
NIEMAN REPORTS

VOL. XLII, No.2, SUMMER 1988

MIKE PRIDE describes a New Hampshire newspaper covering the hectic primary campaign.

SABINE ROLLBERG questions a cover-up: Where were all the German journalists during and after the "thousand years?"

HARRISON SALISBURY relates journalists and their profession to a Japanese folk legend — *Roshomon*.

C.K. McCLATCHY judges a disturbing trend — the proliferation and domination of chain-owned newspapers.

GRADY CLAY scans the land and sees the need for a *GAZETTEER* to decipher real estate jargon.

MICHAEL KIRKHORN suggests a dose of skepticism for journalists who heed the call to advocate causes.

BOOKS

MADELEINE BLAIS on journalists, their stories and photos that won the coveted prize — a Pulitzer.

DANA BULLEN on the dissemination and impact of news in developing countries.

ROBERT CLARK on the many facets of managing a newsroom and juggling skills.

NED CLINE on a newspaper family who sold its birthright for a massive sum.

JULIUS DUSCHA on Washington revelations by a veteran newsman who dissects presidents, policies, and power-plays.

ALBERT MAY on journalists exploring political and ethical issues.

Regarding the Mind's Eye

To look is not always to see. Skilled reporters, however, have learned to see the unseen; their newsgathering is multi-dimensional, and their efforts keep a lively public informed and questioning. The popularity of radio talk shows, phone-in programs for television, and the op ed pages attests to the thousands of news consumers who have seen beyond the headlines and who want to be heard.



In the pages of *Nieman Reports* we endeavor both to look and to see — to behold more than the “silent rhetoric” that is continually at work in the news arena.

Editor Mike Pride of Concord, New Hampshire, comments on the 1988 presidential primary campaign in that state and describes how a campaign within a campaign affects local and national political coverage.

Sabine Rollberg takes a second look at some German journalists at work today, remarks on their stance during World War II, and mentions the moral courage that will be required to admit to mistakes.

C.K. McClatchy shows that

newspaper chains offer “the best and the worst” in ownership and points out the importance of applying high standards to the product.

Harrison Salisbury talks about “tricks of the trade” and the risks entailed in getting the story. He explains how foreign correspondents in particular face difficulties and perils that ordinarily are not experienced by reporters in the United States.

Grady Clay rings the changes on the current practice of “combining word and thing to communicate meaning” and shows how language has become a “market place.” His concern extends to the need of ecological inventories and political protection for our natural and scenic resources.

Michael Kirkhorn focuses on journalists who warn of the hazardous and risky situations often hidden in everyday living, and urges cooperation between reporters and the scientific community as they analyze contemporary social problems.

In this issue the book reviews, each written by a Nieman Fellow, include:

the 1987 crop of writings that won a Pulitzer Prize; a discussion of communication and development *vis-a-vis* the Third World; a guide to newsroom management; an account of a prominent newspaper family; a description of what makes the great engine of political Washington run; and the results of a two-day seminar on the role and responsibilities of the press in covering political candidates. Two of the books were written by Nieman Fellows.

* * *

Our hope is that readers of *NR* always will be able to look and to see. What the eye transmits to the brain shapes attitudes and selects the scene for action.

News consumers who have clear pictures in their mind's eye take democracy seriously. The power of an informed citizenry is a rich resource and the most important kind of wealth a country can claim.

— T.B.K.L.



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CONTENTS

- 2 **Regarding the Mind's Eye** Tenney B.K. Lehman
- 4 **The Saga of a Small Town Newspaper Covering a Big Time Campaign** Mike Pride
The 22,000 circulation newspaper covered the campaign "day after day, month after month."
- 8 **German Journalists and Their Past** Sabine Rollberg
If the perpetrators felt guiltless — should the media feel guilty?
- 10 **The 1988 Joe Alex Morris Jr. Memorial Lecture** Harrison Salisbury
Vietnam: The Roshomon Effect
Covering wars, or any story, the reporter digs for facts hiding behind "truth."
- 19 **How Newspapers are Owned — and Does it Matter?** C.K. McClatchy
That day looms large when newspaper people no longer run newspapers.
- 25 **Off the Beaten Track** Grady Clay
Subtitled: Shifting Sands, Sticky Wicket, Fast Track, Outback, Last Ditch, and Armpit of the Nation.
- 32 **The Media and Risk Communications** Michael J. Kirkhorn
Journalists should first assess the alarmers before sounding the klaxon.
- 37 **Books**
The Pulitzer Prizes: Volume One, 1987
edited by Kendall J. Wills Madeleine Blais
Communication, Development, and the Third World: The Global Politics of Information
by Robert L. Stevenson Dana Bullen
NEWSROOM MANAGEMENT: A Guide to Theory and Practice by Robert H. Giles Robert P. Clark
The Bingham of Louisville: The Dark History Behind One of America's Great Fortunes
by David Leon Chandler
with Mary Voelz Chandler Ned Cline
House of Dreams: The Bingham Family of Louisville
By Marie Brenner
The Power Game: How Washington Works
by Hedrick Smith Julius Duscha
Covering The Candidates: Role and Responsibilities of the Press: Seminar sponsored by the American Press Institute Albert May
- 48 **Liu Binyan to Join Class of '89 as a Nieman Fellow**
- 49 **Nieman Notes**

The Saga of a Small Town Newspaper Covering a Big Time Campaign

Mike Pride

*The 22,000 circulation newspaper covered the campaign
"day after day, month after month."*

There were two 1988 New Hampshire presidential primary campaigns, the one my newspaper covered day after day, month after month, and the one the national media covered sporadically for two months, then intensely in the eight days after Iowa. If life followed logic, the presence of thousands of reporters, photographers and television crews would have made those final days the most substantive and informative of the campaign. Just the opposite happened.

The national media eliminated most of the candidates from their coverage plans before a vote was even cast in New Hampshire, creating the impression that a vote for Pete du Pont or Bruce Babbitt was a vote

wasted. Although the press had had a torrid fling with Babbitt around the New Year, the only poll-poor candidate who won big coverage between Iowa and New Hampshire was Alexander Haig — and that was only when he announced his withdrawal in favor of Robert Dole.

least to say, since complex messages could not penetrate a press obsessed with polling data, personalities, gimmickry and whether George Bush's parachute was going to open.

At the *Concord Monitor*, a 22,000 circulation afternoon daily in the state capital, we tried from the outset

... we tried ... to provide a different kind of coverage. We considered the primary a local story, and we told our 14 reporters to use their territorial advantage and easy access to bring the candidates and their ideas into readers' living rooms. We also told them to avoid the language of the horse race: frontrunner, darkhorse, back of the pack.

Mike Pride, Nieman Fellow '85, is editor of the *Concord Monitor*. He has been in that post since 1983. He has also served as the *Monitor's* managing editor for five years. In 1986 he was awarded Editor of the Year by the National Press Foundation for his coverage of the shuttle disaster.

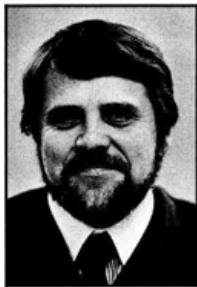


Photo by Garo Lachinian. *Concord Monitor*

In deciding whom and what to cover during the primary campaign, the national media looked to the latest polls and to each other. Their insularity, combined with a desire to be in the know about who was winning, undermined their objectivity. It also favored the candidates with the

to provide a different kind of coverage. We considered the primary a local story, and we told our 14 reporters to use their territorial advantage and easy access to bring the candidates and their ideas into readers' living rooms. We also told them to avoid the language of the

horse race: frontrunner, darkhorse, back of the pack.

Not counting almost-rans and early casualties, the primary we covered had 13 major candidates, six Republicans and seven Democrats. It opened officially on July 28, 1986, when du Pont came by the paper for an interview, though it had really begun long before with speculation about regulars, like Teddy Kennedy, and irregulars, like Lewis Lehrman and Lee Iacocca.

The aim of our coverage was to help readers figure out which of the 13 men on the ballot would make the best presidential candidates. An essay in *Media and Momentum*, a book on the 1984 New Hampshire primary edited by Gary R. Orren and Nelson W. Polsby, assessed the *Monitor's* coverage of that campaign as "simply prodigious." Some luckless researcher had drawn the task of putting a yardstick to the stories. By his or her calculation, the *Monitor* devoted 7,401 inches to the '84 New Hampshire primary from October through February, compared with 3,001 inches in *The Washington Post* and 4,768 in *The Boston Globe*.

The essay also described our 1984 coverage as "downright egalitarian," pointing out that between the Iowa caucuses and the primary, "the *Monitor* put Glenn and Hollings, of all people, in as many headlines as Mondale."

Since these conclusions matched our aims, Managing Editor John Fensterwald and I shared them with our staff late last summer and told our editors and reporters that with a double-barreled primary in 1988, we could do better. We didn't want more inches, just more depth and breadth.

The *Monitor's* Game Plan

Our plan was to cover the candidates anytime they came within easy driving distance of Concord and to augment the daily coverage with enterprise and investigation. The *Monitor* subscribes to the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service, and we decided to use *Times* and *Post* profiles rather than

duplicate the effort. We ran Barry Bearak's [*Los Angeles Times*] huge profile of Bush, for example, as a three-part series.

In lieu of profiles, we worked out with our reporting staff a series focusing on specific aspects of the candidates' lives. We interviewed many of Jack Kemp's pro football teammates and wrote about his quarterbacking days. We sent a reporter to Pat Robertson's old church haunts to find out what Robertson believed. We delved into Haig's tenure as secretary of state, Babbitt's 1960s experiences, du Pont's record as governor of Delaware. The idea was to see how these experiences related to leadership, character, and other presidential prerequisites. Most of the research and reporting were done in November and December, before the campaign heated up.

We had other projects as well. We did 26 editorial board interviews with the 13 candidates. Our reporters wrote accounts of nearly every interview, and between late November and early February, we published full-page edited transcripts of interviews with each of the 13.

We brought in Michael Birkner, a former editorial writer who is also an American historian, to lead our editorial board questioning and to write columns, commentaries, and historical perspectives. Emily O'Reilly, a Nieman Fellow, Class of '88, from Ireland, spent two weeks with us in January writing a column about the primary called "Through Irish Eyes." Our reporters did a series about people working for the candidates in New Hampshire. We prepared a two-page issues and answers chart, and we had regular columns and enterprise stories throughout the months leading up to the vote.

Our strategy was to stay ahead of the campaign early so our reporters would be free to cover the rapid twists and turns of the final days. The campaign intensified at the first of the year, but even before then, we had an inkling of what the media invasion would be like.

Hart's Return: A Harbinger

Like many others, we were tipped early the morning of December 15 that Gary Hart would re-enter the race that day. It was an especially big story for us because he was coming to Concord to make the announcement. By noontime, more than 100 media people had gathered around a cluster of microphones on the State House steps.

Personally, I see images of Lee Hart at the beginning and the end of Gary Hart's final chapter. In one she is marching at her husband's side as he splits the sea of reporters, photographers, and television crews that day in front of the State House. Her face is a little puffy, but it is full of resolve and defiance. She is wearing a bright red coat. It is a grand entrance.

In the other image it is February 16, the night of the primary, and Lee Hart is standing in the foyer of a Concord restaurant waiting for her husband to arrive and speak to his supporters. It is dark in the foyer, and she is alone by a coarse granite-block wall. Several people come and wait self-consciously for the elevator to take them to the party below. Someone asks her if she's all right, and she nods, and the awkward silence returns.

What happened between those two moments wasn't pretty, for Gary Hart or the media. Hart's re-entry raised two major questions: What will this mean for the race? And what does he have to offer? The media focused on the first. Reporters wrote about the polls, Hart's no-Iowa strategy, the effect on voters of the Donna Rice affair. They got experts to speculate on which Democratic candidates Hart would undercut and how much his candidacy would hurt his party's nominee come November.

On the second question — what Hart stood for other than adultery — the reporting was slim. Ted Koppel did another interview, but most reporters simply ignored Hart's ideas. The media seemed determined to confirm Hart's indictment of them.



They came from all over and they met on the steps of the Capitol in Concord to ply Gary Hart with questions about his reentry in the presidential primaries. There were the media — newspaper and TV — with names as familiar as those of movie stars. There was the foreign press not quite believing what they were seeing and hearing, and there were those who were covering a “big story” for the first time. It was New Hampshire’s time to shine — it happens every four years.

They covered the horse race, the polls, how ya gonna win? Hart called it “a trivialization of our leadership,” attributing the phrase to Barbara Tuchman, and used one of his rivals as an example.

“Bruce Babbitt has been on the CBS Evening News twice in a year, and I’m sure that was some obligatory thing where they were doing all the candidates,” he said. “Are you going to argue that if somebody turned up a photo of Bruce Babbitt in college wrecking his car while he was drunk that that wouldn’t lead the evening news?”

Perhaps it didn’t come through to the rest of the country, but in the Monitor’s coverage of Hart, it was clear that he was proposing an American *perestroika*, a radical redirection for the country. Our reporter, Scot French, studied Hart’s

campaign booklet (“The Sayings of Chairman Gary,” we called it around the office) and bounced his ideas off experts in economics, the military and foreign policy. Most of the experts were critical, but Hart didn’t mind that. At a campaign appearance a couple of days later, Hart himself held French’s story up as an example of what the media were missing in the coverage of his campaign. Journalists are properly squeamish about compliments from politicians, but Hart was right in this case.

Lost Opportunity

The media’s focus on the horse race did more than blur the big picture some candidates were trying to create. Because it had 13 candidates of widely differing experience and expertise, the campaign provided a chance to explore most issues facing

the country. Babbitt had good ideas about day care and the space program. Haig spoke eloquently in an editorial board interview about the pitfalls of the volunteer Army and the question of women in combat. Du Pont, the libertarian extremist, forced his listeners to question their assumptions and to contemplate issues and the nature of governing.

It was also du Pont who correctly saw the New Hampshire campaign as a battle between trust-me candidates and vision candidates. Media coverage favored the former. Bush’s dismissal of du Pont’s ideas as dumb ideas was a great television moment, but Bush never had to face the question of whether dumb ideas were better than no ideas at all. Instead he was able to dominate the news through a series of great television moments. His exchange with Dan Rather enjoyed a three-night run on the evening news.

Shortly after that, the Gun Owners of New Hampshire staged a rally for raw-meat Republicans that should have shed its glory on Kemp (“My idea of gun control is a steady aim”) or Haig (“I’ve spent most of my life around firearms — big ones and small ones”). But Bush’s handlers had equipped him with a 5½ ounce plastic pistol capable of passing through airport metal detectors. He held it up during his speech, and — presto! — air-time, front-page play and a pistol-packing image for the fight against wimpdom.

While television in particular tended to treat the candidates like entertainers cloying for attention and to reward those whose staffs produced the best gimmicks, 1988 was also the year of the debate. The candidates had more opportunity to explain themselves than ever before, and the public had more opportunity to hear and see them. In New Hampshire it was also still possible to meet and speak with the candidates.

All of this should have led to a highly informed electorate, and perhaps it did. But after the national media arrived for the final days of the

campaign, any voter who wanted to consider issues and character was out of luck. I spoke at a forum at a temple in Concord a few days before the primary. A man in the audience asked how he could find out more about the candidates. Now that he was beginning to narrow his choices,

little influence on New Hampshire voters, the Iowa results and the media's interpretation of them not only skewed news coverage but also raised the stakes in the primary. The consensus on the Republican side was that if Bush lost New Hampshire, he'd be finished. On the Democratic

ised a live interview with duPont, among others. When his time came, he got one question: If you do as poorly in New Hampshire as you did in Iowa, will you pull out of the race?

At the *Monitor* we did a few things to resist this tide. We told our reporters we wanted a story on every candidate every day between Iowa and New Hampshire. We ran the last of our projects, including a two-page spread showing how the candidates differed on the issues. And we popped several good enterprise stories.

Amazing — But True?

Our best story was on Robertson, the hottest candidate coming out of Iowa. For three weeks, Ceci Connolly, the reporter who covered Robertson, had been trying to get his campaign to document some of the am-a-a-zing facts Robertson uses in his speeches. "I know one man who

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he said, he had been looking to television and the newspapers in vain for information about where the candidates stood on issues. My answer to him was that he was too late, that the final days of the primary campaign would be devoted to who was winning, to who was trashing whom in television ads, to anything unexpected, and to the campaigns of the Iowa five: Dole, Bush, Pat Robertson, Richard Gephardt, and Michael Dukakis.

First In The Nation?

This was not a satisfactory answer since it rubs against New Hampshire's status in the myth of modern presidential politics. In that myth, New Hampshire is first in the nation, and one of the good things about its being first is that anyone, small potatoes or big, can have a run at the presidency. The state's small size and the seasoned judgment of its voters are supposed to neutralize name recognition, big bucks, and slick media.

That may have been true once, but not anymore. Although Iowa's anointing of Dole and Gephardt had

side, it was that with the Iowa wind at his back, perhaps Gephardt could do what others had done: win New Hampshire by finishing a strong second to an established frontrunner. These were the story lines for the horse race, straightforward, tidy, easy to cover.

The short span between the caucuses on February 8 and the primary on February 16 also lent to the horse-race atmosphere. It made it impossible for those who did poorly in Iowa to overcome their also-ran status. A week before the primary, David Broder [*Washington Post* syndicated columnist] wrote that the candidates who didn't do well in Iowa "can say whatever they like for the next few days because it won't make a difference." Babbitt, the darling of the media just weeks before, was barely mentioned in *The Boston Globe* between Iowa and four days later, when he finally made a headline: "Babbitt says he is planning to continue to run." Even some local reporters succumbed to the national media's obsession with results. As the Iowa results were being counted, the Manchester ABC affiliate prom-

We told our reporters we wanted a story on every candidate every day between Iowa and New Hampshire. We ran the last of our projects, including a two-page spread showing how the candidates differed on the issues. And we popped several good enterprise stories.

is impotent who gave AIDS to his wife and the only thing they did was kiss," Robertson had told a New Hampshire audience. He had talked about a school district in Tennessee

continued to page 36

German Journalists and Their Past

Sabine Rollberg

If the perpetrators felt guiltless — should the media feel guilty?

Those whose most important task is to ask — question themselves the last.

After the West German judges, the industry bosses, the doctors, and others had been x-rayed about their Nazi involvement — pushed by the press and the student movement in the late sixties and seventies — now, finally, the journalists have to face a hard fact — their own profession has a blemished past.

Last December, *Der Spiegel* cover story “uncovered” a story that held little news; it had been talked about for years. It was first published in East Germany in 1962; here, it was considered Communist propaganda. This is the story:

In 1943, a talented German pianist, Karlrobert Kreiten, was killed by the Nazi regime. He was betrayed by neighbors to whom he had revealed his distrust of a Germany victory in World War II. An editorial in the *Berlin 12 Uhr Blatt* (12 O'clock paper), the daily newspaper owned by the Nazis, justified the artist's death penalty.

Sabine Rollberg, Nieman Fellow '87, is a special correspondent for the culture and science department of the broadcasting station, Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR) in Cologne, Federal Republic of Germany.



In a dictatorship the press agrees with the regime — 85 percent of the papers belonged to the NSDAP — National Socialist Working Class Party — the Nazi party.

The writer of that editorial justifying Kreiten's death penalty was Werner Höfer. Every Sunday since 1953, he has hosted a roundtable discussion. His guests were international journalists, including American newspapermen.

... there never was
a real denazification
in East or West
Germany.

Höfer's program, aired at noon-time, was titled *Der Internationale Fruhschoppen* — the international morning pint. For the television audience it was like a church service before the Sunday meal.

When *Der Spiegel* came out with this story Höfer was 74, and retired from some of his high ranking jobs such as television director of the Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR), the largest broadcasting station in Europe. But he still was hosting his *Fruhschoppen*. He had ambitions, terminated by *Der Spiegel*, to end his life raising his glass to the television audience.

The new WDR management urged him to resign. It is amazing that the administration acted now, because the fact that he had written for Nazi newspapers was always known. *Der Spiegel* revealed that Höfer wrote more than the article about the pianist Kreiten.

Now the question: Why did *Der Spiegel* publish the story now? Why did not German journalists unearth Höfer's past twenty-five years ago?

If reporters had started research on Höfer they would have also come up with others. For example, Henry Nannen, former publisher of *Der Stern*, who was a war correspondent; as was Lothar Buchheim, famous collector of expressionist art and author of *The Boat*; or Peter von Zahn, the first television reporter in the United States after World War II; and Professor Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann, today head of the Allensbach Institute, the major poll-taking organization in Germany. In the 1940's she wrote for *Das Reich*, the Nazi paper for intellectuals (if this is not a contradictory term).

And — and — and — the list would make a very impressive *Who is Who* of postwar celebrities in West Germany. But no journalist working for a major newspaper researched the subject.

Again, why not? First of all, it is difficult because one has to rely on what these people reveal about themselves. There are very few records in the archives of those who are still living. In a biography of *Who is Who* it is difficult to find details about people's

lives during the "thousand years."

The Höfer generation of journalists were not conscious of having acted wrongly. They were surrounded by people such as the former chancellor Kiesinger, the former prime minister of the state, Baden-Württemberg, Hans Filbinger — both have bloody hands — and the boss of the industry lobby, Hans Martin Schleyer, who made money with the pre- and postwar Germans. Only the red army faction who kidnapped and killed him in 1977, mentioned Schleyer's Nazi past. The names of other Nazi perpetrators are legion.

So why should journalists who "only" wrote feel badly when the perpetrators themselves felt no guilt? The Höfers just approved and wrote what the Nazi secretary for propaganda Goebbels announced.

Höfer states that his past was known to the first president of WDR, Hanns Hartmann, who hired him because he liked Höfer's professionalism.

It is common knowledge that there was never a real denazification in East or West Germany. (The past of those people was forgotten). Adenauer once asked where should he find officers for his new Foreign Service if not from the old one?

to say no." But he did more than that — he said yes. He made a career following the Nazis. One of his jobs was press officer for the ministry of armament.

Höfer's younger critics never had to go through decisions like that older generation. The postwar journalists may be thankful that the Höfer case finally made us aware of our profes-

How should a journalist behave? If you told the truth could you stay in your country? If you did, could you write? For whom? — For your desk drawer only.

Höfer's case released a discussion about the press, about writing in Nazi Germany. Questions such as: How should journalist behave? If you told the truth could you stay in your country? If you did, could you write? For whom? — For your desk drawer only. The many writers who chose exile give the answer.

Those who could not make this decision were used by the regime — even if they wrote for the 15 percent of the newspapers not owned by the Nazis — those few papers left-over from the *Weimar* Republic. They

sional past. It also raised other questions: How would we have behaved? Why are such questions asked only at critical times? It is possible that Höfer's detractors, under such moral stress, may have acted as he did.

However, it is difficult to understand that Höfer, a democratic liberal after 1945, is so hesitant to express his regrets for what he has done. It is a missed chance — depressing and pitiful — that he and many of his generation are unable to mourn without shame or fear of losing face. That generation could have set an example of honesty and moral courage for us, the younger ones, and for their silent contemporaries — those who say they had only watched, but had not taken part. It requires moral courage to confess errors and mistakes.

The recent attempts by the Kohl administration to equate the Nazi death industry with the brutal dictatorship of other countries make it more and more necessary that the few remaining eyewitnesses and journalists speak up and confess their honest memories.

We need candidness instead of glossing over — we need honest mourning instead of hesitation.

West Germany journalists should continue to investigate questions, answers, and the news. □

The past . . . was forgotten. Adenauer wondered where to find officers for his new Foreign Service, if not from the old one.

In its story, *Der Spiegel* called Höfer an arm chair culprit. The former television host is suing the magazine. He who entered the Nazi party in 1933 "by accidental mistake," as he describes it himself, does not feel guilty. He only concedes that he, "an unpolitical intellectual," did not "have enough courage to dare

were always cited abroad by Goebbels as proof of freedom of the press in Germany. The opposition was hinted at by reading between the lines.

Sebastian Haffner, retired chief editorial writer for *Der Stern*, who went to his London exile in 1933, said that Höfer had made up for his past by the way he behaved after the war.

The 1988 Joe Alex Morris Jr. Memorial Lecture

Vietnam: The *Roshomon* Effect

Harrison Salisbury

Covering wars, or any story, the reporter digs for facts hiding behind "truth."

Howard Simons, curator of the Nieman Foundation, introduced Harrison Salisbury to an audience of Nieman Fellows, journalists, and others, at the 1988 Joe Alex Morris Jr. Memorial Lecture. Joe Alex Morris, Sr., a former newspaperman, was among the guests at the Memorial Lecture. Mr Morris was foreign editor of the United Press, and, later, editor of Colliers Magazine. His son, a Harvard graduate, Class of 1949, was a foreign correspondent for the Los Angeles Times, he was killed by a sniper's bullet while covering the street fighting in Teheran.

* * *

In 1981, classmates and fellow journalists put together a fund so that we could have this

Harrison Salisbury, a former foreign correspondent for The New York Times, recently had his 27th book — *A Time Of Change: A Reporter's Tales of Our Time* — published. In 1955 he won a Pulitzer Prize for his series of stories on Russia, a country he has covered for a number of years. His by-line has been over many stories from many countries, including China and Vietnam.



lecture series. We invite each year, a distinguished correspondent who covers foreign affairs.

Harrison Salisbury is the journalist to be envious of for all of you who are in journalism or want to be in journalism — adjectives are hard to come by; he's indefatigable; he's prodigious; he writes brightly; he walks brightly; and I thought it would be fun to invite him.

He finished the University of Minnesota in 1930, and had worked a year on a Minneapolis paper while going to school. In 1930 he joined the United Press and worked in St. Paul, Chicago, New York, and Washington. Then he went to London where he worked during the war, and ended up in Moscow in 1944.

He came back and was hired by *The New York Times*. He went back to Russia in 1949, served there for five years through Stalin's death, and became the most famous American journalist at that time in Moscow. He came back and wrote a series which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1955.

Harrison wrote his first book, I think, in 1946. His 27th book [*A Time of Change: A Reporter's Tales of Our Time*] was published this past March. He did a book on Leningrad which I recommend to everyone, called *Nine Hundred Days*. In his book, *The Long March*, published in 1985, he retraced the steps of Mao Tse Tung in the retreat through

China. He went through many editorships at *The New York Times*. He invented the "opposite the editorial page." He follows trouble, then gets out of trouble. In 1966 he was in Hanoi during the raging of the Vietnam War. He is a remarkable, quintessential journalist and a marvelous person.



It's a very special occasion this evening for me to have the privilege of speaking in a lecture series which is dedicated to the memory of one of the most outstanding of the younger American foreign correspondents, Joe Alex Morris, Jr., whom I knew as a youngster and whose career I watched with admiration and envy as he grew up in the footsteps of his father who is here this evening — Joe Alex Morris — who is my colleague and my boss at the UP and who taught me many tricks of the trade.

And if you don't think there are tricks in the trade of journalism, well, you just don't know what journalism is. Because you have to know how to do it if you're going to get that story. And Joe Alex Morris, Sr. knew how

to do it, and his son knew how to do it even better. It is one of the great tragedies that he worked so hard and he was so close to the story that he paid for it with his life.

That's not an uncommon thing in journalism. It is a hazardous profession, particularly when it is engaged in fully by men and women who are willing to undergo almost any kind of a risk for the sake of getting the story, for the sake of putting together something complex and important which they believe is necessary to a better understanding of the world, and which, through their newspaper or their broadcasting outlet, they are able to give to the American people. This is the essence of what journalism is about. It's a tough, hard profession. And the man who is being honored here tonight for his contribution to this profession was a master of that art.

I want to talk about some of the problems that are involved in newspaper reporting and coverage. Problems which exist particularly for the foreign correspondent, but equally for the correspondent who is attempting to report the events of a city or a community or a nation — almost any kind of human happening which comes into his scan is subject to the principles of which I propose to speak. You may have noticed that I gave this talk what may sound to you like a rather esoteric subject. I called it Vietnam: The *Roshomon* Effect.

Some of you certainly know the remarkable Japanese film *Roshomon* — but without understanding what *Roshomon* is about, you will not be able to understand the point of my remarks. In *Roshomon*, which is based on a Japanese legend or fairy story or tale, an event occurs. An event in which a number of people participate. And the film shows this event successively as it appears to each one of the participants.

It seems to the audience that a murder has occurred, and indeed we see this happen in the film. But the longer the film goes on, and as we successively see this person, and this

person, and this person, in this set of circumstances, the more uncertain we become as to who committed the murder, although in the beginning we thought we knew. In the end, we find ourselves not only uncertain and unable to say which one of the people we saw was guilty, but we find ourselves uncertain as to whether or not a murder actually did occur.

Now that of course is an exaggeration. But it is the kind of exaggeration which illuminates — because the proposition which it illuminates is — what is truth and how difficult it is to establish truth. And this is what journalists, be they foreign or domestic, are all about. We are engaged in a constant struggle to find out what happened, how it happened, and what it means.

He quickly discovers that that event occurred six or seven different ways. And he has in his notebook how that event appeared to occur depending on which person he spoke to. At first, he's totally confused. But as a reporter with a responsibility of cutting through these different versions, he does his best to reconcile them. Some do agree, some don't. And he writes an account which incorporates these different versions including the contradictions.

That is as close as he will come to truth in this particular debt. Now it may not be true at all. It may be that there was some other factor involved in this simple accident which none of these people report to him or perhaps did not see. It may be that, later on, another witness will turn up who saw

We are engaged in a constant struggle to find out what happened, how it happened, and what it means. The first lesson is learned by a cub reporter on a first assignment covering a simple event. That reporter quickly discovers that event occurred in six or seven different ways.

The first lesson which any journalist learns as a cub reporter on a city desk is learned on his first assignment — it is apt to be a very simple event — an automobile accident or a fire in a house. And the reporter goes out and he interviews the participants in that event. If it is an automobile accident, and every reporter I know has had this experience, he goes to one man who drove one car. He goes to a man who drove the other car. He goes to the passengers if he can find them. He goes to the various people on the street who witnessed this accident, and he goes to the policeman or policemen and he gets these versions.

a third car which was involved in this particular circumstance. Now that is about as ordinary a happenstance as you can find. You cannot pick up a newspaper, you cannot look at a television local news show without seeing the fruits of this kind of investigation, this kind of an incident every day.

If you extrapolate from that particular event, you begin to understand the magnitude of the task of the reporter and the editor in determining what happens and how the story must be constructed; in determining the reliability of this reporter and his eye and his observations. It is not a simple thing. And when you apply

this technique and these fundamentals to something like a war where the confusion is incredible — only unless you have been involved in a war can you understand how complex this may be. How men on the battlefield, not only do not know what the man next to them did, or what the enemy did, or what another enemy did, but they can't remember what they did. All of this because of the heat of emotion, the confusion of the battle.

The reporter coming along later, attempting to put this story straight, either from talking to the actual participants or talking to their higher-ups to whom the reports have gone, simplified or exaggerated, incorporating mistakes and all the rest of it. If he has a chance to check with others who may have had some participation, you know that any report of this event in the newspaper is only an approximation — and it may not be an accurate approximation. Not because the reporter didn't try. Not because the witness that he spoke to didn't try to tell the man exactly what happened, but because the confusion and the uncertainty is so great, that no one really knows what did happen.

If you begin to magnify that from the small skirmish on the front line, and begin to try to understand a large campaign or a general movement, and if you compare, for example, the reports of that encounter which are made by the side you happen to be covering with the reports that are made by the enemy, immediately enormous gaps exist.

Now the newspaper reporter is not ordinarily in a situation to judge what happened on the other side. He only takes the evidence of the people on his side because they are the only ones he is able to get to. If, by some chance, there are prisoners, and they haven't suffered some accident which makes it impossible for them to talk, he may get from those prisoners some notion of what the other side *thought* was going on. But it will be skimpy at best, and probably not very

illuminating.

It will be much later, if ever, that he will hear the reports which the enemy takes as being accurate, and which they give out to their people or troops or put on their radio. When we see a simple clip on television, and we've been seeing a lot of them, for example, the Contras in Nicaragua, usually what we see is a clip of men in fatigues, battle dress, jungle dress, with weapons in their hands. They're trailing through jungle or down a road. We don't know what those men are doing. We don't know where they are. We don't know what's going on. They are symbolic of a war of some kind which is going on in Nicaragua.

It probably doesn't make much difference whether we actually know what those men are, who they are, what they're doing, because it's only a tiny fragment of a complicated situation of which they probably don't know — and maybe their commanders don't know.

Any one who has been in a war and has been in headquarters and watches the reports as they come in, knows that the headquarters of the general or the headquarters of the commander of a front often is totally ignorant of what is going on in the battlefield because the reports come in in such a conflicting manner. And they come in in different time frames. It is one of the duties of professional soldiers, one of their most difficult duties, to fit all this information together, and try to construct on a mock-up in their headquarters, the events which are reported to them in such piecemeal fashion from so many different places. You may think I am over-emphasizing this, and repeating myself, and going back over and over these things, but they are essential elements for the reporter to understand as he engages in his task, and for the reader and editor to understand as he prints those reports or puts them on the air or on the screen.

Now this can be further complicated by a circumstance which all reporters know whether they work for electronic media or for the print.

Editors like a good story. Editors of the electronic medium like a good picture. It may well be that the best picture which comes to CBS or to NBC or ABC is not of the important action at all. It may be some little dramatic moment which is caught by camera which has no significance whatsoever to the fighting, but which, in a sense, epitomizes something and creates an image in us of what had happened. I could name a number of those little vignettes which we see on television, each one making an indelible record in our mind's eye and giving us a certain emotional feeling about what we saw, and about what was happening in Vietnam.

It is a cliché, but nonetheless, a probably fairly true cliché, to say that Vietnam for Americans was a living-room war. Which means that our idea of what happened in Vietnam was what we saw on that screen every night on the evening news. And the evening news would present us with one of these little vignettes. I can name some of them. We all remember that picture of the South Vietnamese officer who is pointing a pistol at the prisoner's head and shooting, and the prisoner is in the main street — and down he goes. It's an indelible image. What does it tell us? What does it tell us about the war? Not very much. Does it tell us that the Vietnamese officer executes prisoners? Well, if we know anything about war we know that many prisoners are indeed executed by their captors.

I remember talking to some German prisoners in Russia in the Crimea in World War II, and the prisoners — there were several thousand of them — said the most dangerous moment of the war is when you surrender. Will you be able to surrender without being shot down? They were Germans fighting Russians. They could have been Japanese fighting Americans. Americans fighting Japanese. The same thing goes. They tried to surrender, if they had to, in a large

mass, because if the mass was large enough, the chances of not being shot down were a little bit better.

So this simple and indelible image isn't telling us anything new about the war. It isn't telling us about what happens out there. But it may very well have an effect on our emotions. We may well be revolted by the sight of the man with his pistol and this lone figure standing in the street. Does that mean that that image should not be shown on television because it doesn't really mean anything one way or another? I wouldn't say that for a moment. But I would say when we see this, or when it is transmitted, we should understand that this is a dramatic moment in a war. It doesn't mean anything more.

We have another dramatic image. This is the scene in which the Buddhist monk sits down in the open street, crosses his legs, sits back, pours gasoline over himself, touches a match to it, and burns up before our eyes. Dramatic? Super-dramatic. It's one of the most dramatic things you have ever seen. Does this picture have a meaning? Does it tell us something about what is going on in the war? Yes, it does. In this case, it demonstrates that the Buddhists are so opposed to the war that they're willing to take their life and sacrifice it before our eyes with gasoline and a match that burns them into a crisp. We will remember that scene as long as we live. It will affect our emotions.

Does it tell us more than we knew about the Buddhists? Probably in this case, it does because we don't know much about Buddhists. We don't know that they have, perhaps, a ceremonial attitude towards life, which is different from our own, and if this is true, then we get a new insight into the kind of people who are engaged in this war.

This is not an act directed against Americans. It is an act directed by some Vietnamese who happen to be Buddhist monks, against other Vietnamese who happen to be in the government. The Buddhist monks are

opposed to the war. That is something which probably is not explained very well in the accompanying voice-over. Because the voice-over probably hasn't thought about the meaning of this picture or the fact that it should be explained to the people who are looking at it.

Vietnam by either side in particular circumstances? I don't think so. I think that in the case of each of these, we seem to see an act which has an element of pure truth in it.

What we do not see is that there can be another way of looking at all of these different acts. We do not have

The view of the *Tet* Offensive, as it was reported by the American cameramen, and . . . the military was a shattering blow. An offensive attack which caught the American command . . . by surprise . . . held the old capital of Vietnam for ten days . . . inflicted such casualties . . . and caused panic among many of the American establishment in South Vietnam.

You can take another one of these remarkable images that will always be in the minds of those who saw it. This is the picture of the thatched hut and the American soldier coming up with his cigarette lighter and setting fire to that thatched hut. Is that a meaningful picture? Not in the sense that the soldier burning down the thatched hut has done anything which is unusual in any way. There probably were thousands of thatched huts that were burned down in the war. But it has a special meaning emotionally to us because here we see an American G.I. We have, perhaps, an exalted image in our minds of our troops in Vietnam, and the soldier seems to set fire, for reasons that we do not understand, to a thatched hut in which some ordinary, peaceful people are living. It gives us an emotional effect. Is there, along with that, a voice-over that explains the nature of this particular act, that it happens to be something that is repeated almost every day in

that philosophy in our minds. We do not have that rationale in our minds, either as reporters, and certainly not as viewers and listeners and ordinary people trying to grasp the complex fragments of what's going on in Vietnam. And I use Vietnam only as an example, because you can take any single, human event and analyze it in the same way.

In many ways, I suppose, the most dramatic event in the Vietnam War from the Americans' side, was the *Tet* Offensive. It occurred in February 1968. It happened during the Lunar holiday, the New Year's holiday, or Spring Festival, the great festival in that part of Asia, and it was unleashed at a moment when the Americans had or seemed to have the war fairly well pinned down. They were not losing very much. They were not gaining very much. The situation was more or less stable. And if anything, the Americans were gradually pushing down the Vietnamese. The force levels on our side were such

that we were able to contain them, and probably grind them away. General Westmoreland was saying, as he said so often, that there was light at the end of the tunnel. And Americans were more or less relaxed at the moment.

Suddenly, the *Tet* Offensive was unleashed. It involved an extraordinary mobilization of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces. They had infiltrated over a period of probably six months into the areas right around the American strongholds in Saigon, and just outside of Saigon, and to the north, to the old capital of Hanoi, and overnight they unleashed this offensive with dramatic results. Extraordinary results. And again, we see stories, we read stories of the Americans caught by surprise. We read the accounts of the Vietnamese swarming in, breaking down, coming in to the American embassy compound in Saigon — the impregnable — the heart of the heart of American power in Vietnam. And thousands of Americans fight desperately and are killed. Thousands of Vietnamese are killed, too. And in the end, the Americans regain control of the situation. But at the highest cost in sacrifice in the war.

This event, which we saw both on television and which was reported by the best reporters in the business, has

become almost emblematic of two startling contrasting views of what that war was. And I submit that this is not merely a matter of prejudice of some people. Not merely a matter of some people disregarding the facts. But it is two perfectly consistent views. It is, as in *Rashomon*, two different views of the same event which arrive at startling different conclusions. The view of the *Tet* Offensive, as it was reported by the American reporters, the American cameramen, and indeed, as it was reported by the military themselves, was a shattering blow. An offensive attack which caught the American command *clearly* by surprise which won extraordinary advantages, held the old capital of Vietnam for a period of ten days, struck deeply into our defenses, inflicted such casualties as we never had before, and which caused panic among many of the American establishment in South Vietnam.

Now there is a second and equally strong viewpoint which I have heard enumerated again and again by American military who were out there, and some who were never closer than several thousand miles to Vietnam. And that was, that contrary to this having been a stunning success on the part of Hanoi, it was a remarkable American victory. Well, what is the rationale of that? The ra-

tionale comes from the fact that while the attack was severe, it was savage and inflicted terrible damage, it didn't succeed in driving us out of Vietnam. And after that attack, the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong were so weakened that for a long period of time, six months — maybe a year, they were unable to mount another successful offensive operation.

Well, it doesn't take too much analytic ability to see that these, in a sense, are two sides of a coin or two halves of a sphere. It is true, great, great damage was afflicted on the Americans. It is true, great damage was afflicted on the North Vietnamese.

In reality, almost every major military battle in any war has these same two elements in it. Battles are seldom won with hardly any casualties. Battles usually involve heavy casualties on both sides, and whether it is a victory for one side or a defeat for that side, may very often be determined, not by what happened on the battlefield that day or in a period of days, but what happens later on. What happens as a result of that battle.

In the case of the *Tet* Offensive, the North Vietnamese continued to hold firm even though their losses were staggering. On the other hand, with this offensive coming after years in which controversy was growing in this country about that war, the American side was taken aback. It is reasonable I think, to say that they were staggered by this event and by the reports of that event, and this reached into the highest echelons of the government. In fact, it went right up to Lyndon Johnson.

Now, I don't think any reporter who knew anything about the situation would say that Lyndon Johnson was one who likely would give up his often expressed wish to "bring home the coonskin" from Vietnam — to come out of Vietnam with a victory. But this event, be it an American military success in the technical sense, or be it a Vietnamese victory,

Now there is a second and equally strong viewpoint which I have heard enumerated by American military . . . that contrary to this having been a stunning success on the part of Hanoi, it was a remarkable American victory. . . . Well, what is the rationale of that? . . . while the attack was severe . . . savage . . . inflicted terrible damage, it didn't succeed in driving us out of Vietnam.

was enough to stagger him, and to stagger many of those closest around him. From that moment on, for practical purposes, although the war went on year after year after that, that was the high spot for the United States. From then on, it was all downhill.

No one, I think, would argue that it was anything other than that. But the actual events, and the picture of those events in our minds, will be argued about 100 years from now and form the core of a great argument. Let's face it, not very many people these days are too interested in Vietnam, but where that interest exists, the sides choose up. They see the war in one fashion or another — and those are irreconcilable views. I would submit that's a very natural thing.

If we understand what *Roshomon* tells us, we must know that as far as truth is concerned, there isn't any truth. There are varying degrees of this truth. There are varying degrees of what happens under any circumstance. I think it is true much more of reporters and correspondents, that they understand this far better than the general public. And I think that we, as reporters and correspondents, are at fault. It often happens, and I suppose also happens to people who are not reporters, that if we report an event in a certain way, we go on insisting that our version is the only correct version. We get into arguments about that.

We may say, well the war really was the fault of Secretary of Defense MacNamara. That's a favorite thesis of many people who were opposed to the war — that MacNamara was to blame, that he provided the rationale which enabled Johnson to go forward in his prosecution of an adventure in Southeast Asia, which was doomed to failure from the very beginning. But, on the other side, you will find people who say MacNamara was the first person to take a realistic view of the war. He was realistic enough to understand, when it became apparent to him, that the war could not be won. And when that was apparent, he then reversed gears and began to try

and halt the war.

Now once again, it seems to me that both of those views are correct. There's no doubt that MacNamara, with his inventive genius, his managerial skills and all the rest of it, was an enormous assistance to Johnson and to the military in fashioning a particular kind of strategy to win in Vietnam. It's also perfectly apparent to me that he recognized that this no longer would work. Whether he recognized it of his own free will, or rather was led to it by Bobby Kennedy and some other people, I don't know, but the evidence is quite clear — and it is to be found in the Pentagon Papers. The Pentagon Papers are a much talked about, but little read document.

we lost. A purpose, which I would say, was totally filled with public spirit, with the desire to promote the understanding among Americans, among the government, among the people of what actually happened.

It was a remarkable objective thing, bound to reflect very badly on MacNamara because he was one of the architects of the war. Nonetheless, he ordered it done. And as you know, it was finally published by the newspapers, by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and other papers — in spite of every effort by the government to suppress it. An anomaly which I will always find remarkable, since it was designed not to be kept secret, but to be made public.

I think that the *Roshomon* Effect

You can say . . . if you get nothing but bouquets in this business, you must be missing the best part of the story.

. . . being a reporter or being a newspaper, you're not in the business to win prizes, to win praise, you're in this business to try and present the best possible picture . . . It's not an easy task.

For those of you who may not know the Pentagon Papers, they were that remarkable analysis and compilation ordered by MacNamara to be constructed by his own specialists in the Defense Department to try and demonstrate what went wrong in the Vietnam War. What mistakes were made. What successes were achieved. What should have been done, what shouldn't have been done — a public document which would be studied by historians, by public officials, and the public for years to come so that we would not be compelled to repeat the terrible experience of this war which we did not win, and an event which

colors almost everything that newspaper men do. I know that I myself, as a reporter, particularly in the Soviet Union, without ever having heard of *Roshomon*, without ever having heard of the philosophy that underlay it, was constantly being subjected to this particular and very natural human tendency.

As a reporter in Stalin's Russia, with a censorship which scrutinized every single word that I was able to transmit to *The New York Times*, I had a very difficult task in trying to work my way through that censorship to see if anything could be salvaged in some way, which would

approximate giving the American readers some notion of what was going on in the Soviet Union.

It was not an easy task. And some months, when I possibly filed 32 or 34 or 35 stories, maybe five would go through the censorship, another seven or eight would be riddled, but might possibly be salvaged, and the rest would be killed. It required me to judge whether it was worthwhile sending it on in its mutilated version with what was at best, an imperfect view of what was happening in the Soviet Union, or whether I just better throw it in the scrap heap — forget it.

Where possible, I tried to salvage the copy and send it on to New York for publication. Considering the tense situation between the United States and the Soviet Union, considering the fact that each side considered the other as a possible opponent in a nuclear war — one which might break out at any moment — any amount of information that could be provided to the United States public should be provided, regardless of its imperfections.

I suppose I should have understood that when these reports, which were as good as I could get through the censorship, arrived in the United States, and if they were published, and many times they were simply thrown away by *The Times*, that they would be then attacked and criticized by people who said that they were pro-Russian propaganda. Here you had the irony of a reporter fighting to get something through the censorship, and when he *did* get it through, being denounced for having done it — being denounced for carrying propaganda for a government which was doing its best to keep him from sending anything at all.

A *Roshomon* Effect? Well, sort of a reverse of that, because the reverse was in the *lack* of information either that I sent out, or which was published by *The Times*. And the responses — the Russians denouncing me for sending these stories, and often calling me in and threatening me for what I sent,

and then the readers denouncing *The Times* and denouncing me for publishing them. So you get it both ways.

You can say, as I often said, as I said at the time of the Hanoi controversy, well, if you get nothing but bouquets in this business, you must be missing the best part of the story. Because being a reporter or being a newspaper, you're not in this business to win prizes, to win praise, you're in the business to try and present the best possible picture in spite of *Roshomon* and all the other circumstances. It's not an easy task. It's a very difficult task. And it's done imperfectly by the best reporters and the best newspapers.

newspapers only report unpleasant news. They only report unpleasant news about the Americans abroad. About our troops. About our military establishment. About our politicians. They never say good things.

I say I know a place or did know a place until *glasnost* and Mr. Gorbachev came along, where you can live all your life and you will find newspapers that never report anything unpleasant about the country, that never report anything unpleasant about the military establishment, that have nothing but bouquets for the leaders, where everything is fine, and the sun shines every day. The place where that sort of reporting occurs is Moscow, and

Many people say the newspapers only report unpleasant news. . . . about the Americans abroad. . . . about our troops . . . our military establishment . . . our politicians. . . . I know a place . . . where you can live all your life and you will find newspapers that never report anything unpleasant about the military . . . that have bouquets for the leaders . . . everything is fine and sun shines everyday. . . . the place is Moscow and the newspapers are *Pravda* and *Izvestia* and all the other Soviet newspapers.

I think that it is time, considering the amount of criticism which the media in general, receives from the public, to understand that many people in this country simply do not understand what the newspapers are about. They do not understand what job they are doing. They do not understand what would happen if the press simply stopped reporting controversial items. Many people say the

the newspapers which indulge in it are *Pravda* and *Izvestia* and all the other Soviet newspapers. If that's the kind of report that you think we ought to have in this country — one that has its own kind of *Roshomon* Effect — it picks one effect and blocks out all the others — fine, we have that example.

But I also say that maybe that's the difference between this country and

the Soviet Union and other countries of that ilk. They consciously try to present a positive image. Oh, once in a while they will present a negative image if they're told to from the top. Otherwise, never. We do not have that directive from the top. I have had at least peripheral contact with presidents since the time of FDR, I have never known a president who didn't think that he would be much happier if the newspapers only printed rosy stories about him and his marvelous achievements.

Many newspaper men who are old enough to remember FDR think of him as a great friend and crony of the press. They remember he used to play poker with a bunch of the White House correspondents in a little cottage in Hyde Park on Sunday nights, and they would all ride down in the special train to Washington on Monday morning. Oh, yes, that was true. I never played poker with the president, but I knew men who did, and they thought that they were his buddies.

On the other hand, I also knew the FDR who did everything possible to twist the news so that they would only present the things he wanted them to present, and when they didn't, as occurred with a reporter for the *Chicago Tribune* and some other reporters, he was as vindictive as any president I ever saw.

Presidents like newspaper men if they are flax. They do not like them if they attempt to penetrate whatever veil they have draped over the truth in order to make it look better. And don't ever think that any of them have a different view.

Jack Kennedy was a great president. I happen to admire him very much, but not for one moment do I think he genuinely liked newspaper men or what they reported. I well remember one trip — I was coming back from West Virginia. He gave me a lift in a little puddle-jumper that he was using. All the way to Washington he was pulling clippings out of his pockets and out of envelopes and looking at them — “goddamn press

— lies, lies, lies.” He was talking of reports about his father — old Joe — who was not exactly a very innocent man. But the Kennedys really stuck together and the press was the enemy and I knew perfectly well that if I or anybody else dared to attack any member of the Kennedy family, and it didn't have to be John himself, I would be consigned to that periphery.

He didn't trust any newspaper men period. Not even people like Ben Bradlee. I don't think Ben would agree with that, but I do think it was absolutely true. He was wonderful. He knew how to con the press — the special, elite group. He had a marvelous personality, and they got along very well. But the hard core of Kennedy, or any politician or any president, is that the press is the enemy. You've got to treat them in one way or another, and neutralize them if you can.

said, “Oh, boy, what a wonderful bunch those press fellows are. I wish we could have them up here at the ranch.”

I don't think any of them have been invited up there. I don't think any of them have been invited to any really intimate situation. That's not unusual. It is expectable, and it is right to my way of thinking. I don't like to see a press that is on intimate, crony, warm terms with the man they have to cover, because I know then, that there's something going on — that somebody is influencing someone.

Decisions made by many critics of newspaper men are accurate. They're rude. They're pushy. They're always trying to find something out, usually something unpleasant. They ask these questions. They confront politicians. That is their business. Maybe some of them enjoy confrontation —

Presidents . . . do not like them [journalists] if they attempt to penetrate whatever veil they have draped over the truth to make it look better. . . . I don't like to see a press that is on intimate, crony, warm terms with the man they have to cover. Because . . . then . . . there's something going on. . . . somebody is influencing someone.

We have a President now, Mr. Reagan, who's had a *magnificent* press. It is *incredible* that he's been in office for nearly eight years, and he has a marvelous group of wonderful correspondents in Washington who — whatever he does — well, you know, after all, he's a great guy. And I think he probably is a great guy, but I will be surprised if he ever honestly sat down with his wife Nancy and

I must say I don't enjoy it at all. But, if you're going to try and cut through all the different versions of an event that *Roshomon* shows actually exist, sometimes the only way is to go straight to the heart and go as hard as you can.

It may not work. It may just — bang — right up against a stone wall. Once in a while you'll crash through. There are many other ways of doing it, and

I think I prefer some of the other ways. But you cannot avoid the confrontation between the press and the people in authority, whether it's this country or any other country, if you're going to try and get through this miasma with which the truth is surrounded.

You may remember that Winston Churchill once said that in war time truth must be surrounded by a bodyguard of lies. Now, that's a very curious and typically picturesque Churchillian expression. Truth must be surrounded by a bodyguard of lies. What does it mean? It really means that you don't bother to tell the truth in war time. You've got the censorship, you've got all these weapons to conceal what the truth is, and you don't want the truth known because, number one, the enemy might get some advantage; number two, it's entirely possible that your own people would lose some faith in your invincibility if they knew the reality of the situation.

Well, you can even make an argument for that in war time. But I don't think it's a very good argument. And I know it's no good in peace time. I have never been much of a believer in the infallibility legend of great men. I think that great men, as they used to say, put their trousers on one leg at a time, just like everybody else.

I don't believe our presidents come in, in the morning, and get from their presidential secretary a one page memo to which the state department, the CIA, and the NSA have contributed eternal truths which nobody else has, and therefore, all during that day, Ronald Reagan is able to do his work because he knows what's really happening in the world. I don't think he knows any better than Howard Simons or I or Bradlee or Abe Rosenthal or Max Frankel or any of the editors do.

I well remember when I was in Hawaii and I was a guest at the high command there, I guess it was during the Vietnam War. That is actually where the real command of the war was, and an aide of the commander

in chief at that time, said he wanted to have lunch with me, and wanted to discuss some problem. We had lunch. And his problem was this: He said, "you know my commander insists that every morning when I put before him the intelligence report and what's happening in the world, I put that on one side of his breakfast table, and on the other side he wants *The New York Times* so he can check up on what's really going on." I said, "well that's fine. I'm delighted he does that. I think it's a very good thing." He said, "yes, but there's one problem about this." This was when *The Times* published an international edition in Paris.

reports and *The New York Times*. I'm not saying that the intelligence people may not have something once in a while. We well know that they picked up some telephone conversations that Mr. Brezhnev had from his limousine to one of the other Politburo members and they were talking about certain young ladies and their physical attributes. And I'm sure that was titillating for the president; I don't know that it really served our foreign policy purposes very much.

I'm a great believer in going for the facts as nearly as you can get to them. If you don't get them, what have you lost? Maybe a smack in the nose, if it's been a real confrontation, but

We cannot expect perfection in our newspapers, information services, presidents or public officials, but we can expect that people will work as hard as possible to try and find the information that enables American people to make judgments on their public officials and on their great policies of the day. That's the business of the newspaper.

He said, "I can't get the New York edition of *The Times* delivered out here by airmail. They send me the international edition from Paris and it takes an extra day. It holds up the world intelligence for one day while we wait for *The Times*." I said, "I think I can fix that for you. It's possible by paying extra, it's going to cost you maybe five dollars a day, but you can get *The Times* from New York and have it on your chief's breakfast table every day. "And we made that arrangement.

Well, that seemed to me to be an insight, if I needed one, as to the relative validity of the intelligence of

usually you do come back with a better understanding. You shouldn't expect the president or the governor or the senator or anybody else to thank you for asking tough questions. Why should they thank you? It's enough for them to maintain their political posture without thinking about the country at large. After all, most of them regard themselves as the embodiment of wisdom anyway, or they wouldn't be elected president.

I seem to have wandered a good bit away from *Roshomon*. But yet, maybe not very far. Because it's entirely possible that after the confron-

continued to page 31

How Newspapers Are Owned — And Does It Matter?

C. K. McClatchy

That day looms large when newspaper people no longer run newspapers.

Speaking to an audience interested in journalism, I am reminded of the story told about Governor Horatio Seymour of New York and his reaction to the 1863 draft riots when mobs ruled the streets of New York City.

Gov. Seymour wrote at that time, "These events were an unmitigated disaster for us all. Commerce was halted. The law defied, and the innocent victimized. Unfortunately, the one entirely admirable intent of the mob — to hang Mr. Horace Greely, the editor of the *Tribune*, from the nearest lamppost — went regrettably unfulfilled." Even then politicians were bashing the press. Now we have Gary Hart blaming us for his problems. History tends to repeat itself.

When Tim [Howard H. Hays, Jr.] asked me what I might want to discuss, I thought of a subject that for better or worse has been very much on my mind in the last few years — the changes that are occurring in

newspaper ownership and what these changes will mean in the years ahead to newspapers as well as the reading public.

The most obvious fact is that independently owned newspapers are fading away as large chains elbow their way into domination of American journalism.

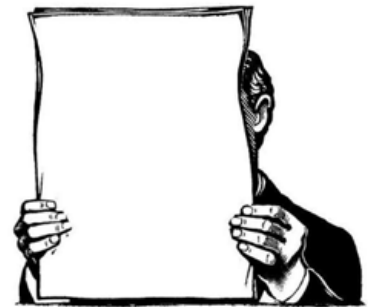
In 1930 there were 311 daily newspapers in the United States owned by chains and 1,651 owned independently. Those owned by chains made up 16 percent of the total and controlled 43 percent of the circulation.

The trend towards concentration has continued unabated. The latest figures I could obtain were for the end of 1986 when it was reported by *presstime* that chains owned 1,217 dailies with only 440 still independent. That meant that 73 percent of American dailies were in the hands of chains and that chains controlled 80 percent of the daily circulation.

Does it make any difference that American daily newspaper journalism seems to be moving inevitably and rapidly under the control of chains?

Yes, it does make a difference, a difference that is difficult to define or to quantify with complete accuracy. The difference, I believe, seems to be more a question of the interests, background, and ambitions of the individuals in charge rather than simply the form of ownership.

There are chains that today are responsible for the very best in American journalism. When one

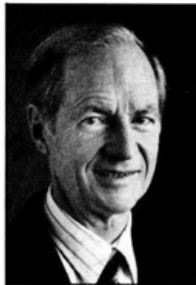


thinks of the top American newspapers, the overwhelming majority of newspapermen would name *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. All four of these are owned by large, publicly held chains, but chains that grew from single family-owned newspapers with high journalistic standards.

However, independently owned newspapers have special advantages. In most circumstances, all things being equal, I believe local ownership generally serves the local community well. A different equation exists between a newspaper and the community when it is chain owned. A compelling example is close at hand. Compare *The Press-Enterprise* here in Riverside with the Gannett-owned *Sun* in nearby San Bernardino.

Tim Hays has been the publisher and editor of *The Press-Enterprise* for 38 years. He has lived in this community since 1924. He is a first-rate newspaper person who could run with skill any newspaper in the country. But for the sake of making my point, let's assume that Tim Hays

C. K. McClatchy is editor and chairman of the board of McClatchy Newspapers. He gave this talk to an audience at The Press-Enterprise in Riverside, California.



The Sacramento Bee is among the newspapers owned by the McClatchy company. It has been family-owned for 130 years.

Photo by Owen Brewer

was an average newsman, nothing special. Riverside still would be well served by even an average newspaper person who spent long years learning about the community, its special problems, and promoting long-term programs for its improvement.

It would be difficult for an individual running a chain-owned newspaper to make the same long-term contribution that a Tim Hays can. Not impossible, just very difficult.

increase.

This suggests that Gannett, at least in San Bernardino, has not achieved much by the usual standards of measurement.

But, despite the mediocre performance I have described, let me hasten to add that Gannett is superior to some chains. But the publisher of *The Sun* in San Bernardino will have to run twice as fast to match the contribution of a Tim Hays. If he works for a company such as Gannett, he

A bad newspaper can come as the result of many factors: neglect, incompetence, greed, and in some cases, the inability to produce enough revenue, regardless of the best of intentions.

I believe an examination of the two papers during the period since Gannett took over ownership in 1969 is revealing. In these 19 years the population of Riverside County increased 93 percent and San Bernardino County went up 63 percent. In this period under the ownership of Gannett, *The Sun* has had five publishers and six editors; *The Press-Enterprise* has had Tim. The two papers started out in 1969 very much the same. The circulation of *The Press-Enterprise* was 78,898 daily and 80,957 Sunday, and *The Sun* was 77,432 daily and 80,412 Sunday. They also were generally similar in size of news hole and lineage. Now, according to the latest ABC-audited figures, *The Press-Enterprise* has a daily circulation of 135,886 daily and a Sunday circulation of 141,598, while *The Sun* is 77,878 daily and 82,860 on Sunday. *The Press-Enterprise* news hole, lineage and reputation for excellence have gone up along with its circulation. *The Sun* has barely stayed even despite a 63 percent population

probably will be moved to a new city before four years have gone by. His future success will depend more on his corporate report card than his relationship and his contributions to the local community.

But for the sake of accurate reporting, I should say that the present situation in Riverside is not without unknown complications. Dow Jones, the publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*, now owns 21 percent of *The Press-Enterprise*. It is the intention of Tim and his family to continue to own and control the company, but we must note that the nose of Dow Jones is now into the tent. And it is not in the nature of camels or newspaper chains to back out.

The question of whether there is a relationship between particular types of newspaper ownership and the quality of the newspaper that is likely to result is a tantalizing one. It is a subject that is very much on my mind because I am a member of a family that has had responsibility for *The Sacramento Bee* for 130 years.

However, in the last 65 years, the company owned by my family has started or acquired seven other daily newspapers, some many years ago, such as *The Fresno Bee* and *The Modesto Bee*, and some more recently, such as the *Anchorage Daily News* and *The Tacoma News Tribune*.

This clearly makes our company different from what it was when *The Sacramento Bee* was our only newspaper. By industry standards we, too, would be classified as a chain. But we feel there are significant differences between our company and other chains. One significant difference is that we never have had an overriding desire to grow. The growth that has taken place resulted primarily from newspaper owners wanting to sell to us. We have never felt there was any intrinsic virtue in great size. I think we have had some success, but I am obviously not objective.

It could be said that the difference between our company and the more typical chain is not significant and is only in the eye of one of its owners. Every newspaper company would argue that it tries to improve its newspapers. And despite the appalling quality of some American newspapers, it probably would be difficult to prove that anyone consciously sets out to publish a bad newspaper.

A bad newspaper can come as the result of many factors: neglect, incompetence, greed, and in some cases, the inability to produce enough revenue, regardless of the best of intentions.

Talking about the worst newspapers in the country is a fascinating subject. Obviously, this is a subjective judgment as we all have differences in the criteria we use to judge a newspaper. Some look primarily to completeness and accuracy of the news report. Some put great value on the integrity of the editorial judgment, having confidence that business and advertising pressures never determine news or editorial judgments. Others place a high value on a newspaper performing an educational function,

telling the readers not just what happened today, but giving them information they need to understand why something happened, and what the future problems may be that the community should be preparing for.

At the risk of offending a few colleagues, let me give you my unscientific thoughts on the worst newspapers in America. . . . I claim no special knowledge, but I do have an opinion and I believe it is worth sharing.

The willingness to put the good of the community ahead of an absolute devotion to the bottom line is another consideration. These and many other factors come to mind in such a discussion.

At the risk of offending a few colleagues, let me give you my unscientific thoughts on the worst newspapers in America. This judgment is drawn in part from my own observation and in part from the comments of other journalists. I have seen copies of all of the papers I will mention although obviously I have not seen all the papers in a chain. I claim no special knowledge, but I do have an opinion and I believe it is worth sharing.

I would say the worst newspapers in America are those in the Donrey, Thomson, and Leshner chains. The primary purpose of these papers is to be ever-faithful cash cows for the owners. Little concern is given to the

readers. The employees generally receive low salaries and poor benefits. News coverage is skimpy and inconsistent. Success is measured in rates of return, not public service. Typical Donrey newspapers in California are *The Daily Democrat* in Woodland and the *Daily News* in Red Bluff; and typical Thompson newspapers are *The Daily Telegraph* in Adrian, Michigan, and *The Repository* in Canton, Ohio. Leshner is well represented by the California newspapers, the *Merced Sun-Star* and the *West County Times* in Pinole.

There are other newspapers that should be mentioned in any listing of the appalling. Unquestionably Rupert Murdoch's News America Company deserves listing. The deterioration of the *New York Post* under his ownership is tragic and probably fatal, and the *San Antonio Express-News* continues to set a standard of near-newsless sensationalism. And that doesn't count what he did to the *Chicago Sun-Times* before he sold it. However, I understand Murdoch's *Boston Herald* is doing a good job of covering the state house. Murdoch is bad, but he lacks the consistency of a Donrey.

I thought Jim Ottaway, Jr., a senior vice president of Dow Jones, made some very perceptive comments about the growing concentration of ownership in a speech early last Year [*Nieman Reports*, Spring 1987]. He said the rampant buying and selling of papers has tended to "reduce the quality, slow the growth, and threaten the future of many papers. He also said he sees the "profit motive" becoming dominant over "the search for truth, editorial quality, and public service" in more and more newspaper owners, publishers, and managers. he found this true both in chains and among the independents.

In the field of newspaper ownership I don't find any clear formula that would guarantee quality. There are outstanding, privately owned, independent papers such as the *Riverside Press-Enterprise*, but there are

also third-rate papers such as the *Las Vegas Sun* in Nevada that are privately owned and independent. Chains offer the best and the worst, looking at *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* at one end, and Donrey, Thompson, and Leshner at the other.

There are many chains in between the extremes that face great pressure to bolster the bottom line. Harte-Hanks and Cap Cities, for example, are burdened with very large debts. Ingersoll's problems have been intensified by its driving ambition to grow. These pressures fight against quality. There are also what you might call the quality chains, such as Times-Mirror and Knight Ridder.

Gannett is a special case. While it is true that the typical Gannett paper clearly is run with primary attention to the bottom line, it also is true Gannett maintains certain standards. Gannett readers are usually given a pretty skimpy news hole and mediocre local coverage, but they do get a paper that is attractive and colorful. And it should be mentioned that Gannett has set high standards for the industry in training, technology, and hiring practices. Public or private, chain or independent, you can find good, bad or indifferent in any category.

Newspapers are different from other businesses. To be a good newspaper person you must have skills that cannot be learned selling real estate or making a bank loan.

Having placed myself on the very thin ice of criticizing some of my colleagues, let me skate out a little far-

ther and give a general opinion about what seems to contribute to the building of good newspapers, and what factors contribute to pushing newspapers to the bottom of the barrel.

More than anything else, the factor that seems to be essential for the making of a good newspaper is having individuals in charge who understand the special role newspapers play in keeping the public informed and the absolute importance of that role.

Newspapers are different from other businesses. To be a good newspaper person you must have skills that cannot be learned selling real estate or making a bank loan. The skills to run a newspaper are best learned under the discipline of a good news organization.

On a good newspaper you can learn those skills on the news side or the business side. To make a gross generalization, one can say that good newspapers are almost always run by good newspaper people; they are almost never run by good bankers or good accountants. Fortunately, most of the major newspaper chains are still run by individuals whose experience comes mainly from the newspaper business.

Dow Jones, the owner of *The Wall Street Journal* and numerous other dailies, is run by Warren Phillips, who has had long experience on the news side. Knight-Ridder is now run by Alvah Chapman, who had early newsroom experience and absorbed the tradition of news values established by the Knight newspapers.

The New York Times and *The Washington Post* are both owned by large public companies that also own other newspapers. But due to a two-tier stock ownership, the families that owned those papers when they were private still are able to control them. In both cases, the members of the families calling the shots are well imbued with the high standards of journalism that have been connected with the papers for many decades.

The Times-Mirror Company, the owner of the *Los Angeles Times*,

which casts a long shadow in this neck of the woods, was guided for years by Otis Chandler, a member of the family that started the *Times* back in 1882. There is no question that Times-Mirror under the leadership of Otis Chandler and Bob Erburu has built a fine reputation in journalism.

in all, having a newspaper person in charge provides the best chance for a good newspaper to exist.

The nation is fortunate that in most cases newspapers, both good and bad, are still run by newspaper people, those who understand they are in a special business and understand its importance.

. . . it is remarkable that newspaper companies have not become the targets of the great conglomerates, or the Saudis or the Japanese. How would you feel if King Fahd controlled Knight-Ridder or Mitsubishi turned the dials at Gannett? . . . That thought makes Al Neuharth look like Elijah Lovejoy.

Concerning Gannett, despite its devotion to the bottom line, we should remember that Gannett is run by newspaper people. Al Neuharth built a reputation as an aggressive and talented newsman before he turned his talents to building the largest newspaper company in America.

I should mention that our company has announced its intention to go public, using the same two-tier stock arrangement of The New York Times Company and The Washington Post Company. The decision was made to insure the long-term independence and integrity of our newspapers. We hope it will create a mechanism that will protect us from the situation that happened in Louisville.

Now let me go to my real fear about the future of American journalism. I fear the day when newspaper people are no longer in charge of newspapers. I realize that simply having newspaper people in charge won't guarantee good newspapers, that there are some really wretched newspapers run by individuals who legitimately call themselves newspaper people, but, all

In some ways it is remarkable that newspaper companies have not become the targets of the great conglomerates, or the Saudis or the Japanese. How would you feel if King Fahd controlled Knight-Ridder or Mitsubishi turned the dials at Gannett? Not good, I'm sure. That thought makes Al Neuharth look like Elijah Lovejoy.

One foreign purchase has taken place: Mexican publisher Mario Vasquez Rana's purchase of UPI. UPI under Vasquez Rana has continued its downward slide.

Maybe an even more upsetting thought than having our newspapers controlled by foreign corporations is the thought of having them controlled by American conglomerates which have demonstrated special contempt for the press and its responsibility to inform the public. Just imagine if Mobil Oil, under the leadership of a man like William P. Tavoulareas, gained control of *The Washington Post*. I imagine Ben Bradlee would prefer Mitsubishi.

Why is it that so little ownership of American newspapers has gone in-

to the hands of either foreign corporations or domestic conglomerates? There is no law to prevent it. I believe it hasn't happened because there is a strong tradition against it and few have had the *chutzpah* to go against the tradition. I'd like to think that tradition will stand inviolate in the years ahead, but I wouldn't lay any big bet on it. Newspapers are changing. Mergers and acquisitions are making conglomerates ever bigger and less responsive to public interests. The public and the government increasingly seem ready to accept what used to be unacceptable.

Newspapers are changing. Mergers and acquisitions are making conglomerates ever bigger and less responsive to public interests. The public and the government increasingly seem ready to accept what used to be unacceptable.

To me a clear and unsettling example of this change can be seen by comparing what happened when ITT tried and failed to buy the ABC television network in 1966 and when General Electric successfully bought the NBC television network last year.

It was in February 1966 that ABC and ITT first agreed on a merger. Some members of the Federal Communications Commission expressed concern about the influence ITT ownership might have on ABC news coverage. There was concern expressed in Congress because ITT had

heavy business interests abroad. The Justice Department came out strongly against it, saying there was "no real need" and suggested the change would harm the integrity of the news operation. There was general public indignation expressed over a giant conglomerate with many special business interests and overseas connections getting control of a news source that was so vitally important to the American public.

There also was concern expressed that the past history of ITT gave little sense of confidence it would keep its promise that it would not interfere in the news operation. The FCC finally approved the merger over the objections of the Justice Department. The Justice Department went to court to block the merger and everything dragged on. Finally on January 1, 1969, almost three years after the merger plan had been announced, ITT directors voted to call off the deal.

Compare this history to what happened when GE announced on December 12, 1985 that it intended to buy RCA, the owner of NBC, for \$6.28 billion. It would be the largest non-oil merger in history.

Robert Reno, in a column for *Newsday*, put the proposal in perspective.

"Here in the GE-RCA acquisition we see proposed an industrial vastness touching on a significant share of the nation's communications, entertainment and manufacturing sectors and involving enormous amounts of defense expenditures and government-protected broadcasting rights of immense value.

"What is envisioned is a corporate body of staggering size and breadth and immeasurable influence which in some ways may be a glimpse of the corporation of the future. Indeed, if GE and RCA can pull this thing off, no merger becomes unthinkable."

There were many parallels between ITT in 1966 and GE in 1987. GE had many overseas ties. It was deeply involved in business that had great interest in the news and how stories

were presented. And like ITT, its past history raised some ethical questions about the integrity of its management. In 1961 three GE executives went off to jail after being convicted of price fixing and bid rigging and the company paid a giant fine. But GE's acquisition of NBC caused hardly a ripple. There were few public complaints. The FCC moved things along as if it were approving a change of call letters on a small radio station. And, amazingly, the Justice Department gave quick approval. No questions asked. It took a little over six months to get final approval.

The change from the failed ITT-ABC merger to the successful GE-NBC merger suggests a future that does not bode well for keeping newspapers out of the hands of people who want to use them to help their conglomerates sell more missiles to the government or drugs to the third world or toothpaste to you and me.

The tradition that has kept a Mobil Oil from buying up a controlling interest of Knight-Ridder may turn out to be insufficient protection in the years ahead. In the present climate anything seems to go.

I fear it is just a matter of time before newspapers will be considered the same as any business, a fit prize for investment by interests that do not care about the principles of good journalism.

I am not saying that because we can call ourselves newspaper people that we are better and brighter than others in any other field, but we have the opportunity to inform and to entertain, to reach an audience in a way that few have. We have an opportunity to serve as a forum for debate and to bring independent scrutiny to bear on the forces of power in our society. And we have the protection of the First Amendment.

We may not be better and brighter, but we do have very special opportunities and obligations.

What can be done? Special tax laws have been suggested that would make it easier for families owning indepen-

dent newspapers to pass ownership on to the next generation. These could help to keep some independent papers out of the hands of the chains, but there seems to be little support for such measures and a lot of opposition that claims they reek of "special interest."

Congress could pass additional anti-trust laws that would set limits of ownership on newspapers, either in total numbers or percentage of circulation. Admittedly, it would be difficult to frame, but I would favor legislation that would set some limits. It seems to me there should be some way the public could be protected from excessive concentration of ownership in newspapers. Far greater harm could come from two or three companies owning all the newspapers than two or three companies owning all the oil companies. Such legislation would face the double hazard of a monumental lack of interest from Congress and, if ever passed, possible attack in court as a violation of the First Amendment, but it deserves consideration.

Even more difficult than legislating absolute limits on ownership would be establishing restrictive criteria to screen the type of individuals controlling newspaper companies. I would love to see a system devised that would guarantee that the future bosses of Dow Jones and The New York Times Company would be in the mold of Warren Phillips and "Punch" Sulzberger, but that is easier said than done. You might end up with what would be the equivalent of a licensing system for acceptable news leaders.

But who would we trust to make the judgment of who was acceptable and who was not? No one I can think of. Mobil Oil must be guaranteed the same First Amendment rights as *The New York Times*. I don't see how we can expect government to protect us from bad leadership, not if we want to keep government out of other critical judgments in the news business.

This is a dreary picture I have been

painting of how newspapers may be controlled in the future. I hope Congress will examine legislation to limit concentration of ownership, but I don't think we can count on it. I expect if there is any real protection, it will have to be found among the men and women who produce the newspapers and those who read them.

All of the people involved in the daily production of the newspaper must remind themselves that they are in the news business and it is different. Journalism is a public service and demands appropriate standards. Those standards cannot be met if newspaper companies are run by men and women who do not see the value of the press's public function.

I would hope the maintenance of visible, high standards by the best newspapers will inhibit the sliding standards of the worst newspapers. Unfortunately, the market place is far from an effective mechanism to protect the public when there is only one newspaper in the market — and it is bad.

I would like to think that the growth of the national newspapers — *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times* and *USA Today* — will hurt the really bad local papers. It is also possible that the growth in recent years of alternative newspapers may inhibit the deterioration in quality of the worst monopoly papers. Competition is still the best friend of the consumer.

It is important that those of us in the newspaper business become more willing to talk about standards. Maybe we spend too much time giving prizes to the best, and not enough time putting the spotlight on the worst. It may be difficult to shame the publishers of the worst papers into improving. It seems obvious by looking at their papers that they don't give a fig about quality and probably care less about criticism from the likes of me.

But they do care about their bottom lines. Poor quality leads to low penetration and eventually low

penetration hurts the bottom line. I strongly believe that in the long run quality newspapers will achieve greater financial success than inferior newspapers. Let's hope nonreaders are sending a message that will be heard by the likes of Thomson.

The J-Schools of the country could do more to establish awareness of standards, but in the final analysis it will be the readers that make the judgment when they accept or reject our newspapers. People like you can play an important role by demanding quality newspapers.

I wish I had a well-rounded conclusion but, unfortunately, I don't. It is clear, though, that the ideal newspaper is owned and run by talented newspaper people who live in the community. Let me say to those of you who live in Riverside — enjoy Tim Hays while you have him. After Tim and his peers have retired, there is little that can be predicted with certainty other than to say it will be different.

For most communities it is too late to go back to the ideal you have in Riverside. Most communities will have to settle for chain operations. Some will be good and some will be bad. Some can be influenced to be better. Some don't give a damn unless it hurts their bottom line.

Maybe that suggests two worthy goals for our journalism schools to research: One, how can the readers and the general public convince poor and mediocre newspapers that a little more quality would help their bottom line? And, two, how can we keep the likes of Mobil Oil or King Fahd from buying up control of Knight-Ridder? We should give a good prize to the person who gives us the answer to those questions. □



Elijah Parish Lovejoy

Off the Beaten Track

Grady Clay

Subtitled: Shifting Sands, Sticky Wicket, Fast Track, Outback, Last Ditch, and Armpit of the Nation.

How many of us can pace off one hundred yards with an error of less than six inches, or look at a plowed field and estimate its acreage to a 75 percent accurate figure or time precisely that universal commodity the Six Minute Egg?

These questions occurred to me as I tried to explain to a friend the size of a 200-acre farm. It was rough going. It made me wonder what is our Universal Visual Dimension of modern space in the United States, our yardstick for BIG environments?

I got an answer in Brazil while inspecting the giant pulpwood plantation developed by Daniel Ludwig. His power plant and pulpwood mill — shipped from Japan — turn out 900 tons of fine paper pulp every day — one-third over-capacity. Finally, my guide uttered three magic words, of-

fering a handle for conveying these huge apparati to friends in the U.S. — “Each of these plants is as long as three FOOTBALL FIELDS” said the guide. Here was the key dimension, the universal image for United States audiences, a national denominator of landscape unit size and shape.

WORK,” I began with a list of 97 candidate generic places. By the time I finished with Texas, or vice versa, the list expanded to 250. Seized by a compulsive urge to follow wherever the damn thing might lead, and having been assured there’s nothing of the sort available, I plunged ahead. The

... A CITY is a “large man-made device for the distribution of surplus energy.”

Let us assume that a form of universal truth is contained in such visual and linguistic images. And that it is important in a democratic society for image and reality to stick tight to each other. Our meaningful world is what we can describe to each other. Once it is beyond description, written off as CHAOS, we’re in trouble. Those of us combining WORD and THING to communicate meaning must watch fits and catch misfits.

Such assumptions prompted me to begin writing a form of encyclopedia — also known as a gazetteer — an effort to improve the fits between word and place. I’ve had to do it by fits and starts.

In 1982 I had conceived a colorful coffee table book of essays called *HOW PLACES WORK*, based somewhat on the German book *HOW THINGS WORK*. Later, running a seminar at Texas A&M University called “HOW PLACES

work now consists of a book manuscript of some 400 pages — and expanding.

According to my definition, a CITY is a “large man-made device for the distribution of surplus energy.” My focus is contemporary. Occasionally I try to peer into the future. I am not interested in specific place-names: not so much in Stony Lonesome, Indiana, but in the common characteristics and functioning of all such WIDE PLACES IN THE ROAD; not just the intersection of Fifth and Jefferson Streets in Louisville, but in the functions of that generic COURT HOUSE SQUARE which still dominates many county seats. Not so much the COMBAT ZONES in foreign lands, but the nature of our domestic varieties.

Once you get into the swing, you can watch the way newcomers like COMPLEX move up off the psychiatrist’s couch, out of the adject-

Grady Clay, Nieman Fellow '49, was the first urban affairs editor of The Courier-Journal in Louisville, Kentucky. He was, for 23 years, editor of the international journal, *LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE*. He has been president of both the National Association of Real Estate Editors, and the American Society of Planning Officials. Mr. Clay, who lives at 330 Wildwood Place, Louisville, Kentucky 40206, is working on a new book, the *GAZETTEER*.

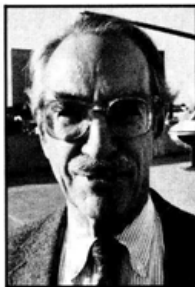


Photo © QUADRANT - 1988

tival mode, and into Noun-dom. Beyond the COMPLEX lies METROPLEX, and, no doubt, down the road lies MEGAPLEX. HIGH TECH CORRIDORS appear widely, chief on the wish-lists of mid-sized towns. My planner friends tell me HANG GLIDER LAUNCHES cause occasional zoning problems. HARD HAT AREA has extended indoors to non-hazardous shops where their purpose is to keep the long hair of both male and female workers out of the machinery. NO-SMOKING AREA is a greater proliferator, WAITING ZONE a fact of everyday life and movement.

HARD HAT AREA has extended indoors to non-hazardous shops where their purpose is to keep the long hair of both male and female workers out of the machinery.

What prompts all this is a vision of language as a marketplace in which new products are continually tossed in by hundreds of specialists out there working the mines, tending the stores, skiing and managing the slopes, fishing the waters, selling the merchandise, policing the territory: on-the-job talkers and improvisers.

This huge host . . . inventors, manipulators, word-gamesters, smithies and sharpies, list-makers and wordmongers, specialists and don't-give-a-shit-slingers. . . . They may come from THE ARMPIT OF THE NATION and be proud of it. After a drink or so, they'll confide in you the precise location of THE ASSHOLE OF THE UNIVERSE. They may brag about living in the BUCKLE of the BIBLE BELT, and they'll claim

that the SNOW BELT starts 50 miles thataway. . . . If their job is to raid computer companies for hotshot employees around Washington DC, they're called BELTWAY BANDITS. When they get too old for life in the FAST LANE, they end up in THE BONEYARD, or retire to a GRAY GHETTO or GERIATRIC CLUSTERS of the genus RETIREMENT COMMUNITY.

But aside from the gaudy lingo, the one-upmanship and Rube Goldbergian lash-ups out there in the linguistic marketplace, what's the deeper rationale?

Looming over all these places is the steady injection of energies into the machinery, chemical processes, electronic gear, vehicles, air movement systems, and the signs and signals necessary to make them work. Great goings-on, comings and goings, stop-and-go, to-ings and fro-ings distinguish such places. Not set-pieces, but a dynamic interchange to which an activist language and its users respond.

Modern places exhibit a myriad of inside-outside compromises and adjustments. Each is a complex set of semi-hemi-demi-quasi-structures, Take PETROLEUM STORAGE AND REFINERY COMPLEX (known locally as SHELLEXX CITY or OILPORT); it needs fifty acres of piping just to transfer liquids, a coupla hundred-acre TANK FARM, and DEEP-WATER PORT, plus a half-mile of BLAST REDUCTION ZONE for the next explosion.

What goes on here is that modern

production methods are breaking apart the old notion of a single building in which "everything is contained;" they call on the GREAT OUTDOORS to perform tasks once hidden inside THE PLANT. It is a historic reversal to the Middle Ages when most heavy work of farming, mining, mixing, and manufacture was done out-of-doors.

This shift to larger outdoor scale changes all of public life. "Park people" no longer merely "manage the parks," but are held responsible for the safety of balloon-launchings, frisbee-throwing contestants, motorbike racers cross-country, and the state of algae in fishing lakes. In aspirational quality-of-life circles, "park people" are touted as part of what once was called the ECONOMIC BASE. New places have names like WATERSHEDS, COMMUTERSHEDS, AIRSHEDS, WIND-FARMS, and HEAT ISLANDS. They often depend on distant energy sources, mess around with old POLITICAL JURISDICTIONS, and show up on self-conscious new NEIGHBORHOOD maps.

What is happening is that complex activities of every sort — from ski-resorting to polo, from widget-making to electronic data processing, from owning an automobile to shopping for clothes — demand complex outdoor environments that put heavy demands on landscape and on other physical resources. Our industrial society is too experimental to allow all its activities to be confined to buildings. Modern life does not work

"Park People" no longer merely "manage the parks," but are held responsible for the safety of balloon-launchings, frisbee-throwing contestants, motorbike races across country, and the state of algae in fishing lakes.

that way. Nor does traditional language easily accommodate these new places. Watch that noun COMPLEX as it cascades through the new columns — a catch-all for operations too few journalists try to explain.

... complex activities of every sort — from ski-resorting to polo, from widget-making to electronic data processing, from owning an automobile to shopping for clothes — demand complex outdoor environments that put heavy demands on landscapes and on other physical resources.

And now to a final observation. Michel Foucault has observed that "spatial metaphors, far from being reactionary, technocratic, unwarranted or illegitimate, are rather symptoms of a 'strategic' 'combative' thought, one which poses the space of discourse as a terrain and an issue of political practice." (*The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. Michel Foucault. Random House, 1970.)

Years of editing news and opinions about fast-changing places in the United States and abroad convinced me that:

(1) There is more here/there than meets the casual eye.

(2) Places should be examined as processes that happen to be "taking place" in a particular sort of location; but they begin far in history and ex-

tend to the end of time. Thinking about places only as subjects gets us into dead ends of aesthetic psychology.

(3) No question of PLACE can be separated from questions of ownership, control, management, influence. This is what Foucault calls a "strategic . . . combative" point of view, which is OK by me.

Each of us occupies quite specific PLACES and quite generic sort of PLACES all of our lives. To "know one's place" means to know its potential, its prospects, its history, and the lines of control or influence which

permeate it. This does NOT mean accepting as unchangeable some loose and ill-defined category which Fate has ordained or advertising has tried to preempt. Attaching names to places is not fixing labels to make the world stand still, but the only way carefully to explore and discover its potentials. □

This article is adapted from a talk given by Grady Clay at the annual meeting of the Society for the North American Cultural Survey, at Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, Louisiana.

BUZZWORDS OF PLACE

(Upper Class Division)



Mix and Match for Quick Sale to the Right Sort (Exclusive rights, Northeastern United States)

0 Luxurious	waterfront	Estate	(Mint condition)
1 Spacious	prestigious	Location	(Close to. . .)
2 Exclusive	country	Horse farm	(Great view)
3 Impressive	waterfront	Seat	(Unique. . .)
4 Commodious	antique	Penthouse	(Panoramic vista)
5 Unique	restored	Place	(Rare find)
6 Elegant	English	Landmark	(Ambience)
7 Ultimate	historic	Establishment	(All amenities)
8 Gracious	Colonial	Retreat	(14-ft. ceilings)
9 Stately	Classic	Enclave	(Servts. Quarters)

Example:

0963 = Luxurious Classic Landmark (Great view)

7111 = Ultimate Prestigious Location (Close to Country Club)

6969 = Elegant Classic Landmark (Servts. Quarters)

Written for the GAZETTEER. Copyright 1988 by Grady Clay.

WAR MONSTERS

The following three articles by Grady Clay are from his latest book, Right Before Your Eyes: Penetrating the Urban Environment. APA Planners Press 1988. Copyright 1987 by the American Planning Association.

It came as no surprise to anybody close to American Land development practices in 1967 to observe a 400-square-foot building built from scratch in sixty days near Charleston, South Carolina. Of course it took a bloody war in Vietnam to produce such blind speed. The plant was built by Ruscon Construction Company using Armco Steel components in a crash job to get housing for helicopter engines production. The building could hold 10 football fields under one roof, housed 1,000 employees, and in three years was designed to hold 5,000, making it Charleston's largest industrial employer.

The land? Oh, that . . . It was there, open and fairly flat. In the name of a national emergency (and with a presidential election not far off), anything could be put anywhere, and this new factory adjacent to, that is, across the street from, a recently-finished housing development proves the point. War triumphs over all. So long as the nation is on a war footing, (whatever that may mean) we may expect variations of the above scene anywhere in the nation.

The landscape . . . what's that? The idea that anybody should be concerned with what is outside the helicopter engine plant is of course foreign to the minds of the men who use the 'copters, to those who build them, and to the architects and engineers forced to get that goddamn thing built and off the ground and running in 60 days, no excuses, no sleep, no evasions, get it done . . . yesterday.

One might dismiss this as an inevitable side-effect of war; just another suburban tract development,

this one under one roof. Sorry about that. . . quit bitching and get going . . . you a Commie or something?

But if one stands back a moment and considers that today's wartime expedients become tomorrow's peacetime routine, that today's "emergency" gets built into the structure of tomorrow's government, it becomes quite clear that the 60-day, 10-football field building is just around the corner for every community, and not merely those impacted by defense or war or "preparedness" contracts. Inflation is forcing the developers of buildings or land to speed up, to rationalize, to choose the critical path, over-invest in expensive machinery, and pass the costs along as best they can. This is the reality of a country caught up in warlike fervor.

quickest speculative booms of those decades for men able to grab large hunks of buildable land in a hurry. It happens in every wartime moment, whether the war and/or the national emergency is "declared" or not. The money machine is greased, long-term as well as construction financing can again be assembled in a hurry, and the quality of the environment during and after construction is nobody's concern. Who the hell cares? There's a War On — that's the familiar cry. If the war grows hotter, if the U.S. gets drawn deeper into Asiatic or Middle Eastern fighting, only well-established and deeply-embedded protection could prevent landscape from being converted willy-nilly into war production sites.

Very quickly, in a real war

There's a War On — that's the familiar cry. If the war grows hotter, if the U.S. gets drawn deeper into Asiatic or Middle Eastern fighting, only . . . deeply imbedded protection could prevent landscape from being converted . . . into war production sites.

What this means is, also, that every large and readily-available tract of land outside every major city is in the target zone for future large-scale and quickly-built buildings. Ten acres or 100 acres under one roof . . . Thousand-acre sites, fantastic runoff after every rain, traffic spillovers drenching the roads for miles around . . . It happened after those Korean war restrictions were lifted and federal housing subsidies unleashed in the Fifties, promoting one of the

emergency, my kind of talk would become unpatriotic if not illegal, liable to arouse mob spirit and vengeance if not police handcuffs. So the questions need to be raised ahead of time, in the so-called safety of pre-World War III days: who is going to take care of the environments for miles around, and for hundreds of miles downstream from those giant paramilitary or industrial eruptions? Before it's too late for another hundred or so cities, somebody's got to

ride herd on the rough riders themselves . . . hold local zoning regulations, require good land planning, ensure siltation and run off controls, insist on reasonable long-range plans that ensure long-range protection.

More important than that — and of immediate pressing concern — is the necessity for Congress to pass legislation that will prepare long-term protective measures for the nation's soil supplies; identify and protect the irreplaceables (which, once bulldozed away, can never be recreated). This should give scientific identity and eventually legal status to those resources which, once destroyed, might never return: historic, lovely springs buried by reckless urban expansion, farmland of deeply unique soils, and even deserts beyond the city's edges which might form vital greenbelts, wedges, or permanent open spaces to help shape urban expansion.

Every building and land developer worth a hoot in today's competitive market is bustin' to get at the big-scale stuff, land by the square mile, buildings by the acre, uninterrupted in-line production, Everybody Stand Back. If the countryside around every city is not to be trampled in this process, its citizens must put pressure on their congressmen, their city councilmen, et al., and on local planning and conservation groups to secure, first, the ecological inventories that will identify local natural and scenic resources, and then the political protection that will shunt and divert big-scale development off to more suitable sites.

Otherwise, the careless, heedless and single-minded developers with war money, scare tactics and old-line "don't stop progress" arguments will have bitched up the country so it won't be worth coming home to — either during the afternoon rush hour, or from distant and undeclared wars, actions or military adventures.

□



CAUTION: FUTURE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

It would be a mistake to assume that the places explored here can stand alone in space; that they are self-contained and that they work as neatly and as self-sufficiently as the planners' land-use diagrams might suggest. The truth of the matter lies in the vast interplay of forces, not the least of which is the sun and not the last of which is gravity, exerting themselves upon each and every place. It is true that by naming these places, we attach to them our own meanings and limits. That is inevitable when we indulge our civilized form of place-claiming by place-naming. But we should accept the fact that to name a place is merely to put a loose kimona around it in hopes that its flutterings will distinguish it from its surroundings and give us another chance to examine it more closely.

Only by looking at places with the assumption that they are parts of a living, emerging whole can we grasp at least some of their meanings and potentials. If we think of the world as an embryo, as Dr. Lewis Thomas has suggested, then every part of that vast changeling is merely in transition. Looking at a croquet court or roadside dump may not require of us more than some bits of technical knowledge — unless we consider how it relates to its surroundings; and what new forces are available to impinge upon, to restrict or to reconstruct what we see today.

Anyone who has examined a particular place with more than casual attention will, sooner rather than later, stagger back at the awesome array of unknowns, at the unanswered and possibly unanswerable questions about any particular place. Merely to ask "How did it come to be?" is to lift the lid from the unfathomable. If one merely dares to wonder what this may look like 25 years hence, one is

quickly locked into the prospects of erosion, the possibilities of newcomers, the likelihood of a change in energy flows, the inevitable workings of the Second Law of Dynamics, a whole universe of prospects. And to discover "how-it-came-to-be" one must unravel not only local histories, folk memories and badly filed documents, but also linkages with surroundings which have changed beyond recognition. Even that newest of historical fields of specialty, "Local History," is filled with disappointed newcomers whose diggings through local records uncover gaps that seem impossible to close.

No place is what it seems on first sighting. All places . . . refuse to follow rigid rules. . . . Consider a baseball diamond between seasons, a drive-in theatre at dawn, an abandoned farm . . . each of them a place bereft of . . . hints and meanings which come from being occupied, busy.

No place is what it seems on first sighting. All places are ambiguous, and refuse to follow rigid rules. No

place "knows its place," for such knowledge is human and imposed by people upon the spaces they may fancy they "own." Look at a playground deserted by its players, neglected by its neighbors, short-changed by its owners distant at City Hall. Consider a baseball diamond between seasons, a drive-in theatre at dawn, an abandoned farm, a prematurely-subdivided field . . . each of them a place bereft of a host of hints and meanings which came from being occupied, busy.

And yet how places are used, mis-used, or not used tells only a fragment of the truth about them. Their very materials can speak volumes. I have in mind a richly-colored brownstone wall along a property line in Limestone Country. For miles around, every old wall is of limestone, gleaming grey-to-white in the sunshine. Yet here is this brown aberration, its stones brought from distant hills — by what struggling? at what expense? prompted by what

aesthetic dreams?

Every place offers its own warped and clouded window on the world. Manufactured concepts such as ownership, zoning, inheritance, and deeds of title may surround properties, sometimes with a rosy glow of anticipations. But it is our own exploration of places that alone can expose us to the magic beyond deeds, and to visual revelations beyond history. □



Marketing Arousal: THE ARENA EFFECT

The long-distance voice wanted me to comment, for publication, on "the future of golf course design," the sort of inquiry that occasionally drops into my lap when things are dull in New York City. It came from one of those slick Manhattan magazines competing for the \$150,000-a-year-and-upscale readers. But, much preferring to share such thoughts with more than one audience, the next time I found myself on a golf course — it turned out to be near Grandfather Mountain, North Carolina, I was moved to these further observations:

Definition. Golf course: a ballistic-missile site designed as a pleasure ground. Designer: a specialist in op-

tical illusions, in the deceptive organization of distances, in the sly concealment of obstacles. To become such a designer requires a high level of skills, single-mindedness of purpose, and the inspiration of true artistry.

Djinns and evil spirits come to inhabit golf courses, just as do the more benign sort of genii. Golf course designers profess to interpret both in their effort to be all things to all golfers.

As for players, some play the ball, others play the landscape with the ball being merely a means to an end. The latter requires the greater skill.

The putting green is the ultimate outdoor artifact — the prototype

American Lawn. A homeowner looks longingly at the green. Homeowner asks, "Why doesn't my lawn look like that?" — forgetting that the Course Committee of that particular club has just budgeted some \$10,000 just to redo one recalcitrant green. And from that homeowner's question springs sweat, hard labor, much expense and possibly an early heart attack. Suburbanites of the last 50 years saw greens as Model Lawns. It takes years of frustration to be relieved of that impossible vision.

Golf courses are also handy devices for jacking up neighborhood values. The value of a house that can be marketed with a "fairway view" is the key to many high-priced land development profits. The process works as follows: One 450-yard hole (or in laymen's terms, a fairway plus green and tee) can add up to \$180,000 to real estate values by providing lots having fairway views. As it works out, 450 yards equals 1,350 feet, which, when divided into lots with 150 feet of frontage, gives nine lots for each side of the fairway, or 18 lots. If you can get \$10,000 more per lot because of fairway proximity, and can tuck 324 lots alongside the entire golf course, that comes to a neat \$3,240,000 potential added value to a golf-course oriented subdivision.

It's not all gravy. There's lots of risk. But in good times and bad, the opportunity to watch grown men and women hitting little white balls across expensive scenery will continue to entice developers — through hook and slice and beyond the rough. Fore!

. . . . But in concentrating on the new look that's taken hold of the golf course, it is easy to overlook the effect of big-purse, telecast golfing competitions. Something new has been added beyond the crowds and the gallery that cheers good shots and mourns when their hero gets off in the rough.

The whole golf course has been redesigned for television. "This club saw the big PGA competitions going to other clubs with courses designed for spectator crowds," explained my

guide as we drove past the Birmingham Country Club undergoing a massive earth-moving surgery in 1985. "If you want to compete, you've got to measure up to PGA standards with the latest design."

Which means, among other things, re-grading the terrain to create a new "natural" amphitheater around the greens, especially on the final holes, so that thousands of fans can watch the current champions and challengers during that "sudden death" playoff. What began on the Scottish moors with their natural hazards — sand dunes and rocky outcrops — has been transformed into a formal stage setting so that the visible climax penetrates onto the farthest livingroom via TV.

... in good times and bad, the opportunity to watch grown men and women hitting little white balls across expensive scenery will continue to entice developers ...

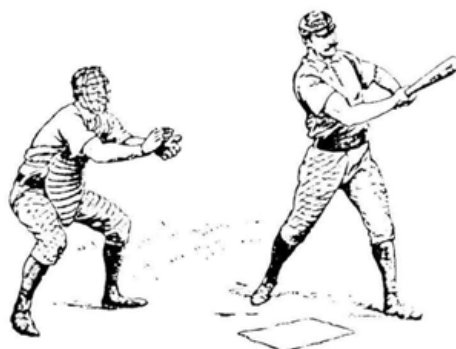
Or consider the racetrack, and especially the end of the race. Remember that bygone day when two subalterns, dragooned from the ranks of bystanders, held a white string at breast height to show who won the footrace? Today the Finish Line has expanded into a complex zone of electronic interaction. The finish of the race — whether human, horse or automotive — must provide space and unobstructed views for cameras, their crews and stands and gear, and for a host of officials and influential kibitzers — not to mention local police and National Guardsmen. The actual finish is recorded on



tape, sound, and for many audiences. The Finish Zone must be clearly visible to tens of thousands of on-site spectators so that, after watching The Finish, they can carry something home besides frustration.

In football, there's this stretch of End Zone once called "pay dirt," and extending beyond the goal line. Once upon a time, in the pre-TV dark ages, players crossed the goal line fighting, squirming, struggling, entangled and possibly in great pain. Just getting the ball across was enough. But no longer. With a million fans watching on TV, the goal line has become just another dramatic prop. Plays are designed with the dramatic finish in mind — preferably plays that put the ball-carrier or pass-receiver across the line standing up. He is immediately engulfed by his buddies, hoisted to their shoulders, and carried off, waving enthusiastically at the crowds. No longer is End Zone mere grass. For TV it may well be a pastel plastic grass, part of the new stage setting.

Nowhere is this form of mutation better seen than at Indianapolis, Indiana. The instrument of this transition has been The Brickyard, as the Indianapolis 500 racetrack is called. This great ritual has been coopted by both the auto industry and the In-



dianapolis civic boosters, who have capitalized on the race's nickname to advertise the entire city as INDY. Once known as "IndiaNOPLACE". The city has added a dozen major sports centers — track, swimming, field sports, et al. — and now flourishes on its new image as a great sports center.

This enlargement of play to sport, of action to performance, of playing field to dramatic stage, of direct vision to televised imagery is all around us. No big marina developer would dream of investing his millions without considering "how it'll look on TV" when he launches his first regatta. The design of race tracks, stadiums, arenas — as was dramatically evident at the Los Angeles Olympics — has been radically overhauled for the projection of visual imagery once removed. Sport for the fun of it — lonely, unobserved, casual and happenstantial — has taken a back seat. If it cannot be observed by large crowds, preferably on TV, it does not exist. □

Roshomon

continued from page 18

tation the reporter, the tough reporter — the one that digs and has the help of some others — has dug out the whole story and published it in *The Post* or in *The Times*, may still have missed something.

That's all right, too. We cannot expect perfection in our newspapers, our information services, in our presidents or our public officials, but we can expect that people will work as hard as possible to try and find the information that enables the American people to make judgments on their public officials and on their great policies of the day. That's the business of the newspaper. Nobody's going to give them any bouquets.

If you catch the president out, he's not going to like you. But maybe it will save you from a mistake, and it might even save you from a World War. □

The Media and Risk Communications

Michael J. Kirkhorn

Journalists should first assess the alarmers before sounding the klaxon.

Over the past couple of years I have collected a thick file of newspaper clippings warning the public about the dangers of radon. Radon has an ominous identity: It usually is described as an "odorless, colorless gas" that seeps into buildings from radioactive mineral deposits. It is not benign. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has estimated that 5,000 to 20,000 people die of lung cancer each year because they were exposed to naturally occurring radon. The National Academy of Sciences undertook an elaborate statistical study and decided in January that the figure should be 13,000 — about 10 percent of all Americans who die annually from lung cancer.

The articles are written soberly in a helpful informative way, they reassure readers that this is a natural hazard that can be "remediated." Radon, the articles say, is produced by the decay of radium in soil and rock, it is particularly hazardous for smokers and in buildings tightly seal-

ed against the weather. Hotline numbers are offered for citizens who want to know how to measure radioactivity in their homes.

The reporters dutifully report that the source of official anxiety over radon are four epidemiological studies of underground miners — including uranium miners in the United States and Canada — who have been exposed over a length of time to large doses of radiation.

Reporters, however, rarely mention that the analogy between household radon and mining is speculative and controversial. Some scientists find it farfetched. Of the four mining studies, Dr. Naomi H. Harley, of New York University Medical Center, observed: "The outstanding weakness of each study is the lack of exposure data. Many times, measurements were lacking and it was necessary to recreate exposures from estimates that were little more than guesses."

But when public health officials, scientists, and journalists get together, as they did last year at New York University, to discuss radon, the unmobilized voice of dissent is overwhelmed by official consensus, concern for the public welfare, and by the willing complicity of journalists, who are eager to play their part in the vigorous business called "risk communication."

Life is risky; journalists want to help. A newspaper editor complains that the information his paper receives from a state agency is not always timely, clear, and complete. The state official promises to do bet-

ter. A television reporter reminds an EPA official that statements for broadcast must be "packaged" for relay to the public in a half-minute or less of airtime. The journalists want the process of communication to work for them. Their comments are technical. How can the process be made to work better?

Who can say that they are wrong? There is no evidence that anyone has ever died from radon poisoning. Medical science does not allow that judgment to be made. People die of lung cancer, the exact cause is guessed at (usually smoking) but not precisely known. Anyone who looks at the radon issue will find grounds for skepticism: Within federal agencies are those, including epidemiologists, who are uneasy about the costly pursuit of radon; there are dissenting voices and they are reputable; it might be cynically observed that the money EPA and other agencies are spending on radon projects buys a certain amount of interest. And yet it may turn out that this was one of the rare instances when journalists moved in early on an environmental crisis and helped to save thousands of lives.

If so, commendable. They will have performed a valuable service. But in my mind a doubt lingers about the willingness of journalists to join in an official effort to warn the public about a hazard that may be supported by a flimsy basis. Or perhaps I am grumbling about the willingness of journalists to be an official warning device. It may sound archaic, it may

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be archaic, for anyone to suppose that journalists ought to be skeptical challengers of official processes — most of all those processes intended to rally the public. But it's disturbing to see reporters and editors so readily persuaded that journalism should uncritically serve a process with goals set by the government and by corporations that may have placed the public at risk.

Journalists are not klaxons, but in recent months it seems to me that I have seen a number of them who are willing to sound the alarm without considering that their traditional role has been to stand back and assess the alarmers before deciding what to report.

How do journalists see themselves — as neutral processors of information or as independent observers? How do they think about the public — as a population eager for the official word or as one that needs to be educated with something more than pronouncements? Is it possible to cooperate with sources? If it is, when does cooperation become a form of complicity in which the journalist gives up the independence that is the origin of credibility?

At the National Conference on Risk Communication in Washington a couple of years ago, Thomas Vacor, consumer reporter for KCBS- Los Angeles, offered his views. I don't know whether they are at all typical, but I doubt that the tone of compliance belongs only to him.

To report properly on risky situations, Mr. Vacor said, the press needs help from sources. "We are reactive and we are allowed to be that way," he told the scientists, government officials, and politicians who attended the conference. "You have allowed us to go off half-cocked on a variety of issues. You have not corrected us; you have not given us advance information. . . . You have to educate the media; you have a responsibility to become a participant . . . You have to understand the risk that you are communicating, but more importantly, you have to understand the media.

You have to talk to us in advance. You have to involve the public early. If we do not pick up on your information often enough, then you have a legitimate basis for complaint . . . If you understand how the media work and demand a higher degree of participation in the system, everything will improve. Then, if you see a pattern of abuse, you have a duty to make complaints that may attack the broadcasting license that is damaging your industry or your profession."

If this sounds like the pleading of a reporter disarmed, and at the mercy of authorities, it may be partly because he knows how hard it is to understand science discourse (" . . . You have to speak to us in English.") In speaking of the public, he said, "The reality of the situation is that most viewing or reading audiences are not very attentive. They do not pay much attention to what the media are saying. We are generally background noise for dinner. We are required not to be terribly lengthy in our comments because we tend to bore people."

nalist appeared in a booklet called *Health Risk Reporting*, published by the Institute for Health Policy Analysis at Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

Journalists, the publication said, "have a low tolerance for ambiguity, which they often treat as if it were synonymous with vagueness and therefore the obverse of one of their cardinal virtues, clarity. On occasion their writing is contrived to conceal what they do not know. . . ."

Journalists, the experts believe, prefer crisp, authoritative information and are uncomfortable with anything less. They impatiently serve an impatient public. They rush to publish and to broadcast. A caricature? If so, it is one confirmed by Professor Dorothy Nelkin of Cornell University, who has studied the reporting of environmental disasters. Journalists, she said, are attracted to controversy and are much less patient with "longlasting chronic issues" — unfortunate, because the longlasting problems are those that may undo humanity. And, she says, they are at-

Journalists . . . are attracted to controversy and are much less patient with "longlasting chronic issues" — unfortunate, because the longlasting problems are those that may undo humanity. . . . they are attracted to authorities they consider unimpeachable — particularly scientists.

But his speech expresses no conviction about the value of an independent journalism. Do the risk evaluators have a higher regard for journalists than they sometimes have for themselves? Not really. This characterization of the average jour-

nalist appeared in a booklet called *Health Risk Reporting*, published by the Institute for Health Policy Analysis at Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

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makes journalism vulnerable to the strategies of public relations counsels who advise their clients to put reputable scientists out front to explain scientific or environmental crises to reporters.

This view of the journalist — impatient, insistent, demanding, narrowly focussed, predictable, reliant on the nearest authority — is widely held by scientists who have dealt with reporters on big stories. Scientists assume that journalists are driven by competition to sensationalize.

"They're after the headline grabbers," an AT&T Bell Laboratories superconductor (a hot journalistic topic) scientist said. "They love conflict. They insist that the story has to be the biggest thing since transistors." And they write it that way. What does he find when he reads the story in a major newspaper or newsmagazine? "Incoherence."

When Professor Nelkin talks with executives of technological companies she finds them "passionately angry at journalism for not reporting accurately on science." The difference in viewpoint exists. Business, she explained, prefers a "technocratic" view that regards environmental problems as fixable. They dislike the larger environmental debate that includes but does not elevate the business viewpoint.

But it is precisely this narrow technocratic viewpoint that infects a journalism that relies heavily on scientific authority without ever bothering to find out what scientific authority consists of. The scientist's apparent impartiality quite often conceals passionate disagreement with other scientists. And while reporters may probe statements made by a chemist employed by a corporation, they accept as safe and reliable, statements from professional organizations — such as the American Chemical Society — even though scientific groups often lobby for appropriations for expensive scientific projects. "Without being perniciously biased, they have bias,"

Professor Nelkin said. "They should be encouraging ethics in the scientific community by reducing the amount of PR." But even if they don't, journalists should try to "create skepticism among readers," and that cannot be done when journalism subjects itself to scientific authority and gives up its independent obligation to represent the public interest.

Undoubtedly, scientific questions involving risks are complicated, and journalists need help interpreting them. To test the supposition I sent for the EPA's background papers explaining its decision to allow continued use of the herbicide *alachlor*, which the agency decided to study after it found that it caused cancer in laboratory animals.

of simple clarity in the language. Here is an example from the report:

"In this notice, the upper bound risk estimates are cited in terms of an order of magnitude. For example, estimated risk in the range of 10^{-3} or 10^{-6} indicate increased risk of about one tumor-cancer case per 1000 or per 1,000,000 persons exposed, respectively. By simply multiplying a Q1* times an exposure level, a risk number can be generated which appears to give a more precise measure of risk, such as 3×10^{-5} for example, predicting three additional tumors/cancers for every 100,000 persons exposed at that level. However, in view of the many assumptions involved in calculating both cancer potency values and typical human exposure

It [AIDS] really is not dissimilar to other plagues — the plague of starvation in Africa, the plagues of war now going on somewhere between 25 and 83 nations (depending on your sources), the plague of racism, the plague of environmental destruction, which may . . . make AIDS seem insignificant.

The New York Times reported last December that the EPA had decided that *alachlor* was acceptably risky to humans — about one in a million would get cancer if exposed to *alachlor* in drinking water or food over a period of 70 years. The National Audubon Society found the EPA decision "astounding."

I requested the official document from the EPA. The agency sent a 118-page report which I read with the intention of learning what risk analysis consisted of. An attorney I know who specializes in environmental risk cases said the EPA risk analysis was "all smoke and mirrors." I was not surprised at the lack

levels, cancer risk estimates do not realistically offer such precise predictions of disease incidence. The order of magnitude of risk is the main concern of the risk estimation process."

I guessed that this passage was meant to clarify the meaning of the term "risk estimate," and because I am a mathematical ignoramus I will not object to the abstruse language, except to say that I am glad I was not a reporter who received this report a few hours before deadline.

I did come away from my reading with the thought that estimating the risk to humans from toxics and carcinogens is a series of close calls in which public interest and public

health are balanced by a hairbreadth against other factors, including profit.

Journalists owe it to themselves and to the public to recognize that the discipline of risk analysis is a fairly new science, and one that is influenced by a variety of non-scientific considerations, including the protests of community organizations and the politics of agency decision-making.

Undoubtedly the most sensitive of the crises in which journalists have spread the alarm is the epidemic of AIDS. Here, many journalists have become advocates for thorough coverage. These reporters also had the foresight to understand that if prevention was the only way to control AIDS, the press could help. Was news suppressed? Certainly, newspapers, radio, and television across the country demonstrated a needless prudery in the early coverage of AIDS. What, after all, was "exchange of bodily fluids?" How were drug addicts warned by such abstractions? And without question AIDS did not, as the epidemic began to spread, receive the attention it required — though in fairness, it was possible to find compassionate and intelligent reporting of AIDS more than two years ago in a number of newspapers published in towns that the epidemic had not hit.

Journalism may have helped prevent the spread of the syndrome, but does a strong expression of journalistic interest require journalists to involve themselves in complicity with their sources?

Was there any danger to the credibility of journalism in the AIDS education campaigns undertaken by San Francisco television stations, which, *The New York Times* reported, had "struck a comfortable partnership with health and education organizations throughout the community, on a scale local broadcasters say is unprecedented in television. Although the print media covered the story earlier, more accurately and more aggressively, television, because of its sheer pervasiveness, is generally credited with waging the most powerful educa-

tional campaign?"

Should journalism be proud of its crusading on AIDS? Should it, as NBC News science correspondent Robert Bazell said in a recent publication of the Scientists' Institute for Public Information, be entirely pleased with the idea that this story required special attention and dramatization "because this is a news story unlike any other news story?"

It really is not dissimilar to other plagues — the plague of starvation in Africa, the plagues of war now going on somewhere between 25 and 83 nations (depending on your sources), the plague of racism, the plague of environmental destruction, which may in the long run make AIDS seem insignificant.

actually were acquiring AIDS through heterosexual contact, and even the number of drug addicts with AIDS was not increasing radically.

At a time when most news organizations were mobilizing themselves to cover the epidemic, Dr. Langmuir's rather lonely voice was advising us not to be alarmed about the possibility that AIDS might spread beyond the unfortunate high risk groups.

The high risk groups face horrible prospects, and further research or spread of the virus may wipe out any assurance that may lead to complacency. But it is possible to argue that while education through the press was very helpful, the desire to portray dramatically the agony of

Journalists should remember the value of maintaining a skeptical distance from passionately advocated issues even when it is unpopular to do so. Journalists are not risk communicators.

These plagues may have no interest groups or celebrities to promote them, and as a result journalistic interest in, say, depleted atmospheric ozone, has fluctuated over the past decade, often disappearing altogether, until finally, as *The New York Times* informed us, its loss at least in the short run is not reversible.

Advocacy eclipses unpopular or unorthodox viewpoints. Last October a long profile in *Newsday* caught my attention simply because it represented one of those overlooked viewpoints. Dr. Alexander Langmuir, retired chief of epidemiology for the federal Centers for Disease Control, told *Newsday* that the AIDS epidemic, following the pattern of all epidemics, was peaking. He said that very few of those the Centers for Disease Control called heterosexuals

AIDS victims may have worked against a measured view of the epidemic.

Journalists should remember the value of maintaining a skeptical distance from passionately advocated issues even when it is unpopular to do so. Journalists are not risk communicators. They must take the trouble to understand the risk distanced from advocates, risk assessors, and risk communicators. Journalists are not klaxons. They are observers and witnesses, and that is quite different from being a klaxon.

The public requires from journalism calm and objective reporting and an independent analysis of social problems. The journalist should interpose the public interest, protect it, take a measured view, and hope that

continued on page 48

The Saga of a Newspaper

continued from page 7

that lost federal money because the students didn't cheer as loudly for girls' basketball as for boys'. He had claimed his reading program helped a Pittsburgh girl go from second to seventh-grade reading level in 20 days.

Robertson's campaign people were sure there was documentation for these stories, but after several weeks they still couldn't find it. If Dan Rather left CBS News to run for president, they finally said, he'd have just as hard a time digging up background on every story he had done.

The Robertson story the rest of the media were pursuing was how well he would do in New Hampshire. This was even more of a guessing game than the other horse-race coverage. It was assumed that while the polls measured the movement of the other candidates with fateful precision, Robertson's support was like a Stealth bomber: It didn't show up on Gallup's radar screen. This meant that all one needed for a story was to round up the experts and ask them about Pat's chances. I know this news-gathering technique firsthand because, as editor of the *Monitor*, I was asked by several print and television reporters to play local expert.

Two days before the vote, Chris Wallace of NBC's *Meet the Press* turned to me for what he called "a reality check" after discussing Robertson's prospects with Broder and Johnny Apple [*New York Times*]. Originally, I had thought Robertson would do lousy in New Hampshire for two reasons: a weak evangelical base and a deep-rooted belief in the separation of church and state. But I, too, had caught the post-Iowa handicapping fever. I confidently told Wallace that Robertson would pull a surprise on primary day. Broder jumped in to support this possibility

with the observation that in recent days Robertson signs had been popping up in snowbanks alongside highways in the state. This reminded me of the weather sages of New Hampshire, the crusty old fellows who can tell you by the autumn acorn fall what winter will be like. Their reliability, it should be said, is no worse than a reality check with a homegrown political expert.

Style Over Substance

The emphasis on who's winning is understandable: That's what politics is all about, and that's what people care about. Furthermore, as Babbitt pointed out in a postmortem, "The notion that the media don't cover issues is ridiculous."

to cover the prospects of the front-runners, as determined by Iowa's screwy caucus system and by pollsters. This meant abandoning any pretense of the rough equality an objective press should afford candidates before a single direct vote has been cast. It also played into the hands of the candidates with the most money, the best gimmicks, and the greatest aversion to ideas.

Broder visited the *Monitor* on primary day and discussed covering presidential politics with our staff. Someone asked him why the polls and the frontrunners got so much attention from the national media. "How do you write a story that has 13 leading characters in it?" he said. "I don't know how to do that."

Broder is right about most things, and he's probably right about that. Maybe only a small local paper in New Hampshire can plot the kind of campaign coverage strategy the *Monitor* did.

Nevertheless, I find it troubling that

The reporters who invaded New Hampshire in early February didn't come to cover issues, character or other presidential qualifications; they came to cover the prospects of the frontrunners, as determined by Iowa's screwy caucus system and by pollsters. This meant abandoning any pretense of the rough equality an objective press should afford candidates before a single direct vote has been cast.

The problem is that in the final days of a campaign, coverage of the horse race overwhelms any effort to cover the substance of politics. The reporters who invaded New Hampshire in early February didn't come to cover issues, character, and other presidential qualifications; they came

newspapers and networks spent millions of dollars to send thousands of bright people to New Hampshire to try to wrestle with the question of whether Bush could hold his lead against Dole. What a waste of time and talent! Besides, most of them came up with the wrong answer. □

THE BOOKSHELF

Read About the Best

The Pulitzer Prizes Volume One 1987: A Legacy of Distinguished Reporting, Powerful and Unforgettable Images From America's Best Journalists.

Edited by Kendall J. Wills. A Touchstone Book/Simon & Schuster Inc., 1987. Paperback \$9.95

by Madeleine H. Blais

The Pulitzer Prizes: Volume One 1987 bills itself as "A legacy of distinguished reporting, powerful and unforgettable images from America's best journalists" and in most respects the hefty paperback (nearly six hundred pages) lives up to the rosy claims of its subtitle. At first the bulk of the book was daunting: I worried that some of the winners might exemplify that solemn interminability that characterizes bad newspaper writing. In that turgid equation length equals significance. It is a pleasure to report that in the case of this volume best really is best.

There is much to admire. "The Goodyear War," written by the staff of the *Akron Beacon Journal*, is financial reporting in the form of a thriller. We learn that Sir James Michael Goldsmith, the interloping businessman that wants to buy out the rubber firm, at one point had a child by his mistress while still married to his wife. Robert Mercer, the firm's chief executive, is reported to drink a cup of Ovaltine every evening before bed. When the company workers decide to fight the takeover, they call their offensive "Rambo time" and "everybody was protective of the job he had. Expense accounts were reported more accurately, few

supplies were missing." These are terrific details; they function as metaphor, they offer insight. They show.

The same kind of detail permeates "Disorder in the Court," *The Philadelphia Inquirer's* series on the injustice of justice. The victim of an armed robbery, an old man, is shown on his daily walk to Kelly's Deli where every day he played the same number in the lottery. On the day of his death, rainy sidewalks and troublesome ulcers slowed him down. The timing proved fatal.

In the useful preface explaining the origin of this series, the reporters recall being told by colleagues: "Don't do it. It will be a colossal waste of time."

"Journalism is chores," Norman Mailer once wrote, and in the case of this project, he might have admired for sheer undisputed drudgery, the hours it took reporters to pore through court records from 1979 to 1984 in order to establish the shocking pattern in which seventy one percent of the defendants who appeared before judges to whom their lawyers made significant campaign contributions were acquitted as opposed to a thirty-five percent dismissal rate overall.

Eugene Roberts, the executive editor of *The Inquirer*, and the man credited for supporting the project, is described in visionary terms not always associated with newsmen, too often branded as slaves of the quick study:

"Gene Roberts doesn't think in months or years. He thinks in milleniums."

"Congress, remove our guilt. Halt the crucifixion of illegal aliens on the border," wrote Jonathan Freedman of

the *Tribune* in San Diego, who won in editorial writing. He compared the exploitation of illegal immigrants with drug addiction: the economy functions on fixes of cheap labor. "Kick the habit, America." Such strong sentiments, framed in earnest direct prose, free of the preening bombast that undermines so much editorial writing, do not arise from nowhere. In his moving introduction to the editorials, Freedman confesses his and his wife's reliance on an illegally employed woman to watch their baby. Her name was Rosa, her son was Carlitos. He is haunted by them, just as he is haunted by the memory of a story buried in the morning newspapers:

"Three Mexicans were run over by a Border Patrol van on Easter Sunday. I thought I was inured to the suffering and carnage on the border, but the detail that they were run over as they slept in flowers on the day of their Lord's resurrection made my body hurt."

This sense of a certain amount of submerged autobiography fuelling great journalism also surfaces in Alex Jones' account of "The Fall of the House of Bingham" in *The New York Times*, a winner in the category of specialized reporting. In the preface, Jones says he too comes from a newspaper clan. Though his is less noisy and less prominent than the Bingham's, he could certainly feel a fierce identification with their struggles. Once again, in this account as in others, fact is metaphor. Barry, Jr., the defrocked editor of the *Courier-Journal* in Louisville, is described in his days of exile as rising at six a.m. to jog: "An indulgence for him; his days as editor and publisher began at 5:15." Barry, Jr. suffered as a child in the shadow of a more dynamic older brother. Once, according to a story told by the family's nurse, Barry said

to his brother as they stared into the planetary night:

"You can have the moon and all the other stars, but just let me have the evening star."

When Alex Jones finished his piece, he called his wife, also a journalist: "I didn't know what anyone else thought, but I was sure I had just finished the best thing I had ever written. She was kind enough to stifle her yawns and listen to me roll on and on."

There are several selections of Richard Eder's book reviews from the *Los Angeles Times*. He begins his review of Larry Heinemann's novel *Paco's Story*:

"The most profound social distinction is the one between the living and the dead. Ghosts have fallen into the lower classes."

The review of Blanche D'Alpuget's *Winter in Jerusalem* begins, "Every nation I can think of, except one, has defined itself by virtue of existing. Israel is the exception; it exists by virtue of defining itself."

He compares Susan Minot's *Monkeys* to a pavane, an old courtly dance, done slowly and in ceremonial dress, a perfect description of her controlled elegant prose.

Of the two winners for photos, Kim Komenich's series on the Philippines in the *San Francisco Examiner* and David Peterson's photo essay on farming in the *The Des Moines Register*, my favorite was an aerial shot of Main Street in Marathon, a community of 400 in Northern Iowa. It is early morning and the street is shuttered and deserted, save for the lonely pilgrimage of one tractor which happened to materialize within camera's range.

"Altered Fates," the *Chicago Tribune's* series on genetic engineering, a winner in the category of explanatory journalism, once again embodies that spirit of diligence which so often precedes great reporting. The reporters interviewed sixty scientists and they also spent months educating themselves so they could read over five hundred technical papers. The

final product reflects a blend of the abstruse with the humane. The introduction to a piece on ADA deficiency which leaves its victims with little or no immunities:

"Entering Alison Ashcraft's bedroom, you get the feeling you are being watched. Stuffed animals are everywhere. More than two hundred of them fix visitors with a glassy stare from all corners of the room. Girlish excess? No, good parental psychology. Each button-eyed, felt tongued rabbit, tiger and bear represent a time in the last five years that doctors have had to draw Alison's blood."

A quote from a doctor:

"The idea of telling a perfectly healthy person that they carry a gene which will definitely express itself in a fatal genetic disorder is a unique situation in human history."

I like what Steve Twombly who won in feature writing for *The Philadelphia Inquirer* wrote about the writing of his piece:

"I decided to organize the piece in digestible chunks. Call them chapters, though they are not so labeled. They are delineated only by abrupt transition. And though I find it almost impossible to discuss my style — it just comes out this way — sentences seem to have gotten simpler and punchier over the years, the adjectives and adverbs fewer. That seems reflected in the carrier piece."

When it was finished, the article did not exude greatness to its author. Certainly the last thing he expected was a Pulitzer Prize.

If I ran a newsroom I would make a gift of this book to all my reporters, not, I hope as an encouragement to foolish prize lust. Posh bingo, someone called it.

Dave Barry, the humor columnist, recipient of a 1988 Pulitzer for social commentary, summed up that scene: "At certain times each year we journalists do almost nothing except apply for the Pulitzers . . . During these times you could walk into most newsrooms and commit a multiple

axe murder naked, and it wouldn't get reported in the paper, because the reporters and editors would all be too busy filling out prize applications. 'Hey', they'd yell at you. 'Watch it! You're getting blood on my application.'"

As it happens I teach journalism to college students and I can easily envision constructing an entire course around the invaluable lessons provided by this book. Taken as a whole, the work demonstrates an inspiring blend of literary technique and exhaustive research and old-fashioned conscience. What distinguishes these pieces, finally, is the passion for story, not for prizes. □

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(See page 42)

Third World Media — Watchdog not Lapdog Role

Communication, Development, and the Third World: The Global Politics of Information

Robert L. Stevenson. Longman, Inc., 1988. \$35.95

by Dana R. Bullen

This book by Bob Stevenson does several things that are rare in discussions of a new world information "order":

1. It asks the right questions.
2. It gives evidence to back up what it says.
3. It is only 181 pages long.

This last may sound facetious. It is not meant that way. This is a subject (communication, development, how these relate, do they relate?) on which tomes appear regularly containing hundreds of thousands of words that all too often are simply useless. It is a field in which it is easy to say nothing at great length.

Communication, Development, and the Third World has plenty to say. Since reading it, I've been urging others to buy it.

In 1964, Stevenson begins, pioneering Stanford communication researcher Wilbur Schramm wrote a book for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that made rapid economic and social growth, spurred on by mass media, seem realistic, exciting and relatively simple. The dust jacket, Stevenson recalls, showed rural villagers clustered around a bulky, old-fashioned community radio receiver somewhere in South Asia. They could be hearing about new crop techniques, learning of ways of reducing disease or, perhaps, listening to a political debate. It was a glimpse of the future. Schramm's book became

virtually the bible for a generation of development efforts.

With mass media assumed to be capable of compressing time required for change and of multiplying the impact of development programs, the impulse to "mobilize" communication (the word was broad enough to include news media as well as other kinds of communication) became irresistibly strong.

Rationalizations for more and more "mobilizing" (now very much including news media) swelled in debates, studies, and declarations. At UNESCO in Paris, the clamor for a new communication "order" — fueled by awareness that information meant power, that criticism of leaders or policies could be stilled in "guided" news, and by hatred and rejection of claimed dependency on industrialized nations and news media headquartered there — resounded. It became a political and policy imperative.

The new "order" was never defined. It became an omnibus slogan for a developing world wish list of desires ranging from vaguely expressed "self-sufficiency" or "independence" to "just the good news, please" to harsher things, depending on who was speaking.

The more radical ideas (licensing of journalists, an international code of conduct, prescribed news agenda, etc.) threatened press freedom, everybody's freedom, and especially the right to know of people living in developing countries. Independent news media and countries believing in uncontrolled news — a "free flow of information" — now themselves mobilized and fought to preserve these freedoms. The resulting war has raged for more than a decade.

This is where many books stop. This is where Stevenson, professor of journalism at the University of North

Carolina, just begins to get going.

First, he carries the debate forward to what he calls the "failure of the radical alternative."

The simple optimism of the late 1950s and early 1960s soured into strident anti-Western rhetoric in the 1970s, Stevenson says, out of need to account for the Third World's all-too-obvious failure to leap the gap from underdevelopment to modernity.

"The rhetoric of Marxism as molded to the plight of the Third World in the 1960s and 1970s offered both an explanation of the failure of development that absolved Third World leaders of responsibility for their nations' predicament and a vision of the future that justified the usurpation of traditional press independence," Stevenson states.

The scapegoat was "imperialism" and "neo-imperialism," and its agents were "Western news media." In place of independent news media critical of government, advocates of a new information order sought to disengage from the developed West and called for news structures to be "harnessed to the political apparatus of the state, mobilized to support national integration and development."

One of the big strengths of *Communication, Development, and the Third World* now emerges. Realizing that enough countries have actually tried out a "new order" by now to create a substantial record, Stevenson asks a seemingly obvious, basic question: How did it work out?

He examines in detail new world information order "prototypes" in Nigeria, China, Yugoslavia, Tanzania, the non-aligned news agencies pool, alternative wire services, Peru's confiscation of news media in the early 1970s, the failure of calls for similar nationalization in Venezuela, and Mexico's flirtation with a 6,500-page draft information law that would have required — among other things — publication of messages deemed important by government. Utilizing a fascinating approach first developed by Schramm, he also analyzes a "day in the world's news" to spotlight differing agendas.

While seeming to nod somewhat supportively at a Third World orientation such as that of Inter Press Service, Stevenson draws generally hard conclusions:

Largely meaningless "protocol news" on the comings and goings of leaders was widespread. Both puffery-style development news and "protocol news" lacked reader, viewer, and listener interest and almost always credibility. Says Stevenson: "The gap between rhetoric and reality was greatest when national media, committed to a new order based on respect and cooperation, were in fact used to shout the passions and prejudices of a mean regime".

The new media, he states, "were mostly weak imitations of the Western models they were supposed to replace, and, worse, more the instruments of repression and deceit than enlightenment and cooperation."

Officials, not journalists, were calling these tunes. "... The architects of the new world information order seldom represent their own media," Stevenson says. "Third World journalists, on the whole, share the professional values of their Western colleagues. They, too, want to report on their governments freely and critically. They want to be watchdogs, not lapdogs."

Stevenson then asks another basic question: What impact do mass media have on development?

It's the right question. It's a fundamental question. It's a question with a real problem. There may not be a satisfying answer.

Western analysts, including Schramm, later massively scaled down the expectations they raised in the 1950s and 1960s, Stevenson notes. And others, the advocates of the "radical alternative" to existing news systems, also had little evidence beyond the dialectic argument of Marxism to support their own case.

Stevenson concludes that the question of mass media's role in development is about as murky now as it was years ago.

It sounds a lot like the chicken and the egg. Nobody can show the causal relationship.

Examining country statistics, Stevenson indicates Third World nations that have opted for essentially socialist, non-Western development can point to benefits of educational and health programs — but also have a generally lower level of economic development and, more important, pay the high price of loss of personal freedom.

I wish Stevenson had gone further on this point. *Communication, Development, and the Third World* focuses very well on the arguments of the "new order" debate and how this has influenced news handling in developing countries, but it lacks a sufficiently full and focused presentation of the important role of free and independent news media and the way, it seems to me, that a free press facilitates development.

Development news is not some kind of rare creature in the far-off land. It is all around us as a staple of Western journalism. Pulitzer and other prizes are won regularly for reporting on urban planning, education, health, economics, road building, sewer systems, the space program, you name it. Every paper that I know of carries large amounts of "development news" every day.

The benefits and lessons are plain — and applicable everywhere. For instance:

- The best programs must flow from a full debate of alternatives, not only behind the closed doors of government offices but throughout a society.

- The choices developed in such a debate will draw support because there will be understanding of the reasons for such choices. This support will be far deeper and more effective than the support that leaders may attempt to command others to give.

- Nobody possesses all wisdom. Independent news media help bring to the surface ideas from many sources that may be better than those under consideration.

- Independent news media will watch the progress of development programs. These programs will be more effective if problems are exposed than if they are covered up.

- Often it is only a free press that allows the voices and needs of the people to be heard by government or other powerful interests.

- This also provides a way in which different parts of a government can communicate swiftly and effectively with each other without bureaucratic constraints.

Leaders everywhere want uncensored, full news about the world, their region, their countries. If it is useful to them, it seems it would be useful to everyone.

Summing up, Stevenson argues that the push for a new information "order," which a decade of debate failed to define, is failing for three reasons:

1. "The hollowness of the Marxist rhetoric that shaped the issue in the first place." As evidence challenged one after another of the premises, supporters kept changing the questions until it began to look like a "shell game," he says.

2. "The experience of trying to implement it." Stevenson notes it is one thing "to stand before the UNESCO general conference and argue for the mobilization of mass media to support a new global order, but quite another to piece together a daily news file that was credible enough for domestic consumption and minimally palatable for international exchange." The value of straight reporting is reasserting itself, he says.

3. Rekindled interest "in real development, not the rhetoric of a new order," and growing awareness that emphasis on expanding telecommunications, not on news media, might do more to promote development.

This completes a circle of sorts. It was broadening of the original call for "using" communication for development to include news media that forced the fight to preserve press freedom.

If it now can be agreed that free and

independent news media benefit everyone by being free, while other forms of communication each has its own contribution to make, a good part of this time-consuming, attention-diverting, resource-wasting struggle at UNESCO and elsewhere over a new world information "order" could be ended.

There is a communication revolution going on. It is good for development. While emphasizing that more needs to be done, Stevenson provides astonishing figures indicating the extent of communication development

efforts. The only regressive aspect has been the misguided attempt to control news. □

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It Calls for a Certain Omnipotence

NEWSROOM MANAGEMENT: A Guide to Theory and Practice

Robert H. Giles. R. J. Berg & Company, Inc., 1987. \$67.50

by Robert P. Clark

The time is ripe for a good book on newsroom management, despite some wails that the MBAs are ruining journalism.

I can affirm that the need for training a newsroom supervisor was great 26 years ago, when, a few months after my Nieman year, I was plucked from my science writer's desk at *The Courier-Journal* and seated in the managing editor's chair of *The Louisville Times*.

My feeble protests that I had had completely no training for such a job was met by "We've got people here to put out the newspaper. You just make sure it's a good newspaper."

Nevertheless I had much to learn: the importance of the copy desk, the function of the composing room, the arts of hiring and firing and communicating and disciplining, the role of other departments at the newspaper, budgets, performance reviews, etc. etc.

And my experience as an editor in the years since then tells me that the need for management skills in the newsroom is still very much with us.

Comes, then, Robert H. Giles' 739-page book. It is timely, exhaustive in its research, and several years in the making. Giles knows his stuff. And he is filling a void in the ranks of textbooks on this important subject. Only a couple of others have been attempted.

As a scholarly work, the book may serve well. But it seems to me to dwell too much on theory and principles and too little on the practical — especially for working news people, and probably for most students. Too scarce are specific newsroom examples that would bring the theory and principles to life.

The book's timeliness is reflected in two very different magazine pieces.

One, in the March/April 1988 issue of *Columbia Journalism Review*, was entitled "When MBAs rule the newsroom: A concerned reporter shows how bottom-line editors are radically changing American journalism."

The other was in the American Newspaper Publishers Association's

presstime, labeled "The selection and development of first-level editors: Newspapers are trying to reverse the 'horrendous' failure rate of first-time managers in the newsroom."

Doug Underwood, a former *Seattle Times* reporter now teaching journalism, wrote the *Columbia Journalism Review* article. Its theme: The importance of news in newspapers is being badly damaged by a growing stress on marketing, by packaged journalism, by a "pervasive newsroom bureaucracy" and by a "CPA mentality" in editors who hold the Master of Business Administration degree.

Underwood acknowledges that Knight-Ridder, Inc. — a group that is big on personality tests, Management by Objectives and "long hailed as a corporation that manages its newspapers for quality" — won seven Pulitzer Prizes in 1986. But he says "some reporters believe that the (Knight-Ridder) marketers and the corporate types have gotten the upper hand."

The *presstime* piece, in contrast, points to the many training seminars now offered by newspaper associations and institutes, and cites new efforts in staff development at such papers as *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times* and *The Washington Post*. The writer was Sara M. Brown, president of a Washington consulting firm serving media companies on management and human-resources matters.

There is no question that the job of a newsroom supervisor has become more complex. An editor's work involves not just getting the paper out and making sure "it's a good newspaper," but dealing with credibility issues, competing for readership, handling budgets, managing people, even managing one's own time. And today's reporters or copy editors, promoted to editors, are often so much at sea in these areas that newspapers are being impelled to train them how to manage.

Giles addresses these problems, drawing on extensive reading and

study in behavioral science, psychology, and principles of management. The bibliography of books and articles in *Newsroom Management*, if my count is correct, totals 361. And he interviewed scores of editors, teachers, and researchers.

He also brings to the subject a strong professional background. He is vice president and executive editor of *The Detroit News*. He was a Nieman Fellow in 1966. He is a former executive editor of the *Akron Beacon Journal* and a former editor of the *Times-Union* and *Democrat and Chronicle* in Rochester, New York. He is president of the Associated Press Managing Editors, and he has conducted his own research on editors' stress, under the aegis of the APME.

Newsroom Management contains heavily documented and footnoted chapters on such topics as Management Theories and Human Behavior, Motivating Journalists, Newsroom Management Roles, Managing Conflict in the Newsroom, and Stress and Survival.

Each chapter has a summary, and in the back are review questions for students, case studies (presumably hypothetical), a glossary, and Standards of Excellence that define the tasks of the news staff of the Rochester papers.

There is only occasional relief in the book's weighty tone. As far into the book as Page 213, Giles acknowledges that "so far, our attention has been fixed on theories and concepts." But there is little let-up.

Some personal observations by Giles and others are contained in "Close-Up" items scattered through the book. But how much more effective it would be if newsroom examples and concrete illustrations were woven everywhere into its fabric.

For example, one of the sources Giles cites several times is Peter F. Drucker's book on *Management* (Harper & Row, 1974). On decision making, Giles writes only 8 1/2 pages, scattered in various locations with

only a single real-life example. Drucker writes a 16-page chapter on this important topic plus numerous references elsewhere, and he illustrates with examples from Japan, the United States Congress, Presidents Washington and Franklin Roosevelt, and the telephone, steel, and chemical industries. An earlier Drucker Book, *The Effective Executive* (Harper & Row, 1967), devotes two of its seven chapters — 53 pages — to decision making, again rich with illustrations and anecdotes.

Other common management problems draw little attention in *Newsroom Management*. Time management gets three pages. Memo writing gets one. Budgeting gets one.

On the other hand, employee evaluations rate a whole, useful chapter of 60 pages, with a sample rating form from the Rochester papers. And Giles' own studies on stress are interesting and helpful. (An editor's most intense stress, he found, comes from dealing with the boss and the company, especially when the editor thinks the company puts more emphasis on profit than on the quality and quantity of the news).

Here are some other nuggets of useful information — there are many more in the book:

- "When the editor takes a pro-

blem to the publisher, the editor should also be prepared to explain how he or she expects to solve it."

- Newsrooms that have democratic bosses tend to have higher morale. This participative management style calls for the editor to delegate authority, involve subordinates in decision making and trust them to handle authority.

- "Listening is a powerful management tool; unfortunately, few people truly understand the importance of listening."

This book may help fill an important need for readers eager to learn the theory and principles of management. The many courses and training programs now being offered would be an ideal complement.

The price of *Newsroom Management* seems forbidding, but I was told by the publisher that sales have been brisk, especially to news organizations. (Sales have totaled 800 in the past few months, an encouraging number for a professional book, and it was ready to go back to press.) There is also a "cut-rate" price for students. □

Robert P. Clark, Nieman Fellow '61, is a news consultant. He retired last year from the Harte-Hanks Newspapers where he was vice president of news.

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A Long Entangled Tale Unfolds

The Binghams of Louisville: The Dark History Behind One of America's Great Fortunes.

David Leon Chandler With Mary Voelz Chandler. Crown Publishers, Inc., 1987. \$17.95

House of Dreams: The Bingham Family of Louisville.

Marie Brenner. Random House, Inc., 1988. \$19.95

by Ned Cline

The irony of it all is that the Binghams have published fine newspapers in Louisville in spite of themselves.

That's heartening, but it's also more than a little surprising if you believe all the stories — from zany, to pathetic, to tragic — that are included in the two most recent books about the rise and fall of the Louisville Bingham dynasty. And while there have been intense debates, both public and private, about the accuracy of certain facts in the stories, none have been disproved.

Those of us in the newspaper business have known for years two things about the Bingham family. One is that they produced good newspapers — and the other is that they were, well, different. But until these books were published in the last several months, few of us knew what we now know.

And the reaction has been mostly: Wow!

Both books weave a long and entangled tale of the Binghams, predating the purchase of the Louisville newspapers by Robert Bingham, through the recent public unpleasant airing of the family's dirty laundry and sale of the papers

to Gannett. Both are fascinating and compelling. Both ought to be read by journalism junkies as well as those who get kicks out of corporate intrigue or, simply, family scandal.

If you want virtually every vivid, morbid, and laborously documented detail the choice of two is Chandler's tome. If it happened, he tells you. Sometimes over and over. If you had any doubt, he scratches that itch. He turned over all the stones, maybe even including some that may not have existed, but he did it in a masterfully careful way. It's unlikely anyone could have done it better, and certainly not in a more thorough way.

Chandler's *Binghams* is smaller and shorter than Brenner's *Dreams*, but it isn't as exciting or as easy to read. While Chandler tells his readers how to make a watch, Brenner just tells hers what time it is. That is not to say Brenner doesn't give details because she does. But her writing is more crisp, brighter, lighter, and just more fun. Chandler makes his readers work and you stick with it because you think you need to. Brenner brilliantly carries her readers along the problem-ridden Bingham trail with a lot more grace and ease. Readers will stick with her because they want to and can't resist.

But both books provide absorbing accounts of the construction and destruction, the ecstasy and the agony of the Bingham publishing empire. Both offer striking similarities between the Bingham story and other public families, most of them better known. Until the books came out, the Bingham story was mostly one for Kentuckians, but Chandler and Brenner have made them much more than that. CBS whetted public palates for more on the Binghams last year with a *60 Minutes* segment where family members bitched and moaned about

each other among themselves, and Chandler and Brenner have served up the main course and added large helpings of dessert.

Like the Kennedys of Boston, the Binghams prided themselves on family wealth and have suffered more than their fair share of family tragedy. Like the Hunts of Texas, it all started with oil and, up to this point at least, ended with domestic implosions.

And throughout the whole saga as told by both Chandler and Brenner, arrogance and greed were the foundation of both the rise and fall of the publishing side of the Bingham dynasty.

Both writers paint Robert Bingham, the original Bingham to own the Louisville papers, as little more than a rogue who at best wasn't much of a success at anything until he got his late wife's bank account and at worst may have brought on her death once he knew he had her inheritance. And reading Chandler and Brenner, you get the definite feeling that from the time Robert Bingham bought the papers until Barry Bingham Senior sold them last year, there were probably more nightmares inside the family compounds than there were restful nights.

People with money have long contended it's relatively easy to make lots more when initially you have enough to afford the risks and the gamble to multiply it. Robert Bingham did that with his \$5 million windfall from his late wife. The rest, as they say, is history: public history, now.

One redeeming feature of all this is that the newspapers of Louisville flourished — as did the Bingham fortune despite various tragedies and family misfortunes. Inside the family were problems with alcohol and other drug abuse; two sons were killed in accidents. It was not until Barry Bingham Junior took over the newspapers that any of the Binghams really got deeply into the news side of the business. Then he was felled with disease and, although recovered, was essentially driven to distraction

by his two sisters who didn't want the papers and also didn't want him running them. That's what brought on the sale.

But, according to Chandler and Brenner, Barry Junior brought civility to the news operation following years of political favoritism and powerbrokering. He brought ethics and enhanced quality to his newspaper even though he couldn't bring any sense or an end to family feuding.

The Bingham had class in public, but vengeance in private. They had ample opportunity to do great things, but frittered it away with internal

distrust and bickering. They had the abilities to stretch their publishing empire far beyond one state, but not the willingness or patience to allow that to happen.

They self-destructed. Thanks to authors Chandler and Brenner, we know what happened to the Bingham, but we don't yet know what will happen to their newspapers because of what happened to the family. □

Ned Cline, Nieman Fellow '74, is the managing editor of the Greensboro News & Record in North Carolina.

An Insider reveals the Inner Workings of Politics

The Power Game: How Washington Works

Hedrick Smith. Random House, 1988. \$22.50

by Julius Duscha

For those folks beyond the beltway who seem to get most of their news about Washington from the television networks, this book is *must* reading and should open voters' eyes in astonishment and wonderment. Not many people know how Washington really works, and Hedrick Smith's [NF '70] great service here is telling it like it is.

For those of us living within the beltway whose days and nights are consumed by the workings of Washington — the gossip and the deals and politics and insanity — much of Smith's book is riveting reading even though a lot of stuff is not new to we "insiders." But he tells most of his stories so well that they are even better than the first time you have read or heard about them.

For journalists I think this book is of utmost importance. Not only

should they read it carefully for its fascinating details of the "underbelly" of Washington life, but as they read they should be asking themselves why more of this inside detail does not reach readers — and viewers — as events unfold. Why do we have to wait so long to get the inside on the machinations of the Israeli lobby, on the infighting over tax reform, on the pernicious influence of political action committees, on the running of the Reagan White House with everyone from the President on down putting first and foremost how something will play on television tonight? It's a hell of a way to run a government, and, I might add, to report on it.

Every so often a Washington book comes along that genuinely goes behind the scenes and describes the workings of the national government in precise detail. Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen did it in the early 1930's; W.M. Kiplinger on the eve of World War II; Douglass Cater 20 years later; and Stewart Alsop in late 1960's. Hedrick Smith, who, until he recently left *The New York Times*, had been in Washington for that

paper for most of the last 25 years, writes in this tradition.

He writes well, but at too much length and too much repetition. But that's quibbling. What is not a quibble, I think, is that there is really no sense of outrage in this book. He just lays it all out, like *The New York Times* reporters must do, of course, without once, that I can recall, getting mad about these machinations. Perhaps Smith himself has become too much of an insider to get his blood pressure worked up about, say, the Israeli lobby, the way money is tossed at candidates by political action committees or the way the Reagan White House has manipulated reporters.

Although the dust jacket of the book includes pictures of John F. Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, and Henry Kissinger, these photos are misleading because the book is almost wholly about the Reagan years. Smith uses the game motif to pull the story together, and while that is misleading at times, it is a fair enough way to tell a sprawling story.

Three themes are stressed: the ever increasing power of money in politics, largely as a result of the rapid growth of political action committees since 1974; the alarming influence of staff over elected officials and those requiring Senate confirmation, as best exemplified in Col. Oliver North's role in the Iran-contra affair; and the frightening preoccupation both on Capitol Hill and in the White House with the way decisions and policies will play on television. Whatever happened to that old political science course saw that good policy automatically makes good politics?

As I read Smith's accounts of the powerful Israeli lobbying, the maneuvering over the 1986 tax "reform" bill, the doling out of money by the political action committees to curry favor among the politicians, the fights within the White House and the State and Defense Departments over everything from seats on Air Force One to important matters like the

Salt II treaty, I kept wondering why more of this does not find its way into the media.

Sure, some of it does, but usually only in bits and pieces. From my long experience in Washington as a reporter, I think I know some of the reasons. When you are covering a beat, whether it be the White House or the Agriculture Department, you are, to a great extent, at the mercy of the people in charge and you feel you cannot afford to harm that relationship with too many unflattering inside stories that are embarrassing to your sources. Also, it is much harder to dig out the inside stuff than to go with the nicer material that may be leaked to you by staff to make bosses look good.

A couple of examples. In his fascinating account of how the White House constantly worries over what television will report each night about the President's day, Smith notes that White House press secretaries call the television correspondents late in the day to try to put some added spin on their reports. Inside poop, you know. The correspondents of course, cannot resist it, and usually add some of this last-minute stuff to their "kicker." Well, shouldn't the television audience be told that at the last minute before broadcast time the White House said this, but don't put too much stock in it because this is part of their daily game plan to make the President look good?

Or take the role of staff. On Capitol Hill there are a lot of senators and representatives who are too busy making speeches around the country for fat fees or just strutting around Washington to keep up with their committee business; so they become dependent on staff members to tell them what to do, almost minute by minute during the day. And, of course, President Reagan cannot seem even to say good morning without prompting of one of his famous three-by-five cards. The powerful role of staff in Washington is a story that needs much more attention, and I hope that Smith's book

will stir editors and reporters alike to look into this story.

Smith's book contains much that should make Washington correspondents think about their roles in today's mass media. The lessons that can be drawn from this book by Washington correspondents can also be applied to the great bulk of American journalists who never get to Washington but are covering state, city, county, and town governments.

I think many of the things happening in Washington — the influence of staff, money and television — are also going on elsewhere in the country. After all, Washington sets the pace for politics and government in general in the United States. So if I were covering a governor, a mayor, or a county executive I would begin asking myself, after reading Smith's book, whether I am giving my readers or viewers a true account of the machinations of the government I am covering. I suspect that not enough journalists are doing that.

Another point that Smith emphasizes is the importance of coalition-building in government, and this, too, affects government at all levels. This is not new, long-time lobbyists in Washington have always known that one should never shut off relations with any senator or representative because even though he is against you today he may be a candidate for the next coalition you have to build. Surprisingly, this is a fact that too often is lost on even experienced politicians when they first come to Washington.

Smith places a lot of emphasis on personality in politics in this television age, and Reagan's popularity is the best example, of course. Although Smith notes that Reagan by no means got everything he wanted — he failed to convince Americans of his Central American policy and he was not able to make all the deep cuts in government social programs — I don't think Smith gives enough attention to this anomaly. Reagan remains popular as a person, but he has been unable to sell much of his program to the people despite his skills as the great

communicator.

This is due I think to the ambivalence of the American people. They seem to like a divided government because of its checks and balances, and they can like a person without buying all of his programs and policies. So television and image may not be all, and that makes me feel pretty good.

So what do we do about a national government that seems almost permanently divided between a Republican president and a Democratic Congress, fighting and jabbing most of the time; between warring bureaucracies in the White House, the State Department and the Defense Department; between rival committees and subcommittees on Capitol Hill; between strong and often unyielding personalities in Congress and in Administrations.

Well, for one thing, we should look at today's events more in the perspective of history. Franklin D. Roosevelt had plenty of troubles with Congress and with rivalries within his Administration. So did Dwight Eisenhower, that great conciliator. Washington has never worked smoothly; in fact, the Founding Fathers set up a system of checks and balances designed to muck up things and disperse power. Yes, presidents have extraordinary power, but they still need a consensus to carry out that power, as witness Mr. Reagan's failure with his Central American policy and with his talk early on to cut back Social Security, both perfect examples of how a president's power is constrained if there is not a consensus out there backing him.

Smith has been criticized for not having a solution to all these problems, but he says in his last chapter that his purpose was to tell how Washington works, not to lay out a prescription for perfect government. There is none, of course. He does go over proposals such as a single six-year presidential term, bipartisan government, four-year House terms and similar ideas that are always in the air.

He concludes his book with this

quotation from Secretary of State George Shultz: "We have this very difficult task of having a separation of powers that means we have to learn how to share power. Sharing power is harder, and we need to work at it harder than we do. But that's the

only way." That sums up Washington pretty well. It's messy, but somehow it still works most of the time. □

Julius Duscha, Nieman Fellow '56, is director of the Washington Journalism Center.

Who are the Candidates? Where do You Draw the Line? What are the Consequences? How do You Judge?

Covering The Candidates: Role and Responsibilities of the Press, 1987.

Paperback \$3.00. Order by Mail.
American Press Institute,
11690 Sunrise Valley Drive,
Reston, Virginia 22091.

by **Albert May**

Two days before Democratic primary voters nominated Harold Washington to ultimately become the first black mayor of Chicago, the *Chicago Tribune* published a page-one story that still haunts the newspaper's editor.

The article disclosed that the campaign of one of Washington's white opponents had seeded the city with a scurrilous flyer, and, as best the Trib could tell, a false allegation about Washington. The story also — for the first time — put into public print the rumor that Washington was a homosexual who had covered up an arrest on child-molestation charges.

The flyer didn't disclose the rumor to the *Tribune*, which had heard it already from the Washington opponent's campaign, investigated it, and decided it was unfounded enough not to print. So how, when the rumor took form in a yellow leaflet, did it become fit to print?

This is *Tribune* Editor James

Squires' [NF '71] answer:

"What am I supposed to do? On one hand I am a censor holding back critical news. I mean, this flyer was a campaign tactic. I've got to report what it is. But that still holds me to the same kind of ridicule that Gary Hart put on us all the night before last. I mean, that gets to be your third line."

Third line? Gary Hart?

You've dropped into the middle of a conversation, one of many that took place last fall at the American Press Institute in Reston, Virginia, a tranquil spot amidst the rolling green hills that surround Dulles International Airport.

Twenty-one editors, political writers and scholars participated in two days of seminars that were taped, transcribed and deftly edited into a 102-page booklet: *Covering the Candidates: Role & Responsibilities of the Press*. It would make a nice addition to any newspaper's library. The discourse does not supply as many answers as it does a portrait of the anguish journalists suffer when they try to sort out one of their thorniest problems: dealing with the consequences of what is written or broadcast.

For James Squires it was the reputation of a man and a race for mayor. In September of 1987, of course, the

attention was on covering the election of a president. The conversations took place following Gary Hart's withdrawal from the race as result of the Donna Rice affair, including Hart's parting shots at the press, and before Sen. Joe Biden stepped out after revelations about his personal indiscretions as a candidate and a law student.

The seminars are notable because of those who participated. This was no mere "Boys on the Bus" gathering.

The editors numbered Squires, Katherine W. Fanning of *The Christian Science Monitor*, James P. Gannon of *The Des Moines Register*, Bill Kovach of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, John Seigenthaler [NF '59] of *USA Today* and *The Tennessean* in Nashville, Acel Moore [NF '80], associate editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Barry Sussman, managing editor of United Press International, Michael Pride [NF '85] of the *Concord Monitor*, and Jean Otto, editorial page editor of the *Rocky Mountain News* in Denver, Colorado.

The Washington bureau chiefs included Jack Nelson [NF '62] of the *Los Angeles Times*, Clark Hoyt of Knight-Ridder Newspapers, Albert R. Hunt of *The Wall Street Journal*, Charles J. Lewis of The Associated Press, and Craig Whitney of *The New York Times*. Columnists included David Broder of *The Washington Post*, Jack Germond of *The Sun* in Baltimore, Ellen Goodman [NF '74] of *The Boston Globe*, and Charles McDowell of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. The academics arrayed were Watson Sims [NF '53] of Rutgers University, Edmund B. Lambeth [NF '68] of the University of Missouri, and William Green, formerly of Duke University and now on the staff of Sen. Terry Sanford.

Most of the booklet is broken into discussions led by Duke's James David Barber, political scientist and presidential expert, Doris Kearns Goodwin, author and former Harvard professor, Larry Sabato, political scientist at the University of Virginia,

and Jeff Greenfield of ABC News.

Sabato and Greenfield covered more familiar ground of the role of television news and advertising in campaigns. Sabato does produce some fireworks and confessions that political journalists are too cozy with political consultants, and Greenfield plays the iconoclast by arguing that television coverage of campaigns has made print journalism more, not less important.

If you've read James Barber's books on the presidential character, you can skim his panel to find the one led by Doris Goodwin who posed the knotty question, post-Hart.

She asked the journalists "whether a line can or should be drawn between a candidate's private life and his public life?" And, she added, "My answer is yes, that it can be drawn, hard as it is, and it should be drawn, hard as it is." Goodwin's ethical boundary was "the public interest begins when a man's personal life . . . or a woman's eventually . . . affects his public performance or has the potential of affecting his public performance."

She said Hart crossed the line in his conduct with Donna Rice, and her only complaint about the press coverage of the affair was *The Miami Herald's* surveillance tactics. Indeed, the Hart case, for the panelists, seemed an easy call. His personal relationship with Rice raised too great a question about the public man's stability and character.

Some panelists argued that — rightly or wrongly — the Hart case has blown away any remaining barriers that had separated the public and private lives of presidential candidates.

"It's almost a moot point to draw a line," said Jack Nelson. "The flood gates have absolutely been opened."

But as the debate unfolded, it becomes obvious that Nelson's view was a minority one, and that things are far more complicated. Precedents were debated — presidents who were discrete — and hypotheticals were posed. Do you print that the presiden-

tial candidate who is a woman once had an abortion? No consensus.

The line, the *Monitor's* Katherine Fanning noted, "can slide all over the place." Indeed, the discussions make it clear that journalists draw lines all the time, although not necessarily using Goodwin's pencil. The question for the journalist often is a more practical one — can they prove it?

"I think everybody at this table knows members of the judicial body who have been in the bag by noon and, we would all agree, incompetent

to do anything," the AP's Charles Lewis said. The reason the stories of justices with drinking problems hasn't been written, he said, was "because we could never prove it journalistically."

Atlanta's Bill Kovach suggested he and other panelists were holding back information on some candidates, "waiting for somebody else to use it first."

And Kovach actually drew three lines, applied in a reverse order: whether to publish private informa-



Books Received at
Lippmann House

American Humor Magazines and Comic Periodicals.

Edited by David E.E. Sloane.
Greenwood Press, Inc.

Frontiers of Communication.

Shripad Bhalchandra Joshi.
Servants of India Society, Central India Branch.

Newspapers: A Reference Guide.

Richard A. Schwarzlose.
Greenwood Press, Inc.

Search Strategies in Mass Communication.

Jean Ward, Kathleen A. Hansen,
Longman Inc.

Spiked: How Chain Management Corrupted America's Oldest Newspaper.

Andrew Kreig. Peregrine Press,
Publishers.

Strategic Newspaper Management.

Conrad C. Fink. Southern Illinois
University Press.

The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie 1775-1800.

Robert Darnton. The Belknap Press
of Harvard University Press.

The Immigrant Labor Press in North America, 1840s-1970s An Annotated Bibliography. Volume 2: Migrants from Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Volume 3: Migrants From Southern and Western Europe.

Edited by Dirk Hoerder, Assistant
Editor, Christiane Harzig.
Greenwood Press, Inc.

The People's Voice: An Annotated Bibliography of American Presidential Campaign Newspapers, 1828-1984.

Compiled by William Miles.
Greenwood Press, Inc.

Violence and Terror in the Mass Media: An Annotated Bibliography.

Compiled by Nancy Signorielli and
George Gerbner. Greenwood Press,
Inc.

tion based on its relevance and importance to the candidate's character, whether there is enough proof, and whether to launch reporters on investigations of rumors.

"The bell that's been rung that can't be unrung . . . (is) reporting (researching) the rumors," said Kovach. "We didn't use to do that. We didn't invest resources in it; now we do."

Even then, as Squire's story showed, doing the reporting and deciding an allegation is groundless does not necessarily make the problem go away.

"We printed a story disproving the rumor, but publishing the rumor for the first time," he said. "I'm still being criticized in Chicago by the black community and Harold Washington's supporters for being the first source of printing a homosexual rumor about the mayor."

As Goodwin discovered, drawing ethical lines for journalists is a murky business. None of her journalistic panelists ever quite agreed with her demarcation. But toward the end, she discovered what just might be the most useful thing about the press institute's little book.

"You go through a lot of internal emotional decisions about what to do with this issue," she told them. "And I'm not sure the public is as aware of that. It would help you if they were." □

Albert May, Nieman Fellow '87, is the state capitol bureau chief of The Journal and the Constitution in Atlanta, Georgia.



Liu Binyan to Join Class of '89 as a Nieman Fellow

Liu Binyan, China's leading journalist, will come to Harvard University as a Nieman Fellow this fall.

"We are absolutely delighted that a journalist and intellectual of Liu Binyan's stature will grace the Nieman Class of 1989, our 51st Class," said Howard Simons, curator of the Nieman program who invited Mr. Liu to participate in the program.

In his acceptance letter, Mr. Liu said "to be a Nieman Fellow is a great honor for me."

Boston University's Merle Goldman, professor of Chinese history who specializes in Chinese intellectual history, had this to say about Mr. Liu: "The journalist Liu Binyan is regarded by his countrymen as China's pre-eminent and most courageous intellectual. Purged from the Communist Party in 1957, he returned in 1979, after 22 years in labor reform, to continue the investigative reporting for which he had

been purged earlier. From 1979 until 1987, he traveled throughout China uncovering Party corruption, special privileges and abuses in political power. Ordinary people from all over China urged him to investigate cases of injustice and grievances for which they could not get redress. He became the court of last resort. As a result, when the Party launched a campaign against "bourgeois liberalism" in early 1987, he was one of the targets. But unlike the silence that surrounded his purge in the Mao era, this time protests against his treatment were heard in China and abroad. And despite great pressure, he refused to make a self-criticism. Because of his stature and China's desire for better relations with the outside world, he has finally been allowed to accept the Nieman Fellowship which had been offered to him over the last three years."

Mr. Liu is 62 years old. He will be accompanied by his wife. □

The Media and Risk Communications

continued from page 35

the reader or listener will try to understand what is reported.

When *The Oregonian* in Portland published its superb 15-day series on the workings of the Hanford Nuclear Facility, which has been proposed as the national dump for nuclear waste, science editor Linda Roach Monroe introduced the series with these words:

"The series represents a substantial investment of time and effort not only for the newspaper, but also for our readers. For 15 days we will be asking readers to take time to under-

stand topics that, at first glance, can inspire more yawns than second looks."

"But a second look, which is what we spent more than six months taking, reveals the information needed to assess the impact of a nuclear-fuel repository on the Pacific Northwest's future. And that is what newspapering is all about."

The series was alarming because of the energy and inquisitiveness and concern expressed in the reporting, not because *The Oregonian* had done its job as a risk communicator. □

NIEMAN NOTES

Four times a year the Nieman network yields a catch of remarkable diversity. On these pages we take note of Fellows near and far as they move about on assignment, begin new jobs or leave old ones, report on a myriad of subjects, interview the lofty and the humble, investigate irregularities, expose corruption and wrongdoing, win prizes, write books, take on the responsibilities of management, and on a personal level, add to their families or step back into retirement.

These accomplishments and endeavors contribute continuously to a kaleidoscope that shifts and changes every quarter. Ends lead to beginnings, and fresh starts are catalysts that engender purpose. Such fragments in the journalistic mosaic keep forming a complicated pattern that endlessly invites our regard.

—1939—

THOMAS OSBURN ZUBER, 84, died at the home of his daughter in Anderson, South Carolina, on April 19, 1988. A retired newspaper editor and former correspondent for United Press International, he worked as editor with *The Birmingham News* and the *Montgomery Advertiser* in Alabama. He was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing in 1934. From 1941 to 1952 he had served with various government agencies.

—1940—

VOLTA TORREY, retired, writes from his home in Palo Alto, California. "Perhaps Mrs. Torrey's death could be mentioned in Nieman Notes: Geneva D. Torrey, the wife of Volta Torrey, died February 7, 1988, in Stanford University Hospital at Palo Alto, California, after a massive stroke.

"She attended Simmons College while her husband was at Harvard and later received a Master's degree from Columbia University in New York. While working for the Brooklyn Children's Aid Society, she became especially interested in helping dyslexic youngsters, and taught

for several summers at St. George's School in Newport, Rhode Island."

—1945—

Every now and then we learn about the death of a Nieman Fellow only when we send mail to that person and it is later returned to our office, bearing the notation "Deceased."

This is the case with CHARLES WAGNER. His copy of NR, Spring 1988, was recently sent back to Cambridge.

Mr. Wagner, a journalist and poet, was 87. He attended Long Island Medical College for a year before receiving his A.B. degree from Columbia University in 1923.

He began his career as a journalist with the Literary Supplement of *The Morning World* in Manhattan, 1925-26; he wrote drama reviews for *The Morning Telegraph*, 1926-29. He was book review editor with *The Brooklyn Times*, 1930-32; and literary editor of the *Daily and Sunday Mirror* in New York City from 1932 on. From 1957-63 he was book and art critic, editor in chief, the New York *Sunday Mirror Magazine* for King Features Syndicate. He also taught journalism at New York University.

Among his books of poetry are: *Poems of the Soil and Sea*; *Nearer the Bone*; *Rhymes Out of School*; *Hades on Hudson and Other Poems*. He was the author of a biography, *Freeman of the Press*, and of a history, *Harvard: Four Centuries and Freedoms*. He was the United States representative poet for UNESCO, International Biennale, Poetry, Belgium, in 1968.

He was the recipient of *Poetry Magazine's* First Award for "The Unknown Soldier," 1929; the *Stratford* magazine poetry award, 1930; and the Edwin Markham poetry award, 1933.

He was a member of the American Newspaper Guild, the Authors League, and the Poetry Society of America. The Society made him executive secretary in 1964 and named him a first prize winner in 1971.

—1946—

ROBERT MANNING, editor, publisher, and author, has assumed the editorship of a new magazine — *Renaissance* — the first issue is scheduled for publication in the Autumn. The monthly magazine is issued by BHL Publishing with Evan Longin and Carol Beaudoin as associate publishers, and Michael Haley as designer. The three have a controlling interest in the corporation. The former publisher of the *Atlantic Monthly*, Garth Hite, will be part time consulting publisher.

Robert Manning described the periodical as "the magazine for living well," and aiming for a circulation among readers 55 years of age and older. In a *Boston Globe* interview, Mr. Manning explained that "living well" does not mean lavish or self-centered. The concept is "not just in the stomach, but intellectually too."

A publicity release declares: "While intended mainly for those 55 and older," the magazine "will attract the interest of younger adults, presenting articles and features that are thought-provoking, illuminating, sometimes controversial, sometimes brash, usually witty."

The first issue will carry a piece by Dan Wakefield [NF '64] on the poet Maxine Kumin. It will also include articles by Calvin Trillin, Sissela Bok, and William A. Henry III.

Formerly, Mr. Manning was, for 16 years, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, after leaving that magazine he became part owner of the Boston Publishing Co. In the interval of leaving there and joining *Renaissance*, he wrote a book about his career in journalism titled *The Swamp Root Chronicles*. It will be published by W.W. Norton & Co., Inc.

—1948—

ROBERT SHAPLEN, *The New Yorker* magazine staff writer and Far Eastern correspondent, died on May 15 at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in Manhattan. Mr. Shaplen was one of the

most prolific of writers, and one of the most traveled of journalists. His knowledge of the Far East was prodigious — for the last 16 years he had covered that part of the world for *The New Yorker*. He had been on the staff of that magazine for 36 years.

Early in his career he was a reporter for *The New York Herald Tribune*; his father was on *The New York Times*. Frequently, they met on assignments, father and son journalists were covering the same story.

In a career that spanned five decades, Mr. Shaplen wrote from the Far East for *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, and *Colliers*. His stories carried datelines from Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

In 1944, under a barrage of machine guns, he waded ashore with the Marines when they fought on Leyte in the Philippines.

During his last years covering the Far East, Mr. Shaplen's stories stressed the politics, culture, and religious diversifications of the peoples of those countries.

His last assignment included tours of Vietnam, Korea, and Hong Kong. His article on China — he visited that country last year — will be published in a summer issue of *The New Yorker*.

Mr. Shaplen's books — he authored ten — include a novel and a volume of short stories. Most of his books are about Asia.

Family survivors include his wife, the former Jayjia Hsia of Princeton, New Jersey; two sons, Peter, of San Francisco, and Jason, of Princeton, and a daughter, Kate, of Minneapolis.

—1953—

A note to Howard Simons from JACK FLOWER of Lindfield, New South Wales, Australia reads: "I retired from active work with the Fairfax Company in Australia after 47 years, but remain a director of two newspaper companies out here, Newcastle Newspapers Pty. Ltd., and Illawarra Newspapers Holdings Pty. Ltd. . . .

"[My wife] and I look forward to seeing you next year and, I hope, a good attendance from the Class of 1953."

—1955—

WILLIAM WOESTENDIEK resigned his post as executive editor of *The Cleveland (Ohio) Plain Dealer*, effective

November 1, 1987. Subsequently, he joined the faculty at the College of Journalism, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

—1956—

RICHARD HARWOOD, a deputy managing editor and former ombudsman, retired in March after 21 years at *The Washington Post*. However, the *Post* has renamed him ombudsman, a two-year appointment that took effect following his "retirement." Mr. Harwood was the *Post's* first ombudsman in 1970-71; he replaces Joseph Laitin, a career government and corporate public relations man whose two-year contract ended in February.

Dick Harwood said that he plans to issue internal memos on a regular schedule, commenting on the quality of the news reports. He will respond to public complaints involving the news; in addition, he is writing a weekly column on the problems of journalism.

H.Y. SHARADA PRASAD who served as information adviser to three Prime Ministers of India — Indira Gandhi, Morarji Desai, and Rajiv Gandhi — retired from that post on April 30 of this year. He has written to say that he will now devote his time to the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust, New Delhi, as its secretary.

—1957—

Belatedly word has come to us of the death of JOHN OBERT, 63, in Arlington, Virginia, on April 13, 1987.

Mr. Obert started his newspaper career in 1948 as a reporter at the weekly *Echo* in Alexandria, Minnesota; it is now a biweekly called the *Lake Region Echo/Press*. Three years later he was city editor of the *Echo*; he was editor from 1958 to 1966. He received many state and national awards for editorials and columns.

Mr. Obert was press secretary and chief speech writer for Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman from 1966 to 1968 and senior writer for Secretary of Agriculture Robert Bergland from 1979 to 1981. He also helped to write speeches on agriculture for Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter, and Vice President Hubert Humphrey. He was press secretary for Senator Thomas McIntyre (D-NH) from

1969 to 1979, and for Senator John Melcher (D-Mont.) for part of 1985. With Obert's assistance, Senator McIntyre wrote a book about New Right politics titled *The Fear Brokers*, published in 1979.

John Obert had been a free-lance writer and editor since the early 1980's. He was a graduate of the University of Minnesota School of Journalism. During World War II he served in the Coast Guard. His hobbies included fishing, drawing, and gardening.

* * *

It was his widow, Natalia, who wrote to us recently. "[John] died at home, but we were being tended by Hospice and one of the nurses from there who made stops with us was aware of the Nieman, as her father was a Nieman when she was a little girl. [Editor's note: He is Francis Carey, '47, at the time a science writer with the Associated Press in Washington, D.C. His daughter, now married, is Ellie Kroeger.]

"John so did enjoy that year and I did also — as did our four kids. Louis Lyons had a hard time finding us housing as they had never had a Nieman with that large a family. . . ."

* * *

We talked with Mrs. Obert the other day as she reminisced about the Nieman year. She recalled that her husband had received the news about his Nieman Fellowship in May or June, 1956. Their friends and colleagues in the small town of Alexandria "made a big to-do about the award." However, by August when the Oberts had had no further word from Cambridge, John telephoned Louis Lyons to ask about housing.

"I don't know," Louis replied. "We never had a family with four children before, but you come, and by the time you get here, we'll have a place."

The Oberts then hired a U-Haul trailer. The night before their departure friends and neighbors joined in a farewell party, helping to load household goods and giving them a merry send-off.

With the four children consigned to the back seat, the family drove from Minnesota to Massachusetts. They arrived at Harvard Square around five o'clock on a rainy afternoon. The youngsters were tired, hungry, and crying. As John prepared to get out of the car to find the Nieman office in Holyoke House (the present site of Holyoke Center), he instructed Natalia to keep driving around

the block because there was [of course] no place to park. She had never driven a car with a trailer hitched on, but she disregarded her trepidation and dutifully circled the area until John returned.

"The house is in Reading," he announced, so they journeyed on to that suburb north of Boston while he explained that Louis had said it was on loan from a faculty family who owned three other homes and spent little time in that one.

The Oberts found "their" house and were greeted at the front door by a maid. She said she had been told to get the place ready for them, but it was not ready and they could not move in yet. Natalia had a sister living in Connecticut, so they set out once more, this time heading for the Nutmeg State. They ended up staying with her sister until they were notified that they could move into the Reading house.

Natalia remembers especially the nine bedrooms and the many large radiators. The cost of the first month's heating bill was \$800 — an exorbitant sum — especially in those days. It propelled her husband to the door of the local utility office at opening time the next morning. He was asked if his family lived in a hotel.

As it turned out, the family went into debt to take care of subsequent heating bills, but Natalia said, it was "a wonderful house." During that year most of the Nieman events took place in their spacious quarters.

Every weekend, she recalled, some of the foreign Fellows in the class would arrive "with their ditty bags" to stay overnight, play with the Obert children, and talk about their own families back in New Zealand, Tokyo, India, Pakistan, or Australia.

Two of the Obert children were old enough to attend school; Natalia remembers that Reading had an excellent public school system.

After the family had settled in, she said, her husband called at the local newspaper office to get acquainted. Some of the staff are still their close friends.

At the close of her note to the Nieman Foundation, Natalia wrote, "Thanks for the memories!"

—1959—

PHIL JOHNSON, assistant manager of WWL-TV and its former news director, has been given the Distinguished Service award of the Society of Professional Jour-

nalists, Sigma Delta Chi, for editorializing on television.

The award was given for a series of editorials in June and July, 1987, "that lambasted the administration of a prison for young, first-offenders for failing to put a stop to gang rapes and for allowing hardened criminals, who didn't belong in the institution, to 'sell' young inmates to other convicts."

According to the judges, the editorials were "gutsy, opinionated, and direct. WWL-TV acted courageously in calling for the replacement of a warden who denied that any problem existed. . . who failed to put a stop to institutionalized homosexual 'slavery.' Johnson did not let up until he got results. His work is deserving of high journalistic recognition."

The series of editorials resulted in the forced retirement of the warden and the replacement of other administrators at the prison, the Louisiana Correctional Industrial School at DeQuincy.

This marks the second time in three years that Mr. Johnson has won the Distinguished Service Award. He was given it in 1985 for a series of editorials on the basketball scandals at Tulane University.

Phil Johnson's daily commentary is the longest running television editorial in the country, having begun in March 1962. He estimates that since then he has written and delivered more than six thousand editorials.

A \$1.25 million endowed Chair of First Amendment Studies honoring JOHN SEIGENTHALER was established in the spring of 1987 at Middle Tennessee State University. Mr. Seigenthaler is editor and publisher of the *Nashville Tennessean* and editorial director of *USA Today*. Half of the endowment for the Seigenthaler Chair was appropriated by the state legislature in 1984, when it passed the Comprehensive Education Reform Act, part of former Governor Lamar Alexander's \$1 billion Better Schools Program. The state funds were matched by MTSU and by private sources. Alex Nagy, chairman of the Department of Mass Communications, said naming the chair for Seigenthaler was "well deserved recognition" for an individual who has devoted his entire newspaper career to protecting and expanding the First Amendment.

In April Mr. Seigenthaler, this year's secretary to the board and next in line of succession, assumed the presidency of the

American Society of Newspaper Editors, due to the poor health of Edward Cony, associate editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, who was scheduled to take office this year.

Last fall John Seigenthaler was presented with the Distinguished Leadership Award, established by Vanderbilt University's School of Law Alumni Board to recognize people who did not graduate from the school, but whose contributions to the community have enhanced the school's opportunities for growth and excellence.

Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro has announced that John Seigenthaler will serve as the first holder of the Seigenthaler Chair of First Amendment Studies. He will occupy the equivalent of a quarter-time position at the university during the spring semester. He will lecture and hold discussions with classes in communications law, mass media and society, and an introduction to mass communications. He also will coordinate three conferences "of national visibility" and will participate in the editing and publication of the conference proceedings.

WALLACE TURNER on April 1 retired from *The New York Times*, where he had worked as a reporter since 1962. He started in the *Times'* San Francisco bureau, and in 1970 was made bureau chief. In 1985 he opened the *Times* Seattle bureau and was bureau chief there until his retirement.

We understand that his immediate plans are to travel. In fact, he is already afield and could not be reached for comment.

—1964—

Jerrold Schecter and his family were the focus of *Frontline's* program, "Back in the USSR," broadcast nationally over the Public Broadcasting Service in March.

Twenty years ago the Schecters arrived in Moscow, where he was on a two-year assignment for *Time* magazine. Mr. Schecter and his wife Leona settled into a high rise apartment building on the edge of the city. They enrolled their five young children in Soviet schools and were the only American parents to do so. The Schecters later wrote *An American Family in Moscow*, a book about their stay in the Soviet Union.

Last fall, the Schecters, with their now adult children, returned to Moscow to seek out old friends and to make new ones. A team from *Frontline* accompanied the Schecters on their explorations. In an unusual agreement, the Soviet government gave *Frontline* unlimited and unrestrained access to the Russian people in Moscow. For the first time, an American television production team was allowed to make its own contacts with Soviet citizens directly and to videotape anyone who wishes to appear in the documentary film.

Everywhere the Schecters went — to their old school, on the train from Leningrad, during an after work conversation with the top editors of *Izvestia*, or sharing tea with old friends — they found Russians eager to talk about their lives today and to scrutinize the strengths and the shortcomings of their country.

DAN WAKEFIELD's latest book is *Returning: A Spiritual Journey*, published this spring by Doubleday. The author gives an account of his search for inner peace, and the pathways to his destination. (See the previous issue of *Nieman Reports* for review.)

Mr. Wakefield, a resident of Boston, has written a number of books, including *Going All the Way*, and *Starting Over*, two best sellers.

—1966—

ROBERT H. GILES, executive editor of the *Detroit News*, has been named vice president of that paper. He will continue his editorship, and will head both the editorial page and the news department.

Before joining the *Detroit News*, Mr. Giles was editor of the two Gannett papers in Rochester, New York — the *Democrat Chronicle* and the *Times-Union* — from 1977-1986.

He is the author of *Newsroom Management: A Guide to Theory and Practice*, published in 1987 by R.J. Berg & Company, Inc. (See review in this issue of *Nieman Reports*, page 41).

—1967—

ZAWWAR HASAN and his wife Abidah were early June visitors to Lippmann House. They stopped off on their way home to Karachi, Pakistan, after a visit to their daughter, Samina, and their

son, Nadeem, who is studying to be an electronic engineer in San Francisco. Samina and her husband, a Pakistani-American, live in Dana Point, Southern California. A second son, Wagar, is studying for his Ph.D. at Sydney University in Australia.

Mr. Hasan, who retired as general manager of advertising at the Pakistan International Airlines in 1985, had previously been the managing director of the tourism department. At PIA Mr. Hasan edited two fortnightly magazines and a publication that was issued quarterly. After his retirement he became the media representative in Pakistan of the Asian, English, and Chinese editions of *Reader's Digest*. Both Mr. and Mrs. Hasan hope to return here for the 50th reunion of the Nieman Foundation next May.

HIRANMAY KARLEKAR stopped off here for a "footloose walk on the old stamping grounds around Harvard Square."

He had attended a Canada-India Opportunities Conference in Calgary. There, he presented a paper on "Indo-Canadian Relations, Past, Present and Future." Mr. Karlekar arrived sometime before the conference so he could be with his wife, Dr. Malavika Karlekar, who was then a visiting professor at the University of Calgary under a Women in Development Studies Fellowship of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. Dr. Karlekar is a Senior Fellow with the Centre for Women's Development Studies in New Delhi. She is a sociology teacher.

After the conference, Mr. Karlekar visited Anthony Day in Los Angeles, and later in Cambridge, spoke via telephone, with Nieman Classmate Dick Stewart. Mr. Karlekar is a senior editor of the *Indian Express* in Bombay.

PHILIP E. MEYER, the William R. Kenan Jr. professor of journalism at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, has been elected vice president and president-elect of the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

His induction into office took place in Toronto on May 21. He will assume the presidency in 1989-90.

Professor Meyer, who has written award-winning books and articles on journalism, received the Tom Selleck Visiting Fellowship in Journalism Ethics at the University of Southern California in 1987. He is the principal investigator of a study

to create a measure of newspaper accuracy. His book, *Ethical Journalism*, details current standards in the newspaper profession. Another book, *Precision Journalism*, received the 1974 Sigma Delta Chi Distinguished Service Award for research about his profession.

In 1967 he was a member of the staff of the *Detroit Free Press* who won a Pulitzer for their coverage of the 1967 Detroit riot.

—1970—

Larry L. King may now term himself author, playwright and actor. He recently wrote for *The New York Times*, his experiences as a thespian in his latest play, *The Night Hank Williams Died*, which opened at the New Playwrights' Theater in Washington, D.C. This was not his first acting role — he had played a half dozen times in his award-winning play *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. After that experience he promised his wife, Barbara S. Blaine, "... never again." Said Mr. King, "I guess I lied." In this latest play, Mr. King plays the role of a redneck bartender.

WILLIAM MONTALBANO of the *Los Angeles Times* has been assigned to Italy as head of the bureau in Rome. He had been former bureau chief in Buenos Aires for that paper.

HEDRICK SMITH's book *The Power Game: How Washington Works*, is climbing up fast, and in some cases has topped the best seller list in a number of newspapers. Mr. Smith, a 1974 Pulitzer Prize winner for international reporting — his stories in *The New York Times* were about his coverage of the USSR and Eastern Europe — also received the 1976 Overseas Press Club Award for his book *The Russians*, published in 1975. It was recently announced that Mr. Smith had resigned from *The New York Times*. He has headed the Washington Bureau for almost ten years. He came to the bureau in 1962.

In a memo to *The New York Times* staff, the executive editor explained about Mr. Smith's departure that "... in the glow of his critically acclaimed new book, [he] will turn to one or more major television projects."

—1974—

ELLEN GOODMAN, *The Boston Globe* associate editor and columnist, was presented with the prestigious Hubert H. Humphrey Award for "Selfless and Devoted Service in the Cause of Equality."

The award was given to her and to Senator Edward M. Kennedy Jr. at the annual dinner of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. Eight hundred people attended the dinner which was held in Washington, D.C. The newspaper editor and the Senator from Massachusetts each received a citation and a bronze medallion of Senator Humphrey.

PATRICIA O'BRIEN and Frank Mankiewicz were married on January 2 in Washington, D.C. Ms. O'Brien is a former political reporter with the Knight Ridder chain of newspapers, and most recently, she was press secretary to presidential candidate Michael Dukakis. Mr. Mankiewicz is a public relations executive with Hill and Knowlton.

The wedding ceremony was attended by family members including Ms. O'Brien's four daughters by a previous marriage, Monica, Maureen, Margaret, and Marianna. A reception on March 29 was given for the bridal couple at the Dakota, dubbed "the nation's capital's hottest night spot."

—1977—

ROD DECKER of television station KUTV, NBC Channel 2 in Salt Lake City, Utah, had a Fellows reunion in Boston with classmate Paul Solman. Rod was in the area covering the New Hampshire primary. This has been a busy time on the East coast for Rod. And he is equally busy in Salt Lake City. He told Paul that he does as many as five stories a day for his station.

JOSÉ ANTONIO MARTINEZ-SOLER and his family made a transatlantic crossing. They moved from Madrid, Spain, to Murray Hill, New Jersey. Mr. Martinez-Soler is in the United States as national editor for *El Globo*, the news weekly magazine with offices in Madrid. In Spain he was editor-in-chief of the state-run Spanish wire service, EFE. He will be in this country for about two years.

In Madrid, his wife Ana, for the last six years has been writing for *The Wall Street Journal*. She has also been sending stories

to a number of newspapers in the United States, including *The Boston Globe*, the *Examiner* in San Francisco, and the *Detroit Free Press*. Now she has become interested in a new field — television production, and she hopes to pursue that career in this country.

There are three children in the Martinez-Soler family — all with dual citizenship — their mother, whose maiden name was Westley, was born in the Boston area and attended local schools. The children are Eric, 10, Andrea, 3½, and the newest baby — David George, born on President's Day, February 15, 1988, and weighing in at 9 lbs. 5 oz.

PAUL SOLMAN was part of a team that was included in the Peabody Award given to the "Japan Series" on the *MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*, Public Broadcasting Service. The team was involved with five parts of the series.

Mr. Solman is the special business correspondent for the *MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*. The predominant theme of the team's work stressed the business-economics background of Japan, and also identified important business events and trends.

The executive producer for the five parts was Steve Atlas; he worked with three other producers: Lori Cohen, Bob Burns who is president of Cambridge Studios, and Julia Eddy. Gregg Ramshaw was Washington D.C. correspondent.

Commenting on the award, Mr. Solman said "the Peabody is the greatest thing to win — the epitome of what's great about being part of a television team. It was tremendously gratifying."

WILLIAM WHEATLEY, a classmate of José Antonio, is also a new father. His wife, Carolyn, gave birth to a baby boy this past April 14. The baby, David Whittier, has a big brother — John Churchill, born April 3, 1986. Their father is executive producer for NBC *Nightly News*. The Wheatley family live in Manhattan.

—1978—

FRANK SUTHERLAND has moved to *The Times* in Shreveport, Louisiana. He has been editor of that newspaper since January, 1988. Previously, he had been executive editor of the *Jackson Sun* in Tennessee. Before that post he had been managing editor of the *Hattiesburg American* in Mississippi. The newspapers

are all part of the Gannett chain.

—1980—

STANLEY FORMAN, a staff photographer with the New England station WCVB Channel 5, was awarded second place in Spot News by the Boston Press Photographers Association for "Man With a Gun," and WCVB was named the 1988 News Station of the Year. Mr. Forman also received honorable mention in the *Fire* category for "My Children," and third place, with Ken Sullivan, in the division of Team Effort for "Early Stop," an account of a MBTA subway crash.

—1983—

The television documentary series *Eyes on the Prize* has gathered another award — an Oscar nomination — for its sixth and final episode produced by CALLIE CROSSLEY. This episode, called "The Selma Show," its more formal name is "Bridge to Freedom" — was named best in the Documentary Feature category. The award was presented by The Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences in Los Angeles, California.

Eyes on the Prize, a six-hour documentary series tracing the civil rights movement in the United States from 1954 through 1965, also won for the entire series, the George Foster Peabody Award presented by the University of Georgia, and the New England Film Festival *Boston Globe* Best of Festival Award.

The film series also won top honors — the Gold Baton Award — in the annual Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University awards for broadcast journalism (See Nieman Notes, Spring 1988).

GILBERT GAUL, a business reporter for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, has received first prize for medical writing for his story "No Cure for Ailing Medicare Program." The story contest was administered by the New Jersey Press Association. Mr. Gaul covers health care companies and medical economics. His story focused on the increasing number of elderly who are impoverishing themselves because of skyrocketing costs and long-term nursing home care. Mr. Gaul's story also stressed how little the Reagan administration was doing to alleviate the problem.

GUY GUGLIOTTA is the recipient of two coveted awards — one given by the Investigative Reporters and Editors, and the other by the Society of Professional Journalists, *Sigma Delta Chi*.

Mr. Gugliotta, who is on *The Miami Herald*, won the honors with two other Miami Herald staffers: reporter Jeff Leen and associate editor James Savage. Their IRE award was given to journalists on a newspaper with over 75,000 circulation.

The *Sigma Delta Chi* award was given in the category of foreign correspondence. Both awards were for their series in exposing the operations of the Medellin cartel in Colombia. That cartel controls the trafficking of cocaine from Latin America to the United States.

ELI REED who is with Magnum has received world-wide recognition for his photos. He has won a World Press Award for his photograph in *TIME* magazine used with a story about the black ghetto. The photo, titled "From Bad to Worse," is a study of a man standing on a stairway in a Harlem tenement. Photos from all over the world were submitted for this competition — Mr. Reed received a certificate for third place award.

A book — *Beirut: City of Regrets* — will have 128 of his photographs of that city; he has made three trips there. The book, to be published by Norton, will also include an essay about his experiences while shooting photos and a poem, both essay and poem were written by Mr. Reed. A text on the history of Beirut by Professor Fouad Ajami is included in *Beirut: City of Regrets*. Professor Ajami is director of Middle Eastern studies at the Johns Hopkins School of International Studies.

Mr. Reed was on location in Haiti during "Baby Doc's" departure from that country. Thirty-six of his photos depicting scenes there are in a book published last year by Amphoto Publishing Company. He also has had his photographs published in *Homeless in America*.

BRUCE STANNARD and Susan, his wife, have recently written from their home in Killara, New South Wales, to bring us up-to-date with their news. The most recent addition to their family, Alexandra Kathleen, was born May 7, 1988. Her sister Georgia is now 3 1/4. The letter said: "This year has kept us busy with house renovations and garden rejuvenation. . . . Bruce still writes for *The Bulletin* and is now their Pacific cor-

respondent. . . . This summer has seen the launching of our two little boats after six months of restoration. One is a 12' cedar motor boat and the other a 25' wooden sail boat built in 1910. We keep them moored at a yacht club nearby and hope to spend many enjoyable hours aboard. At the moment we are busy preparing for Australia Day (January 26). Bruce will be helping with TCN 9 television broadcasts of the harbour activities, and I will be aboard another boat enjoying the spectacle."

—1985—

On March 22, the South African government ordered a three-month closure of the *The Nation*, an antiapartheid newspaper published in Johannesburg by the Roman Catholic Church. ZWELAKHE SISULU, its editor, has been detained without trial since December 1986. The paper, which has a predominantly black readership and a circulation of 60,000, was founded in 1985. The weekly tabloid was the first newspaper shut down under a six-month-old emergency censorship decree which allows the government to close a publication without court action.

Howard Simons, curator of the Nieman Foundation, cabled the following protest to State President Botha and to Gabu Tugwana, acting editor of *The Nation*:

On behalf of the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University, which has enjoyed the presence of more than two dozen South African journalists over the last 28 years, *I want to protest the closing of The New Nation*. The silencing of any newspaper represents a death in the journalistic family, greatly to be mourned and even more so to be a cause for rebirth. Gagging *The New Nation* mocks your repeated claims for press freedom. I urge you to allow it's voice to be heard.

The International Federation of Newspaper Publishers, based in Paris, also condemned the closing of *The Nation*. To make its protest known a telegram was sent to South African Home Minister Stoffel Botha which said: "We urge you to acknowledge the deep revulsion of the free newspapers of the world at this action and ask you to revoke your decision.

"At the same time, we exhort you to

release the New Nation's editor, Zwelakhe Sisulu, who has been detained without charge for the past 16 months for practicing his journalistic profession."

Mr. Sisulu, who has been the recipient of several awards — presented to him *in absentia* — was again honored by The International Human Rights Law Group at the tenth anniversary commemoration and third annual human rights awards dinner held on May 11 in Washington, D.C.

The South African editor was given the 1988 Pro Bono Service Award. The award was accepted by Gabu Tugwana of *The New Nation*, Mr. Sisulu's newspaper. Elie Wiesel, the world renowned author, and recipient of the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize, was also presented with the Pro Bono Service Award at the ceremony.

—1986—

ROBERTO EISENMANN was a recent visitor here. He spoke to an audience of professors, students and others at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs, Committee on Latin American and Iberian Studies. Mr. Eisenmann, a Panamanian journalist — he is the publisher of *La Prensa* in Panama — is living in exile in the United States. At the Center he spoke on "Crisis in Panama: the New Narco-Militarism Phenomenon."

It was a busy time for the journalist. He also spoke before a forum at the John F. Kennedy School of Government. But to the Nieman Fellows Class of '88, his most important appearance was at Lippmann House where he attended a beer and cheese party and met and spoke with the Fellows.

ATHELIA KNIGHT, a staff writer with *The Washington Post*, is still gathering awards for her four-part series on McKinley High School in Washington, D.C. Ms. Knight spent one year at the school doing research for her series titled "Pursuing the Legacy: A year at McKinley High School." She interviewed students, talked with teachers and the principal, and sat in at classes and faculty meetings. She was the winner in the regional contest for the 1987 Chesapeake AP News Executives' Council competition. Her articles won second place from the Education Writers Association in the category for newspapers with more than 75,000 circulation. This last prize was

presented to her at a banquet in April in New Orleans. Previously, Ms. Knight had earned the Washington Monthly Journalism Award for this series.

Amrita and BARRY SHLACHTER announce the birth of a son, Ethan Zachary, born January 4, and weighing 7 pounds and one ounce. He will be called in moments of informality — by the wonderful initials of EZ. His father proudly announced that EZ, born in Fort Worth, is the first Texan in the family. Mr. Shlachter is a staff member of the *Fort Worth Star Telegram*.

—1987—

The parents of SUSAN DENTZER — Mr. and Mrs. William Dentzer — have announced her engagement to CHARLES ALSTON. This just may be the first instance of two Niemans in the same class marrying. The wedding ceremony is planned for September. Miss Dentzer is a senior editor at *U.S. News and World Report* in Washington, D.C. Mr. Alston is the business editor of the *Greensboro News & Record* in North Carolina.

—1988—

ANTHONY HEARD and Mary Ann Barker of Cape Town, South Africa, were married in California during the Christmas holidays. They have returned to South Africa where Mr. Heard will be writing for British and American newspapers. The South African newspaper man was editor of the *Cape Times*, a major newspaper in that country. In 1985 he was given the Golden Pen of Freedom Award for his interview with Oliver Tambo, head of the African National Congress. For this he was arrested and then released. Mr. Heard's interview contravened a South African law that prohibits quoting banned persons. A year later, Mr. Heard was awarded the Pringle Medal of the Southern African Society of Journalists, considered the Pulitzer Prize of South Africa.

ROBERT M. HITT III has been named managing editor of *The State* in Columbia, South Carolina. He was formerly managing editor of *The Record* in Columbia. *The Record* ceased publication after its merger, this past April, with *The State*.

Mr. Hitt, an undergraduate, and a graduate student of business administration at the University of South Carolina, has been taking courses during his Nieman Year in social, political, and economic changes as they relate to the South.

A Nieman Fellow missed a small part of Harvard classes and Lippmann House seminars because of a baby. EILEEN McNAMARA and her husband, Peter May, announce the birth of a nine pound, one ounce boy born on May 1. The baby — Patrick Stoddard — has a brother Timothy, who is two years old. Ms. McNamara is a reporter with *The Boston Globe*. Mr. May is a sports writer for *The Hartford Courant*.

EUGENE ROBINSON, former city editor of *The Washington Post*, will head with his family to Buenos Aires, where he will be *The Post's* correspondent in South America. Before leaving for this assignment, he will join the foreign desk for a month. Mr. Robinson's wife Avis, and their son Aaron (4 years old) are studying Spanish — both mother and son are doing well in that subject. At Harvard, Mr. Robinson has been concentrating on Latin American history, literature, and the Spanish language.

All About Niemans and The Pulitzer Prize

DOUG MARLETTE, Nieman Fellow '81, won the Pulitzer Prize for his editorial cartoons. His barbed pen was aimed at Jim and Tammy Bakker and their PTL television ministry, Gary Hart, and the motorists wielding guns in Los Angeles. Mr. Marlette, formerly with *The Charlotte Observer*, moved to the *Constitution* in Atlanta last year. Out of the sixteen cartoons submitted for the Pulitzer, four were drawn for the *Observer*, and twelve for the *Constitution*. Mr. Marlette's work is syndicated by Tribune Media Services, but he will shortly be moving to Creators Syndicate. His daily syndicated comic strip "Kudzu" has been published in books, as have his political cartoons.

MARK ETHRIDGE III, Nieman Fellow '86, managing editor of *The Charlotte*

Observer — that paper won a Pulitzer for Public Service for its reporting on the misuse of funds by the television ministry of Jim Bakker — said that he and his staff feel their paper has really won one and one-half prizes this year because several of Mr. Marlette's prizewinning cartoons were drawn while he was a staff member.

The articles in *The Charlotte Observer* revealed the misuse of funds by the television evangelist. He and his wife Tammy are being investigated by federal and state authorities, including agencies from the Postal Service and the Internal Revenue Service.

Among the 1988 Pulitzer Prize nominating jurors in journalism were the following Nieman Fellows: MADELEINE H. BLAIS ('86), professor of journalism, University of Massachusetts; ROBERT P. CLARK ('61), news consultant (retired), Harte-Hanks Newspapers Inc., San Antonio, Texas; EDWIN GUTHMAN ('51), Gannett Foundation distinguished professor of journalism, University of Southern California; JOHN HUGHES ('62), columnist, *The Christian Science Monitor*; AUSTIN SCOTT ('70), editorial writer-columnist, Oakland (Calif.) *Tribune*.

Three Nieman Fellows are members of the Pulitzer Prize Board — ROBERT C. MAYNARD ('66), editor and publisher, the *Tribune*, Oakland, Calif.; EUGENE L. ROBERTS, JR., ('62), executive editor, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*; and HOWARD SIMONS ('59), curator of the Nieman Foundation.

At this time next year the Nieman office will be poised as if at the top of a high dive — the 50th anniversary of the Nieman Fellowships, an occasion that will be fully celebrated at the May 1989 reunion.

We already look forward to the gathering of the Classes in Cambridge. Meanwhile, there are flurries of activity and preparation behind the scenes. While it always is good to talk with friends and correspond with them, there is no substitute for the welcoming handshakes and the face-to-face greetings that are to come.

We hope that the reunion dates are well circled on your calendars: May 5, 6, 7, 1989, in Cambridge. Here's to those red-letter days!

— T.B.K.L.

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