concentrating on the marketing and financial management of media organizations, as well as on development economics. His fellowship is supported by funding available to the Nieman Foundation. ■

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