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An Interview With Hoke Norris

By Roy Newquist

This interview is from the book, *Counterpoint*, by Roy Newquist. Copyright 1964 by Rand McNally & Company. Mr. Norris was a Nieman Fellow in 1950-51.

● *Newquist*: Hoke Norris is Literary Critic of the Chicago *Sun-Times*. Along with the lively book page he assembles, and his own play in depth upon literary issues of the day, Norris is known for magazine pieces and books devoted to two towering problems: integration and censorship. The first, of course, is not truly a literary issue, yet enough top journalistic creative talents are involved with it to give it a strong literary cast. Norris published, a few years ago, a Southern novel, *All The Kingdoms Of Earth*; he has published some thirty short stories in various magazines—both novel and short stories arising out of his experiences as a born and raised Southerner. More recently, he published *We Dissent*, a striking collection of articles on integration by Southern intellectuals of liberal persuasion. This book is a vital analysis of the serious racial issue in the South. It was edited by Mr. Norris, who also contributed an article to it. So my first question will be:

How much have these dissenters actually influenced integration in the South?

● *Norris*: Some of them have done a great deal. Ralph McGill, for example, can be almost single-handedly credited among the unofficial forces that made possible the integration of Atlanta schools, the University of Georgia, and Georgia Tech, a peaceful one. Five years ago I would have firmly believed and said that any attempt to integrate schools anywhere in Georgia would be met with extreme violence. It came about with little violence because Ralph McGill was there and on the scene, and because they had a good mayor in Atlanta and a responsible Chief of Police. These men were determined that there should be no violence, and that the edicts of the court, the laws of the land, should be upheld in spite of all obstacles.

Among others who've shown the way in the South are Jonathan Daniels, on the Raleigh, North Carolina, *News and Observer*; Hodding Carter and his son on the *Delta Democrat-Times*, in Greenville, Mississippi; Harry Ashmore, when he was in Little Rock during the crisis there; William C. Baggs on the *Miami News*; and in Norfolk, Virginia, Lenoir Chambers, editor emeritus of the *Norfolk Virginia Pilot*, did a fine job of preparing people for eventual desegregation. Norfolk schools were closed for a while, but they were reopened when people discovered they couldn't get along without schools.

This, of course, will be the discovery everywhere in the South, because in no area, in this age, can we get along without schools, and Southerners have always believed in schools. At great expense and at personal sacrifice they've attempted to educate their children. They've built some fine universities; the University of North Carolina and the University of Georgia are two I know well, and I suspect they're finer than many of the large colleges to the north. In the South you find the classical tradition prevailing, whereas elsewhere in the bigger land-grant universities the especially by those who read newspaper reports or see dancing or basket weaving or speedreading or some of the other absurd subjects that appear in their catalogs.

To return to your question, the book was prepared because we thought that unfortunately, quite unfortunately, the mass of people in the United States hear only the voices of violence in the South. We knew, all of us, that other important and influential voices were seldom heard, especially by those who read newspaper reports or see television or hear the radio when violence occurs. For when there's violence there's news—without violence there is silence.

Many people have been speaking up for a long time. Even former Governor Collins of Florida, sensitive as the situation was there, spoke quite frankly. He has a piece in the book about the necessity for law and order, and it prevailed in Florida as long as he had his way.

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Challenges and Excellences

By John Hay Whitney

Editor in Chief and Publisher, New York *Herald Tribune*

In some cultures it is believed possible to gain merit by sleeping on beds of nails or tattooing the body. In ours, possibly as the result of confining religion to Sunday sermons, there seems to be a belief that merit attaches to the occasional public address. The teacher is neglected, the harranguer from street corners is ignored. But the man who speaks to the testimonial dinner or delivers the memorial lecture, and the audience that settles quietly to listen to him, both take deep draughts of comfort in doing good.

Oddly, there may be some truth in it. It forces people like me to come to grips with the ideas that lie behind our daily actions and if the audience can rise to a decent skepticism about the whole process, it can use the opportunity to judge those ideas.

Let us begin with the skepticism. A lot of nonsense is talked about newspapers and publishing—not least by newspapermen and publishers. Quite simply, I am proud to be here. My predecessors at these lectures have been eminent men who have all worked long at their profession. But I think it is clear that though I have worked at journalism, I am here today primarily because I am a millionaire.

It is not polite to go into this sort of thing. Heaven knows it is not comfortable. This was brought home recently when I read about my wealth, my homes and my possessions in "Fortune" magazine. But in all honesty, I know, as you should, that I am the thirteenth annual Elijah Parish Lovejoy lecturer here today because five years ago I was able to buy the New York *Herald Tribune* and I have since been able to finance it and help it find new paths in American journalism.

I did not do so in hopes of finding fame and fortune. Nor did I do it, as Lord Beaverbrook used to claim on his own behalf, in order to find a vehicle for political propaganda—although my newspaper and I share a view of life we like to call Independent Republican. As for business reasons, well, it may be that there are worse investments in this country than running a competitive morning newspaper in a busy, bitterly competitive, sophisticated town, but I have never run across one.

I did it because I had to. I did it because all my life, in one way and another, I have been involved in—horrible word—"communications." I did it because we live in a time when there are challenges only a newspaper can meet and excellences only a newspaper can set and because I believe we cannot let the world go by default to the dullards. In short, I did it because when the opportunity arose to buy the *Herald Tribune*, I looked back on my life and found that I was an apprentice journalist.

The process has been a long one and I could have spoken on some other occasion—indeed, I have spoken—as a man from another career.

I made movies once, with David O. Selznick, when there was fun and adventure in the enterprise. We made "Gone with the Wind" and other films, talking about them as "only entertainment," and looked back to discover that we helped shape an art form not only reflecting but in a way influencing our times.

After the war, with J. H. Whitney and Company, I started a venture capital enterprise that tried to turn ideas into industries. What we found, instead of the post-war

slump and recession that everyone had predicted, was an eagerness to translate the new technology into new products. In a small way, we were creating the physical face of the world you and I now live in.

And I was an ambassador. In a part of the world I love, where my education was shaped and many of my closest friendships made, I was charged with interpreting to Britain what was best in America. There I found that you can so hold the values of your life, like playing cards, so close to your chest, that in working out the game you forget exactly what they are; you don't see them; they are part of you. But asked to explain the hand, you can look again and name them—values *and* cards.

By that path, I came here today, to talk about journalism. And where are we?

We are, I think, at a point where to venture into a competitive market requires a great deal of money or a great variety of resources. And the profit still lies in monopoly situations where, too often, there is more income than excellence. It becomes proper to ask whether newspapers are not, perhaps, old fashioned squares in a life which is bewilderingly complex. It is also proper to ask whether, perhaps, the newspaper's day has come and gone and television and news magazines are here to bury it; whether age has not made it infirm and challenge timid; whether there is any excuse for anyone bothering any more with the craft of journalism except as an aid for the professional few who need technical information and the bored many who need a hiding place on the commuter trains and a handy place to find the department store ads.

Consider that we are gathered here as survivors of the recent political campaign. To some—indeed as I read the reports from around the country, to a very great many—its chief characteristic was that it was boring. In the hurried reporters' great cliché, it was full of sound and fury signifying little.

Not so.

For our history and our future, it was historic almost to the pitch of high tragedy. To see nothing but its boredom is to confuse lack of suspense with lack of meaning. Lacking suspense, lacking also the sharp definition of great issues we had been told to expect from the man who was going to provide a choice not an echo, it seemed pointless.

But throughout the early fall we were dealing with the temporary, we hope, disintegration of a great party. In the broad sweep before us any citizen could sense the nation was at a political watershed. And we saw a vote not for but against—against Senator Goldwater and occasionally against President Johnson.

This was the reality behind the daily appearance of press conferences and midwest swings, television appearances and behind-the-scenes briefings. This is the reality that will make the stuff of history books.

Journalism's pride is to call itself the annotator of instant

history, the source material for later interpretation. But what newspapers in the United States printed the reality instead of only the appearance? Which headlines are not headed for the forgotten addenda of some future doctoral thesis?

Again, we had a campaign remarkable in the volume of its reporting, an election night remarkable in the speed of that reporting. We had more statistics more quickly available for more interpretation than at any time in our history. In some instances, there were barely fifteen minutes between the close of the polls and the announcement of who won. And who did all this? The newspapers? Hardly. The *New York Times* allied itself with CBS for the night; the *Herald Tribune* allied itself with NBC and the wire services pooled with both.

And almost uniformly, using the computers that television brought and the speed that television demanded; faced with the drama that television could produce for a new generation of Americans, the newspapers of this country—with a few minor typographical innovations—produced the same morning-after papers they produced a generation ago.

Indeed, we seem to have lost something: a spirit of independence, a spirit of our own ferocity, that has made us captive to the press release and the gentlemanly code of going to great lengths to avoid embarrassing anyone.

In one way, life has been made incomparably easier for today's reporter than it was a generation ago. There is no corporation that does not strive to produce news about itself. There are few bureaus that do not employ a briefing officer. There is no reporter who could not produce enough copy simply by collecting what is given away.

But the privileges we claim for ourselves at every step are based on the old conception of ourselves as the public's watchdog, as the men a little outside our society, measuring it with a pinch of skepticism. If the press conferences become less productive because they are more polite, the fault may be ours. And it's a fault that cuts across the whole of newspaper life. Reporters who don't believe it is right to compete for news; editors who hesitate to offend an administration or take issue with it because to do so may be uncomfortable; publishers whose political friends become sacred items of news.

To be fair is not enough any more. We must be ferociously fair, the way a computer can be on election night when it tells you facts you would rather not know—but tells them nevertheless, with the emphasis they deserve.

I am a man involved in more directorships and enterprises than many of my fellow citizens. I have political as well as other friendships. But the day my newspaper begins to cease troubling my non-journalistic life, I will know something is wrong with it.

Yet all this said, I feel there is a good bit right with the press. The questions we raise point to the answers we can

be proud of. And it was never more necessary than now to seek and be certain of those answers.

Consider our situation. World War II stirred forces and made realignments on a world scale that are hard to comprehend and harder still to measure.

We are told that America has enormous power to lead, but no one seems to have enormous will to follow. We cannot translate atomic power into jungle victory.

And on this vast scene lives modern American man, affluent beyond the imagining of Croesus, but not understanding the economics of it—in other words, not knowing where the wealth really came from or how long it will last. Mobile beyond the capacity of any previous people to move, but not really sure where he wants to go. The object of a bombardment of information more intense and more insistent than at any conceivable time in history, but always unsure of what really happened. Needing more and more to know in order to choose his way of government best, able less and less to understand.

We have a public mind, a popular consensus composed of the biggest hit songs and the highest-rated shows, the best comic strips and the latest fashions, the newest auto styles and the fattest best-sellers.

Smaller countries and older civilizations might take accepted ideas of life and, translating them into terms shared by all, make them applicable to each citizen so that every man roughly understood what his neighbor was like. But we are a huge nation, a continent wide but sometimes incredibly narrow. Our common denominators seem to get lower and more common as time passes so that the public mind, the generalities that help us understand each other, is full of trivia, impersonal and cold. It deals with masses, not with men. It doesn't enlighten, it just communicates.

The creative arts of our day are experimenting now with a way of dealing with this scene. The Picasso that hangs on my library wall is not a generation ahead of the painting we saw when I was a boy. It is a century ahead. Our music began leaping forward years ago. The drama that was once contained in neat settings and careful plots is shifting into new forms. We are testing out ways of the novel today that didn't exist in 1940.

And where these things have gone, newspapers as a creative craft must follow, but in a special course.

A newspaper is as various as the men and the community it serves. It comes into the world new each morning, yet still the same. The challenge it faces is the same as that which faces the men and women who read it—to take a stand in an embattled culture and make sense of it all. Our task is to cut through the junk in the public mind by seeking the order that underlies the clutter of small events; to winnow out of the apparent what is the real; to cede to television and radio the mere repetition of activities and to look behind the bare event for meanings.

Increasingly, those meanings are personal. A newspaper is no longer the only chronicle of events. It is a guide and an interpreter for the reader. It daily grasps the whole cultural kaleidoscope and brings it into focus in terms that will interest him, be meaningful to him—talk to him, like a human being talking to another human being.

Fifty years ago our industry fell in love with a convention of objectivity that was to lay a dead hand of pattern on our news pages and freeze us into "good form." But the reporter who writes "objectively" still selects the items he puts into the story, the editor still selects the stories that make up the page and the publisher still selects the men. And in the spaces between their several objectivities—in what they leave out—may lie the real life of our time, the real color, the grainy detail that mean the difference between the clear ring of life on the printed page and just another newspaper story.

What we should worry about more is whether we are using the freedom we have and which no bureaucrat has yet denied us, to report the way we should; whether we are organizing the material at hand so that the obvious question is not merely implied but asked outright; so that the story about an anti-welfare town manager in some New York community—the one that points up a general trend in our society through a specific man in a real setting—is not hidden in the background because the main stories of the day are dreary repetitions of previous handouts. This is the real excellence of editing.

We all speak a language of marvelous flexibility and great precision that has become tortured through the usages of haste and headline writing into a cliché form that seems comfortable because it is old but has become almost unnoticed, ugly. Maybe it is only new clichés we need. I trust not. But certainly there is a modern idiom that has largely passed the newspapers by, just as there is a grace and precision that seldom seems quite translated into their pages. It is not good enough to look at the readers and say they are happy with what they have. We are supposed to lead; we must challenge them to move ahead with us or neither of us will move at all. We will slide, as a craft, as a profession and as readers, too, into the stagnation of shopping sheets, throwaways and the junior partner of television.

The role we can play every day, if we try, is to take the whole experience of every day and shape it to involve American man. It is our job to interest him in his community and to give his ideas the excitement they should have. These are the excellences of our craft.

They are produced by men who are truly engaged in producing the poetry of everyday life. The task of poetry remains the old calling: To take the language and using the matter at hand, speak to the mind and the heart of individual men. It is the calling of newspapers also; it is their challenge. The excellence of publishers lies in recognizing this and in providing the opportunity and the goad for men

of varying talents to reach out beyond their best to meet the challenge.

Hold the cards of your values away from your chest for a moment to see them clearly. Some, like loyalty and honor have a schoolboy look about them and get praised dutifully—even automatically. Some, like taste and appreciation of what's fun in life, get neglected. Some, like involvement in life and the necessity for individual response are actively challenged by everything around us and are in the greatest need of repair.

Then look back 100 years when this industrial society was being shaped and Matthew Arnold made it personal. The world, he said,

"Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."
Is it true? Are the Mods and Rockers who fight now on

Dover Beach a mockery of history, a cheap jest to show how low the truth has fallen from that cry of poetry?

No, I think that the ignorant armies have always been with us and I believe, as a passionate, personal thing, that joy and love and light exist here. Perhaps it would be hard for someone for a lifetime associated only with newspapers to recognize or then to boast that newspapers have within them the capability to write the real poetry of everyday life. Perhaps, too, I am a square in a hip world. But I think that in our present problems lies future greatness. I know that I have a newspaper reaching slowly forward along this path. I believe that together we see a profession that can accept its challenges and make them excellences.

This address was given by **Mr. Whitney** at the Lovejoy Convocation at Colby College, Waterville, Maine, November 12, 1964. On that occasion he was named Colby's 1964 Elijah Parish Lovejoy Fellow and awarded a Doctor of Laws Degree.

What "White Backlash"?

By Thomas F. Pettigrew

The much publicized "white backlash" of 1964—a presumed angry reaction of white Americans against insistent Negro American demands for social change—raises some fundamental issues for the nation's press. In an age of public opinion polls and growing journalistic savvy in social science realms, the mass media are increasingly providing the public with sophisticated analyses of social trends. But the hastily-conceived idea of a "white backlash" exposes the dangers inherent in such a service, dangers made blatant when the media jump the gun and follow expectations rather than evidence.

For social scientists who specialize in race relations and public opinion bluntly ask, "What 'backlash'?" The truth is the term was coined more for its sensational flavor than its contribution to understanding the current American racial scene. And the evidence that purports to support it is devoid of the most rudimentary research controls and safeguards. Consequently, a more detached view, free from the pressure of deadlines and insistent upon controlled data, strongly questions the existence of a powerful "backlash" sweeping the nation.

A "backlash" implies that many whites in the North, once mildly sympathetic to Negro aspirations, suddenly changed their minds and hardened their resistance to racial change. The term first gained favor in the interpretation of the relatively successful 1964 political sorties of Alabama's Governor George Wallace into the North. Wallace, it will be recalled, entered the 1964 Democratic party presidential primaries in Wisconsin, Indiana, and Maryland. To the surprise of many, he polled sizable minorities in each primary, ranging from roughly two-ninths in Wisconsin to three-sevenths in border-state Maryland.

Many observers inferred from these results that a massive "backlash" was in full swing. Soon every reasonably large vote for a reactionary candidate anywhere in the North and West was immediately explained away as a further symptom of the "backlash"; and even the President of the United States freely used the term in his conversations with reporters.

Overlooked throughout this period, however, were national public opinion polls conducted by Louis Harris which revealed a steadily mounting majority in favor of the then-pending Civil Rights Act—a strange phenomenon to be occurring in the midst of any "backlash." Thus, while an estimated 63 per cent of adult Americans favored the bill in November of 1963, the figure rose to 68 per cent by February of 1964 and 70 per cent by May of 1964—a consistent gain of seven per cent in six months.

Why, then, did Wallace do so well in three northern and border primaries? An array of well-established social scientific principles suggests a number of critical answers. Mass media analysts emphasized the *percentage* of the votes won by Wallace without thoroughly considering the size of the *total* vote. Especially in the Indiana and Maryland primaries where the Alabamian did best, the number of votes cast was considerably larger than is typical of Democratic presidential primaries in these states.

The so-called "backlash," then, was apparently caused by the attraction to the polls of many people who do not normally vote in these primaries, people attracted by the protest nature of Wallace's candidacy though not necessarily his full position on race.

Furthermore, the Alabama Governor's candidacy did not have to be regarded seriously, a factor of major importance in protest voting. Hadley Cantril (*The Politics of Despair*, Basic Books, 1958) has shown, for instance, how French and Italian voters who are not members of the Communist Party but who regularly support Communist candidates find their electoral behavior a satisfying expression of protest—though they would typically not care for the Communists to gain control of their governments. "Voting Communist can't hurt me," reasons one French worker. "It may help me. Nothing like putting a big scare into the *patron*." In this American case, there was little chance that Wallace might actually become President of the United States, and so he made an ideal magnet for attracting protest voters of all varieties.

Wallace's primary performances thus in no way neces-

sarily required or reflected any mass shifting of opinion or changing of minds. To reason that this was the case is to commit a blatant form of what social scientists call "the ecological fallacy." That is, one errs when he infers the characteristics of individuals (in this case, people shifting their opinions in an anti-Negro direction) from group data only (in this case, state-wide voting for an anti-Negro candidate). The fallacy is more easily recognizable in other instances. Thus, when sampling by city blocks, say, in Chicago, there is a high and positive association between the percentages on each block of adult illiterates and adult readers of comic books, though naturally these group percentages cannot represent the characteristics of the same individuals.

The mass media analysis also assumed—without the benefit of before-and-after comparisons—that a *change* of racial attitudes was occurring among many white Americans. To be certain that whites in northern metropolitan areas were generally more anti-Negro in July of 1964 than they were in 1963, one obviously needs to know their attitudes in 1963 as well as in 1964. Yet the media did not provide such necessary evidence.

The nearest attempt to obtaining before-and-after data was a city-wide poll administered by New York *Times* reporters in September of 1964. But this attempt employed the risky retrospective procedure of asking the respondent after-the-fact if he had changed his mind. In addition, the question asked presented a strongly biased wording aimed apparently at "proving" the believed-in phenomenon: "Have you been affected in any way by a 'white backlash'? Have you changed your thinking during the last couple of months? Which category describes your feelings?"

First mentioning the supposed phenomenon by its familiar name and then forcefully suggesting to the respondent which alternative he is expected to select violates, of course, all standards of competent polling. Indeed, it is virtually equivalent to asking a sample of ladies: "Do you like the *chic* new Parisian fashions which simply everyone is raving about?"

Nonetheless, New Yorkers are a relatively hardy, independent lot. Only 27 per cent of a roughly random selection of the city's whites agreed that they were now "more opposed to what Negroes want"; 62 per cent still insisted they felt "pretty much the same"; and six per cent more even maintained that they were now "more strongly in favor of what Negroes want." Abandoning its usual caution, the *Times* unhesitatingly captioned the story, "Results indicate 'Backlash' Exists." Once again, the evidence is hardly conclusive; many persons comprising the critical 27 per cent group might well have been equally anti-Negro in 1963 and an undetermined number of them were undoubtedly swayed by the loaded question.

Fortunately, before-and-after data from both elections and polls do exist. In Boston's School Committee elections,

for example, a field of candidates ran for five positions in 1961, before the explosive *de facto* school segregation issue had erupted in the city, and a similar group ran again in 1963, after the issue had become focal. Among the candidates in both instances were a militant Negro and a white woman, who between the two elections had distinguished herself as an out-spoken defender of school segregation. In both elections the Negro ran a strong, though losing, seventh, while the segregationist won a seat on both occasions. The mass media emphasized the segregationist's sharply higher percentage of the vote in 1963 than in 1961, and presented this as further proof of the powerful "white backlash."

Yet, as in the Wallace primaries, an "out-from-under-the-rocks" phenomenon was probably operating. The number of Boston voters attracted to the polls in 1963 was approximately double that of 1961, and this increment was more than enough to account for the segregationist's better showing. Interesting, too, is the fact that the Negro candidate ran in 1963 as well or better in total votes in virtually every precinct; moreover, an out-spoken white integrationist won re-election, doing better in total votes in 1963 than he had in 1961.

Relevant public opinion poll data have been compiled by a competent national polling agency. An intensive study of racial attitudes throughout the United States was conducted in December of 1963. This work was followed up in the summer of 1964 by re-interviewing with the same, unbiased questions those white members of the original sample who lived in large, northern, industrial areas—where the "backlash" presumably was occurring.

Preliminary analyses of the results of this research are instructive. Basic attitudes toward the goals of racial change had *not* shifted. Those whites who had previously favored the desegregation of schools, public facilities, and neighborhoods predominantly still favored it; those who had previously opposed it still opposed it. Nor had presidential voting intentions shifted because of the race issue for any except a minute fraction. This last finding was amply borne out weeks later in the November elections, in which the heralded "white backlash" for Goldwater completely failed to materialize.

What was apparent were negative attitudes about the present form and pace of the civil rights movement. "The Negroes are pushing too hard too fast," goes the familiar phrase. Yet this charge is nothing new; polls have been consistently turning it up throughout the 1960's. Indeed, each new militant technique has periodically provoked a comparable degree of white resistance. Thus, in 1961 national samples questioned by Gallup pollsters indicated that 64 per cent disapproved of the "freedom rides" and 57 per cent believed the rides would "hurt the Negro's chance of being integrated in the South." Similarly, 65 per cent of white Northerners and 73 per cent of white

Southerners interviewed in 1963 thought that "mass demonstrations by Negroes are likely to hurt the Negro's cause for racial equality."

Note that each of these resistant phases in white American opinion has focused upon means and not ends; throughout all the racial turbulence—perhaps, in part *because* of the turbulence—attitudes toward ultimate Negro aspirations continue to improve. Recently, Herbert Hyman and Paul Sheatsley (in *Scientific American*, July, 1964) have compared white responses to the same desegregation questions asked in nationally representative polls in 1942, 1956, and 1963. The changes are remarkable in both the North and South. While only 40 per cent of Northern whites favored racially-desegregated public schools in 1942, the percentage rose to 61 per cent by 1956 and 73 per cent by 1963. The comparable figures for the South are 2, 14, and 34. Similar increments also occurred for both regions over the three polls for favorable attitudes toward desegregated public transportation and neighborhoods.

The heralded "white backlash," then, shifts its meaning when placed in full social scientific perspective. Anti-Negro candidates for political office in the North, enhanced by the glare of television klieg lights, focus and make more salient the race issue; they draw upon the bigotry and alienation which already existed prior to their entrance upon the political stage; and they often succeed, at least for a time, in attracting to the polls many otherwise apathetic, alienated, authoritarian, or uninformed citizens who typically do not vote.

The "backlash" is more properly described as the familiar crisis phenomenon of activation. Those who favored racial change before the crisis become more active (e.g., northern students in Mississippi voting campaign); and those who opposed racial change before the crisis also become more active (e.g., "parents and taxpayers" groups ostensibly defending the principle of neighborhood schools in northern cities).

But the mass media went wrong in interpreting this process as a "backlash." They went wrong in ignoring the size of the total vote in elections involving anti-Negro candidates, in disregarding the significance of the rising white support for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, in misunderstanding the "out-from-under-the-rocks" quality of protest voting, in not seeking before-and-after evidence of change, in relying upon questions with highly biased wordings, and in not clearly distinguishing between attitudes toward the means versus the goals of the Civil Rights Movement and between actual opinion change and activation.

In fairness, two negative, if conflicting, reactions to this analysis by defenders of the "backlash" idea should be mentioned. One line of argument reiterates the old accusation that social scientists are too confined to the ivory tower. "You haven't been in the streets lately," asserted

one journalist friend to the writer, "there's real hate out there now!" This charge, however, misses the point. By arguing that there is no "backlash," this analysis in no way denies the existence and extent of white bigotry. The point is, rather, that the term "backlash" is objected to in part because it implies that anti-Negro animosity is something which had just suddenly appeared, which was not there long before the "long hot summer" of 1964. Social scientists, irked by the age-old ivory tower argument, often counter by asking believers in the "backlash" concept where they have been in past years.

A more subtle criticism involves accepting the analysis but claiming that it has merely defined the concept "backlash" out of existence. Some maintain in retrospect that the concept was never intended to imply that a large segment of the white North had suddenly changed its attitudes against the Negro.

It is true that the term has been used variously—sometimes referring to voting intentions, other times to racial attitudes. But sudden change is certainly conveyed by the word to most readers. Thus, the Webster dictionary defines "backlash" as "a sudden and violent backward movement or reaction." Note, too, that the *New York Times*, in its polling study of the phenomenon, used as its central "backlash" question one asking the respondents if they had "changed their thinking during the last couple of months."

To return to the basic issues raised for the press by this episode, it should be emphasized that efforts by the mass media to present analyses of broad social trends are most encouraging. In fact, a good case can be made that the media still do not begin to provide enough of such analyses. But the "backlash" example clearly illustrates that these analyses cannot be simple and sensational, if they are to be informative and helpful. For basically, the "backlash" expectation of a simple negative white reaction against recent Negro demands failed because white American attitudes toward Negro Americans are anything but simple. Not simple either, of course, are the other issues requiring media analysis—from the complexities of Southeast Asia to those of the space program.

This is not to argue that journalists need to attain the full standards of science. Obviously, the demands of the two professions are different. But these "backlash" considerations do argue for a more careful and sophisticated approach by the media, one which at least applies the rudimentary checks of logic and control which are an intrinsic part of this age of polls and science.

Mr. Pettigrew is a native Virginian, attended the University of Virginia and received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1956. He has been on the Harvard faculty since 1957 and is now Associate Professor of Social Psychology.

Confessions of an Unrepentant Deskman

By John J. Corry

Copy readers are sour men with round shoulders. Pedantry has dried their juices; routine has withered their sensitivity. Whereas reporters are skeptical, questing and wise, copy readers have monumental conceits. One of them is that they help reporters.

Everyone knows what copy readers do. They change which to that; they make Mt. Everest precisely 29,141 feet high; they replace anxious with eager; they take a lead, say, "That funny old fellow with the rosy jowls and dancing blue eyes is ready to whisk his eight tiny reindeer across leaden skies," and make it read, "Tomorrow is Christmas."

But if a deskman is good, really good, he does more: He enters into a partnership with the writer, submerges himself in the story and in effect shares responsibility for it.

The technique is perilous. Deskmen often wrench news out of shape, molding it to a preconceived pattern. Further, deskmen who bleed too much over stories may submerge a writer's news judgment and prose style in their own caprice. But deskmen who do bleed at all regard a story merely as unmodified prose, something to be stuffed into a column of type. To the reporter, of course, the same story is immediate, prickly with nuance and heavy with significance.

The occasional way out, wise old copy readers know, is to ask themselves, What is the intent of the writer? The question has been confined to editors of fiction. But the proliferation of interpretive pieces and the growing notion that soft stories can tell the news accurately and well make the question pertinent for copy readers, too.

For instance, some of the best stories coming out of the last decade of Southern integration have been soft stories—the bewilderment of an older generation, the menace of a small-town sheriff, the ardor of a civil rights worker. Some of the best foreign news stories have dealt with the minutiae of every day living. In these stories the partnership between copy reader and reporter is a fragile thing. The intent of the writer can be nullified by ham-handed editing; yet left unattended a reporter's intent may remain obscure.

A copy reader does not conceive this kind of story; he acts as the midwife. And this is the most exacting and hazardous kind of editing. It calls for a coming together with the reporter, who may have written the piece in blood,

and a respect for what he is trying to do. The best editing here is the least obtrusive, but it is also the most imaginative. It demands a determined effort to write in the precise word that the reporter sought but failed to find. It demands that the copy reader not interfere with the rhythm of the prose. It demands that the form of the piece, if the writer has a sense of form, be left intact.

There is more involved, however, than just the editing of prose in the partnership between copy reader and reporter. If the partnership works, the copy reader is a news editor, junior grade. He must be; news is growing increasingly complex. Trying to present an intelligible science story, of course, can be a harrowing experience. And responsible newspapers now are paying more attention to the intricacies of legislative, economic and diplomatic news. These stories are not obvious; they are not easily grasped. The most capable news editor, the most efficient slotman may not understand them. And herein lies the second great worth of a sound copy reader: He understands the story and helps to render it intelligible for others.

Unless he had a particularly bad night, the man who edits a story properly has been forced to understand it, a position he may share only with the reporter and God. If God is preoccupied and the reporter is out to lunch, it falls on the copy reader to champion the story. A copy reader *should* fight with a make-up man about space for his story; he *should* suggest that the story is important enough to be followed up.

Deskmen and reporters seldom enter into this partnership. Indeed, outside of a few great metropolitan newspapers, copy reading seems to be a dying art. This cannot be disguised by circus make-up and self-conscious attempts at hard-nosed reporting; a badly edited newspaper is a bad newspaper.

It is bad because it has a void where its sense of news should be. It is bad because it confuses mawkish experimentation with creativity. (An over-edited paper is bad, too. It strains news through a sieve.) And mostly it is bad because the desks have either surrendered their responsibility or have not learned what that responsibility is. News has a life of its own. It does not need frou frou. It can and

should be attractively presented. But it does not need to be sold on anything other than its own merits.

The press preened itself for its coverage of the assassination of John Kennedy. But a sampling of the nation's newspapers shows that the simple, horrifying fact of the murder of a young President often was buried in a welter of bathos, blather and banality.

Undisciplined desk work is pervasive, spilling over into fatuous prose, mishandled news and a generally frightful product. The desk is part of a team; it should help to shape, but not to restrain, reporters. There are fine writers who could—and sometimes should—send their copy directly to the composing room. But even fine reporters, who write well and who understand that news is viable, sometimes forget that news exists in relation to its time and place and to other news.

It is an irreconcilable fact that news looks differently to those involved in its gathering and editing. This is in the nature of things, and it is the source of most of the friction between reporters and news editors. But it is also a healthy thing for newspapers. I suspect that many daily failures of the press—particularly stories that go galloping after trivia—happen because deskmen forget their obligation to maintain an independent viewpoint.

Some stories generate their own momentum and are carried along by it even though their news value has expired and the issues at stake have been resolved. The Krebiozen furor probably was one of these. In other stories the press seems to feed on itself, building perfectly logical cases that rest on sand. Implicit in many stories before the Republican National Convention, for instance, was the assumption that Barry Goldwater simply could not win the nomination. After the election much of the press seemed to confuse Dean Burch with the future of the Republican party and the future of the Republican party with Dean Burch. Constructive criticism by the desk might have led to more perspective.

The maintenance of an independent, or at least quizzical, viewpoint is as essential for copy readers as it is for news editors. A deskman should be equipped for this because (a) he is a generalist, while the reporter may be a specialist, and (b) he is removed from the physical circumstances of a story, while the reporter may be wading in it hip deep. Of course, it takes a special kind of obstinacy to criticize a reporter's viewpoint under these circumstances, but the truly cranky deskman should have it.

Ideally, a copy reader should be sophisticated about the world of affairs. And ideally a copy desk ought to be the font of all knowledge. It is not, but there is often a wide

range of expertise among deskmen. I know one copy reader who is an amateur herpetologist, another who knows all about opera, three who amuse themselves by playing in string quartets, and one who is an amateur geneticist. I even know a slotman who can read Latin. These things in themselves do not make good newspaperman, but they help to develop an independent viewpoint. A good deskman has a knowledge of people and things. It is the best background I know for making him tough-minded.

The desk is probably the last refuge of the newspaper eccentrics. A copy reader brooding over a story has a sense of isolation and he feels that he is the most put upon of men. This is built into the job. It is necessary that the desk understand the reporters' problems and have a sense of the burdens under which he works. If not, the desk's demands may become intolerable. But it is not at all necessary that the reporter understand the desk's problems, other than a notion of what time the deadlines fall.

For all this, copy readers nurse two warm feelings about reporters: envy and disdain. Copy readers know that reporters have selective memories about their own prose. That is, delete a silly sentence, smooth a clumsy paragraph, correct an error of fact; it will pass unnoticed. Excise a pet phrase, misinterpret a muddy statement; there are cries of rage. And all copy readers cherish favorite stories about saving reporters. My own concerns the new, highly paid woman reporter whose first assignment was to cover the Easter parade in New York. She returned to the office, wedged herself behind a typewriter, paid four visits to the ladies room, dithered over her notes and burst into tears—one hour before the deadline. A kindly old copy reader retrieved the notes and wrote the story, which carried her byline. The lady reporter won a publisher's prize for the piece and eventually went on to greater things. She never spoke to the kindly old copy reader again.

All reporters, of course, cherish stories about being eviscerated by the desk. It happens; we know it happens. But I have never known a reporter who wanted to be a copy reader. I have known many copy readers who wanted to be reporters. Perhaps it is because the most a copy reader can hope for from reporters is grudging respect. As a football coach once said of his alumni, things are in order if they are surly but not mutinous.

Mr. Corry, a member of the 1964-65 group of *Nieman* Fellows, works on the national news desk of the *New York Times*. Before joining that desk he was a copy reader on the sports desk of the *Times*. He has been a reporter, and periodically he thinks he would like to be one again.

Note (Blue) to Arthur Fiedler

(Editorial from the *Boston Herald*)

Won't you come home, Art Fiedler, won't you come home?

We've been reading all about your defection to New Orleans and hot jazz, and we're a trifle blue. You led Al (Hirsute) Hirt's Band at a nightclub the other night as it played (we can hardly bear to think of it) "Java" and "Sugar Lips."

Then you marched down Bourbon Street to Preservation Hall for an hour's worth of Dixieland, and topped off the evening at a strip show, whatever that is.

Come back to Boston, Maestro. Don't fall for the exotic lures of the French Quarter. You have 96 musicians to feed and a million ears to serenade.

Won't you come home, Art Fiedler, won't you come home? We're low the whole day long . . .

An Interview With Hoke Norris

(continued from page 2)

● *Newquist*: How would you compare the real state of integration in the North as opposed to the South?

● *Norris*: Certainly the North isn't blameless. There's a considerable degree of segregation, and widespread prejudice, in all northern areas. Every once in a while it is demonstrated, especially when Negro families try to move into new residential areas or into established pure white residential areas.

In the South the patterns of desegregation are written into the laws. In the North they're not written into the laws and segregation can be more subtle and just as effective. The Negro in the North doesn't know what to expect—he doesn't know where he's going to be admitted or where he's going to be refused. In some ways he is more sure of himself in the South, which may be a negative virtue, but it always helps to know where you stand.

I was in Oxford, Mississippi, last fall for the unpleasantness on the campus of the University of Mississippi. On my return, when I began writing a series of stories on the occurrences there, I read in the newspaper that a group of Negro families had been made homeless by a fire and been given overnight haven in a church on Chicago's southwest side. It was a "white" church. And the church people were forced to take the homeless Negro families away because a white mob gathered outside and threatened violence. The damn Yankee has no reason to be pious about the integration issue.

● *Newquist*: Do you think the patterns of violence will continue?

● *Norris*: They won't disappear overnight, but I think actual violence will diminish. In fact, the University of Alabama is the only remaining large southern school that

has remained segregated, although it, too, had the Autherine Lucy episode a few years ago.

I suspect that these things represent the dying struggle of the old Confederacy. There'll be episodes, of course, and it's a shame that such episodes overwhelm the fact that the desegregation of Southern universities goes back to 1938, when people voluntarily or under court order began admitting Negro students. The Supreme Court, even before 1954, was preparing the nation for the ultimate decision that segregation is within itself per se discrimination. Gradually we're chipping away at the old equal-but-separate concept. (This had been the rule since the Plessy v Ferguson case of 1896, I believe.)

● *Newquist*: Now I'd like to enter that second area where your interests are so definitely expressed—that confused world of censorship. You did an article for *The Evergreen Review* on one of Chicago's cases.

● *Norris*: The case involved Henry Miller's *Tropic Of Cancer*. There are those who would attack the book and attack Miller, and those who would defend him, but Miller and his book became irrelevant, as the author and the book almost always do in these cases. It becomes not a matter of defending the author and his book, but of defending the rights of the people.

In this case the Chicago police and the police in some of our Chicago suburbs threatened the arrest of people if they sold a paperback edition of *Tropic Of Cancer*. In one instance there was an actual arrest of a book-seller in one of the suburbs who tended to object to what the police were doing in confiscating his books.

Subsequently Grove Press, on behalf of itself and others, brought suit in Superior Court of Cook County to restrain police officers of Chicago and the suburbs from further interfering with the sale of the book. There was a long and colorful trial—it lasted two or three weeks. The case was tried before Judge Samuel B. Epstein in the Superior Court of Cook County, at the end of which Judge Epstein issued a momentous decision restraining the police from further interference with the sale of the book. In his judgment he made a classic statement of the Supreme Court's present position in regard to censorship. I would hope that this statement could serve, for all time, as judgment on such cases:

The now accepted legal test of obscenity is whether (a) to the average person, (b) applying contemporary community standards, (c) the dominant theme of the material (d) taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interests." No book, in other words, can be considered in fragments, it must be considered as an entire work. To further quote Judge Epstein: "The presence of a single objectionable passage, the influence of the book on youth, the abnormal or the erratic or the advocacy of unpopular thesis no longer are accepted as a legal test of obscenity," and furthermore, if the book has any redeeming characteristics

—that is, any social or artistic significance—it cannot be held to be obscene.

Thus, by strong inference at least, only works obviously written for licentious purposes may be subject to police action. The limitation is strict and precise insofar as a definition in law can be, and it eliminates legal censorship of all but a few relatively insignificant works.

This ruling of the Supreme Court was in force at the time the cops picked up *Tropic Of Cancer* and tried to prevent its sale. The cops should have known better. They were armed, in most cases, with only their own dubious prejudices, and so-called injured sensibilities. They operated outside the law in confiscating the book, in arresting one man, and in threatening others with arrest if they insisted upon selling *Tropic Of Cancer*.

Unfortunately, the biggest trouble from censorship doesn't come from the professionals. The police are just doing a job—a job, in some cases, of which they're rather ashamed, but they've got to make a living by enforcing what they presume is law. The biggest difficulty comes from the amateurs—those who snoop in book stores, look in one passage of the book, say page five of the paperback edition of *Tropic Of Cancer*, and fly into outrage and demand that the bookseller not sell the book, and take it to the cops and sign a complaint which results in an arrest. They are troublesome people—here in Chicago and elsewhere.

I suspect this pattern exists all over the country. The schools have been subject to this sort of idiocy. Outraged parents appear before the school boards demanding the withdrawal of certain books. The books that always seem to appear on the outraged-parent list are *Catcher In The Rye*, by J. D. Salinger; *Brave New World*, by Aldous Huxley; and *1984* by George Orwell. Add some of the works by John Steinbeck. There's such a unanimity in these lists as they appear throughout the country that I suspect the existence of a central clearing house of information. These people haven't really read the books; someone has told them they're bad books. Oddly enough, two of these—*1984* and *Brave New World*—are books that warn of just such a moral welfare state as the amateur censors would attempt to create if we let them.

The problem, as I see it, is totally ignored by the would-be censor. The problem is not to keep people from reading books, but to get them to read at all.

Some of the tongue-in-cheek things that pop up in the course of censorship are wonderful. *Field And Stream*, a magazine devoted to outdoor sport, had a review of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* that reads as follows:

"Although written many years ago, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* has just been reissued by Grove Press. This fictional account of the day-by-day life of an English gameskeeper is still of considerable interest to outdoors-minded readers, as it contains many passages on pheasant raising, the

apprehending of poachers, ways to control vermin, and other chores and duties of the professional gameskeeper. Unfortunately, one is obliged to wade through many passages of extraneous material in order to discover and savor these highlights on the management of a midland shooting estate. In this reviewer's opinion the book cannot take the place of J. R. Miller's *Practical Game Keeping*."

This is a better review of *Chatterley* than appeared in most places.

● *Newquist*: How do you regard the censorship of textbooks—the movement that seems most organized in states like Texas, but still crops up on the local level almost everywhere?

● *Norris*: They are the maintainers of the status quo, or the status quo ante, to be more precise about it—or what these organizations regard as the status quo. Naturally, any viable society changes every moment of existence, though we still have people fighting the American Revolution and the Civil War.

It's hard to know just what the textbook censors hope to accomplish. They apparently object to anything that has a relevance to our modern day and to the years we are moving into. Anything more startling or revolutionary than, say, McKinley, is likely to startle this group. They are a small minority, but they are vocal. The danger arises from their vocal activities, and from the fact that the ordinary citizen who doesn't go along with them doesn't do anything at all, thus lets them have their way. They get textbooks censored on very stupid grounds, especially in the South, which is very sensitive to change these days. And Texas is apparently sensitive to everything.

● *Newquist*: In terms of autobiography, could you describe where you were born, reared and educated, and how you entered the field of literary criticism?

● *Norris*: I was born and raised in North Carolina and was graduated from a small Baptist College there, Wake Forest, before the war. After the war I attended the University of North Carolina for a short while. I just didn't want to go back to work after four years in uniform. Then, later, I went to Harvard for a year, and to the University of Chicago. All my studies at these places pointed in one direction—literature. Not that they were all so-called literary subjects. As you know, astronomy and nuclear physics and public affairs and the history of the world—it's hard to mention a subject that doesn't somehow bear upon one's competence in literature. But specifically I suppose that I happened to be at the right place at the right time, for once. I'd written some short stories and published a novel, and was working for the *Sun-Times*. And when the literary job fell open there, I was it. And I am a Southerner. Apparently that helps these days when you want to write.

● *Newquist*: In looking at present day literature, what do you see that you most admire on one hand, and most

deplore on the other?

● *Norris*: I think I most admire those who can write and do so in the face of the most formidable obstacles and temptations. By obstacles I mean the deadly grinding and ever-growing difficulties involved in making a living. It's just too expensive, these days, for one to take time off to write that book he wants to write. There's almost nowhere a writer can take his family, as there used to be, and live on, say, a thousand a year. By temptations I mean the superficial distractions that divert us all from our natural calling—the distraction of the car, television, high living. But also the temptation to make a killing in advertising, in public relations, in the movies, in TV. They do pay quite well, and they often destroy just as well. And so I suppose that I deplore most of all the loss of writers for whom the obstacles, and the temptations, are too persuasive. This kind of thing creates a constant erosion that may account for the present low estate of creative writing. We do have many writers, but we don't have many extraordinarily good ones. We'll never know how much civilization has cost us.

● *Newquist*: Could you pick out highlights—your own highlights, either from the standpoint of pleasure or significance—of books published within the last few decades?

● *Norris*: After Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, and Wolfe—what? We still have John O'Hara, who's always a delight, a real pro who writes in the European fashion, that is, one book after the other—one *good* book after the other. But after *him*, what? We have a group of young writers, Updike, Cheever, and the like, who haven't quite done it yet, haven't written the books we may expect from them. We seem to be in a period of waiting, and literary creation is a thing that can't be forced. It dies in the hothouse. And so there remain the older books, by the Great Four that I mentioned—we can always go back and reread them, while we wait. They are still the highlights of our time.

● *Newquist*: If you were to give advice to the young writer—the serious youngster with talent—what would that advice be?

● *Norris*: I can give it in one word: Write. For the writer there's no substitute. Too many of us seem to entangle ourselves; we don't write, we talk about writing. The young man to watch is almost always the quiet, rather homely, retiring fellow seen alone in corners at parties. He goes away and you forget him, and when his picture appears on the jacket of a book, you wonder where you've seen him before. The glib talker, the bright young man who's the center of attention and chatter, he's really the one you ought to forget. He's too much a part of the race to report it. The only position from which to report an event is the close sidelines—sort of half-in and half-out of the event. The wholehearted participant is in no position to see anything but the face in front of his own. The

sideliner sees all the faces. And these qualities are born in us. Which is perhaps another way of advising a would-be writer that he should be very careful in his choice of genes. I don't mean to be flippant. It's just that that's the way it is, and nobody can do a thing about it.

● *Newquist*:—what would you hope to see emerge in the near future in the world of publishing?

● *Norris*: Publishing does need some reform, but you won't get any significant reform in it until you've reformed the public. It'll come as news to nobody, I trust, to say that publishers, like all business men, are out to make a buck. They've got to publish books that'll sell. Since it's the public that they sell books to, it's up to the public to make its demands, and it does so by choosing the books it shall buy. Until the public taste is elevated above the meretricious and the factitious, we'll be inundated with meretricious, factitious books. And so we are led back to the root of all cultural evil, and all cultural good—education. Elevate the nation's literary tastes, and you elevate publishing, and writing too. Not alone publishers need the stimulus of demand. Writers do too. No man can continue writing long in a vacuum. If he knows that there's somebody out there after all, he'll seek the echo of his own private genius.

● *Newquist*: If you were to look back, say, from the vantage point of 2064 at Hoke Norris, what would you hope would be said about him?

● *Norris*: What a chilling question. And what a good one. I suppose that as man more and more loses faith in his own immortality, his existence upon earth becomes the more and more important. That's at the basis of our civilization, I suppose—our materialistic longing for comfort and luxury. If there's no future, the present becomes very important indeed. The serf who was saturated with his religion took, understandably, the opposite view. And out of this mundane approach, so to speak, has arisen not only our materialistic civilization, but our humanism as well. If we value our own lives, we must value the lives of others.

And at the same time monuments have become more and more important—not in bronze or granite or marble, but in works. William Faulkner was once visiting a friend who'd collected all of Faulkner's works. Faulkner contemplated the shelf, and said after a moment, "That's not a bad monument for a man to leave." For myself I'd hope that some day—in 2064—somebody might come across one of my creations, that it would speak to him, that it would be my voice he would hear. I can only hope that it will speak to him truthfully and well.

● *Newquist*: What do you feel the literary critic or reviewer owes the books that are reviewed in his paper, the writer who has produced those books, and the public for which he writes?

● *Norris*: The critic owes the book and the writer and the public the same degree of attention and sincerity that the writer gave the book. I can never take very seriously the book that's obviously merely rubbish, and calculated rubbish at that—the quickie written in the morgue of some newspaper about some hot person or topic, the novel aimed directly at the movies, the thinly-disguised biography or autobiography intended to get the bucks where they are, and quickly. Such books should be ignored, and can be. But the so-called serious book is another matter. The reviewer can tell the difference. The shabby quickie smells; read a passage here and there, and it betrays itself for what it is. The real book has a tone, a feeling, a weight—not that it's always a good book, but you do take another look at it. And review it. And before you review it, you read it. Some critics, I understand, don't bother to read the books they review. The jackets are very complete—or have an illusion of completeness—these days. Such reviewers are frauds, of course; they defraud alike public, writer, publisher, and reviewing medium. But it's a pleasure to see a good critic at work. He reads and rereads a book, he makes notes as he reads, he checks some passages over and over again, and then he does his best to give an honest assessment. More than that nobody can do.

Art Buchwald

in San Francisco . . .

The biggest ovation former President Eisenhower received during his speech at the Republican Convention was when he attacked "sensation-seeking columnists and commentators."

When the General came to the part in his speech where he said, "So let us particularly scorn the divisive efforts of those outside our family, including sensation-seeking columnists and commentators who couldn't care less about the good of our Party," he received a standing ovation the likes of which has never been seen at the Cow Palace.

The worst part of it is we are absolutely sure President Eisenhower looked at us when he said it.

The idea that the former Republican President of the United States could get a bigger hand attacking the press than he could attacking the Democrats gives us sensation-seeking columnists goose pimples.

Probably the thing that hurts the most is that Gen. Eisenhower is a television commentator himself and it's hard to believe he would attack one of his own, particularly if he is going to continue his very successful career.

As soon as the President uttered his words we knew we were in trouble. An angry group of California delegates started toward us. We tried to run the other way, but we were blocked by the delegates from Illinois. We went up to Martin Agronsky, the CBS commentator, and cried, "Help me."

"I can't," he shouted. "I'm a sensation-seeking commentator and they're after me too."

We fought our way through to the New York delegation and tried to hide behind Gov. Rockefeller. "I can't do much for you," he told us. "They don't listen to me any more."

The Arizona delegation tried to surge forward. We ducked under Sen. Javits's chair.

The crowd hooted, "You're going to have to come out sometime."

We crawled on hands and knees toward the Pennsylvania delegation hoping to find sanctuary, but they were all hiding themselves.

Someone from the Georgia delegation shouted, "The sensation-seeking columnist is over here."

But they fell over themselves trying to get at us and we made it to Massachusetts, where a kindly Lodge delegate covered us with a "Bill can win" poster.

When they couldn't find us, we heard a Mississippi delegate scream, "Somebody get the dogs."

It was time to move on. We crawled to New Hampshire, then to Vermont and then made it to Maine as the angry pack kept at our heels. Finally we made it back to the press box where Joe Alsop, Roscoe Drummond, Marquis Childs and James Reston had built a barricade of Western Union machines and typewriters.

Alsop said, "We only have enough paper and carbon to last another two hours."

Reston said, "Don't waste copy paper and don't write until you see the whites of their eyes."

Just when it looked as if all was lost, William S. White got through to President Johnson and told him the sensation-seeking columnists were under attack. Mr. Johnson immediately called J. Edgar Hoover and in two hours the Cow Palace was filled with agents of the FBI.

... and in Atlantic City

When former President Eisenhower attacked the sensation-seeking columnists and commentators in San Francisco, the convention hall went wild and we never thought we'd get out of the place alive. So in Atlantic City we were prepared for anything. Well, almost anything. When Speaker of the House John McCormack said in his opening remarks, "The representatives of the press, radio, and television are welcome to this convention," he brought the house down.

We happened to be on the floor at the time and a large lady delegate from Rhode Island embraced us. "I love you," she cried.

We struggled to get free and as we did two New Jersey delegates grabbed us and shook our hand. "God bless the press," one of them said.

The Massachusetts delegates saw us, and they fought to get over. "We got one here," someone shouted. People started showering us with free gifts and money.

We tried to run but were stopped by Gov. Pat Brown, of California, who said, "You look tired, son. Take my chair."

Two alternates took off our shoes and started massaging our feet. Another one wiped our brow. We began to blubber like a baby.

"You've had him long enough," the chairman of the Wisconsin delegation protested.

"Get your own newspaperman," Gov. Brown retorted.

"I'd better go," we said, not wanting the Wisconsin delegation to walk out.

The Wisconsin delegation had thrown several people out of their chairs so we could lie down. Someone made us chicken soup. The crowd couldn't be stilled.

Texas got wind of what was going on and we were carried over to their section where Gov. Connally had been asked to make room for us. Someone slipped us a \$1,000 gift certificate to Nieman-Marcus. Three delegates gave us oil leases and one man from Waco turned over the deed to his ranch.

"We believe in a free and independent press," a woman said as she squeezed our hand.

The crowd could not be stilled. New York sent a sergeant-at-arms to escort us over to Mayor Wagner. The Mayor gave us two passes to the World's Fair and Bobby Kennedy's private telephone number.

How much love is there in the world?

We tried to get back to the press platform, but the delegates wouldn't have it. First Georgia, then Louisiana, and finally Alabama insisted we sit with them. Bull Connor, of the Alabama delegation, gave us a police dog all for ourselves. The wounds of San Francisco were slowly healing.

McCormack was still trying to get the attention of the hall. Finally Hubert Humphrey got through to us and said, "The President wants to speak to you."

"You mean?"

You could see the disappointment on Humphrey's face. "It's his choice," he said.

We picked up the phone and listened.

"Thank you, Mr. President," we replied, "but I think I'd better stay in my present job."

When the Democrats say they welcome the press they mean it.

The Lesson of Dallas

By James S. Doyle

Any day now I expect to pick up the newspaper and read, deep inside at the bottom of a page, that Chief Jesse Curry of the Dallas Police Department has cancelled his standing order of February 7, 1963, directing cooperation with newsmen. The story will have been leaked to reporters by a disgruntled cop who has a grudge against Curry. Everyone else on the force and almost everyone in Dallas will be delighted, and in line with the chief's implied new policy their only public reaction will be a brusque "no comment" and a scowl.

Other police departments have already taken the "lesson of Dallas," as the Warren Commission called it, and while directives may not have been cancelled they have been effectively forgotten, replaced by the knowledge of what can happen when the police cooperate with the press. On the other hand, the press itself has yet to acknowledge the lesson that we must police our own activities, or face arbitrary action by the police themselves.

Jesse Curry is one chief who has insisted on cooperation with the press, and he has been badly served by his own policies. On February 7, 1963, Curry wrote in a letter to all officers that they were obliged, not just permitted, to render every assistance to the press whenever possible. He noted that a policeman's business is public business, and that General Order No. 81 of the police department required each of them to help the news media inform the public about all aspects of police business.

"Implied in the general order," he wrote, "is a prohibition for the officer to improperly attempt to interfere with the news media representative who is functioning in his capacity as such. Such activity on the part of any police officer is regarded by the press as an infringement of rights, and the department shares this view."

This sensitivity to what the press regards as infringement of its rights was in evidence on the weekend a year ago that began with the assassination of a President and ended with the accused assassin's murder inside police headquarters.

Curry and his men not only cooperated with newsmen, but declined to restrain them from activity clearly repugnant to the police. Disorder spread through the third floor

corridor of police headquarters, and the faces of Curry and his aides became more grim. But little was said by way of admonition, and the reporters and cameramen were left alone, to act as they felt they should. The corridor became a common sight in millions of American homes, and the Warren Commission perpetuated an unfortunate view of the press by including among its exhibits pictures of life in that corridor during 48 hours of perhaps the most profound chaos ever visited upon an American jail.

The chaos began almost immediately after the detention of Lee Oswald early on the afternoon of November 22. By 3:30 it was public knowledge that a suspect was in the homicide bureau along the third floor corridor. Television technicians arrived and sought permission to bring in their electronic equipment, and in accordance with General Order No. 81 the permission was granted. Soon movie and still cameramen crowded to the area along with radio, television, newspaper and magazine journalists from all over the world.

Chief Curry was still at Love Airfield attempting to get the new President safely out of Dallas when all this began. By the time he returned to his office, the mob of newsmen and the tangle of equipment was an accomplished fact that could hardly have been considered Curry's greatest problem. At any rate he gave no orders to clear the newsmen out.

In fact, the reporters had great encouragement to stay, for they were developing startling news stories at a rapid pace. Oswald would be thrust in their midst occasionally as he was taken to and from his cell for interrogation sessions. Policemen who had been at the scene of the assassination would happen by and render their eyewitness accounts. Others who had taken part in the capture of Oswald were in the area, and they became highly sought-after prizes among the reporters. The networks had soon set up studio size cameras and tripods in the middle of the corridor, next to the elevator lobby, along with crews of technicians.

The network television operations were the biggest problem that weekend. They represented at one time the best

reason for allowing newsmen at the scene and the best reason for throwing all the newsmen out the door. For while they were bringing all available information immediately to the American public, they were the spark for the senseless aggression, the shouting and the pushing, among the herd of reporters present.

These network men were in contact with their editors constantly, and these men were being pushed, as always, to be first with the best camera angles and the exclusive interviews. And since their three cameras completely blocked the corridor, they managed to impede the progress of officials attempting to pass by the herd and escape without comment. In the end they succeeded in making the passage-way impassable, so they could be almost assured of a good shot of Lee Oswald each time he appeared. They were impossible to avoid.

The scene, as it now develops, is hardly a rare one. In fact the conditions in Dallas never got as bad as they are on a normal day among the herd of New York City cameramen who have developed a propensity for swearing at each other within the range of microphones, and who are generally rude whenever they get together to work a story.

The Warren Commission, in detailing the conduct of the press, concluded by suggesting it would welcome evidence that the press had profited "by the lesson of Dallas," but the self-defeating aspects of herd reporting was not a new lesson in Dallas. It was the lesson of New York and Iowa when Khrushchev was there; it has been, since Dallas, the lesson of Boston when Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy tried to take a walk, or the lesson of the World's Fair when the Kennedy children attempted to visit there. By all portents, it is a lesson unlearned.

A general picture of how the herd operated in Dallas is outlined in the Warren Commission Report, including quotes from an F.B.I. agent describing the third floor corridor as "Grand Central Station at rush hour, maybe like the Yankee Stadium during a World Series game." Newsmen are depicted as wandering in and out of offices in a general takeover of the third floor, at least one of them hiding a phone behind a desk for his exclusive use when news broke, and another shooting pictures with a camera between his legs. Not reported, but presumably evident on television during that weekend, was the professional level of the herd interviews, which included the question shouted at Lee Oswald Saturday evening: "Hey, Lee, why'd you kill the President?" It had been a rather dull afternoon, and as one reporter noted afterwards, "we all would have been dashing for the phones if he had said something like 'because I felt like it.'"

The fact is that the level of professional talent in the corridor those days was much higher than the product of that talent, herded together in a hallway. Some of the finest journalists from wire services, networks and papers across the country were on hand by Friday night. These men

recognized the importance of their assignment and were generally cooperative with each other. They showed an interest in gathering meaningful information. They were also aware of the dimensions of the news herd problem. Maurice Carroll of the New York *Herald Tribune* remarked early Sunday afternoon that it would have been easy, and entirely feasible, for any one of the hundred or more persons on the third floor to have killed Oswald on Friday or Saturday. Another reporter said what many of us were thinking: why didn't they clear us all out much earlier, perhaps after the debacle Friday night when Chief Curry attempted to hold a news conference and the conference room exploded into complete disorder?

This particular question has become the defense refuge for many newsmen and editors since the murder of Oswald. The security of this prisoner, charged with the most shocking crime of the century, should have been uppermost in Chief Curry's mind. And the simplest security would have been to deny access to the police headquarters to all persons except those immediately concerned with the department and its prisoner; further, to hold Oswald in a secret place until he could be spirited to a safer jail.

Many of the very editors who now offer this argument would be among the first to condemn a police chief if he became secretive about so important a police case. But further, this argument clearly evades the responsibility of the press to put its own house in order, and forgets the temper of the weekend when Kennedy was assassinated.

Curry was presumably under great pressure, even if it was never spoken, to allow the world complete access to the workings of the Dallas Police Department that weekend. There was in the world a most hostile attitude toward the city and its officials. Friday evening a cab driver who drove four newsmen downtown from the airport was asked a string of questions such as "What was the name of the hotel where Lyndon Johnson was attacked in 1960?" and "Where did they spit at Adlai Stevenson when he came here?" By Saturday morning editorial condemnations of the city were being carried around the world; phrases like "city of shame" and "frontier law" were becoming slogans. A local paper called upon the city to examine its conscience, reminding residents of some past political extremes, and those of the political right were clamoring that Oswald was an agent of Moscow and China.

To all of this Curry's response was that Lee Oswald was under indictment for the crime and that he would be treated "like any other prisoner." His whole approach was that nothing out of the ordinary was being done by Dallas police in pursuing this investigation, and it must be remembered that his department had a long standing custom of accommodating the press during investigations. Thus to bar the press from headquarters would have seemed to be a repudiation of his own words of February 7 prohibiting any officer from any "improper attempt to interfere with

the news media representative, who is functioning in his capacity as such." Yet by Friday evening, the only way Curry could have restored order would have been to throw all the newsmen out of the building, and then attempt to establish some sort of pooled coverage.

None of this absolves Curry and his men for security slipups. Oswald was killed, after all, by Jack Ruby, not by a reporter or anyone with a press credential. And none of this is a defense of the wild statements of some public officers, including Curry and especially District Attorney Henry Wade who attempted to try his case before the press. That whole question is a separate one, not under consideration here. But the chief's conduct in granting the press almost unlimited access is understandable and certainly backed by precedent.

Just as the murder of President Kennedy is the crime of the century, the murder of Lee Oswald is the police blunder of the century. Surely the press cannot exonerate itself in considering the confused events that led up to the second crime. Curry left the news media to police themselves, a decision that might have been praised by editors if events had turned differently. In any case the news media did not police themselves; they never do. No evaluation was made about the publicizing of such information as the time of transfer of Oswald. Threats on the prisoner's life, received throughout the night, were also widely publicized. Crowds had gathered at both the police headquarters and the county jail, where Oswald was due to be transferred, by ten on Sunday morning. If Curry opened the hole in security, the news media sent out the invitations for the likes of Jack Ruby to jump through.

Those who argue that the police alone are responsible for preventing disorder among reporters invite arbitrary treatment at events such as the Oswald detention. Just such arbitrary, and rough, treatment, was observed during the past campaign, when the police could certainly argue that Lyndon Johnson's too public exposure made it necessary. It was observed in San Francisco at the Republican National Convention, although the motivations were never clear. It had been observed several times in Boston during presidential visits when President Kennedy was alive. In fact, national political reporters often complain that such treatment is too widespread in the country now. To ignore the lesson of Dallas is to beg for further spread of arbitrariness in handling the working press. Much of the public would sympathize with the police official who clamps down on reporters. Our stereotype is none too good at present.

The newspaper editors of this country, representing the most responsible and most influential body of news executives, have a duty to educate public officials to the needs of the press in times of emergency. They also have a duty to educate their own staffs, especially those who supervise the reporters and the reporters themselves, to what is expected

of them. At present, the manners of the news herd are as bad as those of the most rude reporter present. This will always be a problem, but a little general education could improve a lot of situations.

A year after the events in Dallas, a low-key debate is underway within the profession as we seek to understand and explain what went wrong. But almost nothing has been done. Perhaps it is time for the American Society of Newspaper Editors to sit down at the conference table with the national organization of chiefs of police. The first small step that might be taken at such a meeting is the authorization of a single design for press credentials issued by local police departments across the country. It would be possible in this way to identify quickly whether a press card was in fact of the type issued by a police authority somewhere. The credentials could be color-coded for the daily and weekly press, and for radio and television. This small step would at least make it clear what the method of operation of these card-carriers was likely to be, and it would be of some help in setting up pool coverage when such is necessary.

But, even more simply, what could come from such a conference is a list of dos and don'ts for policemen and reporters at major news events, a sort of Geneva Convention for the working press and the working police in time of battle. There is little question that both the press and the police were attempting to do the best job possible that weekend a year ago in Dallas. The police claim, at least implicitly, that they failed in part because of harassment from newsmen. The newsmen failed because they were in each other's way and they followed no rules, and soon got in the way of their story.

The irony of that weekend is that both the press and the police were striving to reassure the world that order prevailed, yet their actions raised fear of further disorder. The fear proved justified.

If it were to happen again tomorrow, neither the reporters nor the police would have any idea how to improve their collective conduct, given the same goals as were present in Dallas. The practical can argue that those goals were accomplished. The newsmen got pictures and quotes from Lee Oswald. The police proved that Oswald was being treated like "just another prisoner."

But he wasn't just another prisoner, and so he was murdered in police headquarters for lack of security. And the words and pictures mean too little for the journalism history records. Lee Oswald is dead, and with him died every chance that the world could discover the meaning and motivation behind the greatest crime of our time.

Mr. Doyle was in Dallas from November 22 to November 26, 1963, on assignment for the Boston *Globe*. He is a 1964-65 Nieman Fellow.

The Obligation of Spokesmanship

By Kingman Brewster, Jr.

If I called you fellow educators, you might feel flattered. I know I would feel flattered if you would recognize me as a former fellow Press Lord, for ever since I was Chairman of the Oldest College Daily, I have been a journalist *manqué*.

But in this spate of mutual flattery there would be an unspoken sense of mutual commiseration. It is perhaps in our moments of self pity that we educators and you editors are drawn closest together.

You find legal underpinning in the chartered power of your owners and directors; I in the fellow Trustees of the Yale Corporation. You would soon be insolvent if it were not for your advertisers; so would we if it were not for the generosity of our alumni. Your columns would be empty without reporters and writers; our classrooms and libraries and laboratories would be useless without the faculty. Finally, alas, there would be no paper without readers, no college without students.

So, suspended in this cat's cradle, woven between disparate groups, is it surprising that we share an uneasiness, as our frail hammock sways in the winds of an insecure and controversial world?

Trying to please too many, we risk affronting all.

Thus, correction of the irresponsible is censorship at worst, or for me, at best, "paternalism"; for you, that most ambiguous evil "editorializing."

Insistence on responsibility is pettifoggery, at least very dull. But to indulge in wit or whimsey is to trifle with a sober destiny. Independence is fence sitting, perhaps even "neutrality." But partisanship is captivity, at best a sign of automatic thinking.

Perhaps our common miseries stem from origins which also have at least analogous relation.

Tavern, coffee house, and cracker barrel carried local news with speed, color and suitable imagination.

The *Courant* was founded to bring the news of the world up the river from the seven seas; from east and west along the Post Road from the ports of Boston and New York.

Family, school, and apprenticeship trained well enough for the homely arts and skills.

The colonial colleges were founded on books, to assemble in one place the heritage from which the wisdom of ancient and remote civilizations could be learned by those who aspired to leadership in church and civil state.

Each of us has been shaped and stretched by revolutions which were not of our own making. Instantaneous communication, high speed transportation, and giant presses, all made the newspaper, through its own correspondents and through the wire services, a reliable global courier of events as they happened, wherever they happened.

The complications and specializations of new scientific learning converted the gentlemen's colleges into centers of fundamental research and experimentation, training scholars and professional men at the most advanced level.

Both journalism and academia may find it less easy to acknowledge the more recent revolutions which would seem to challenge our set ways. Since the forties, many institutions and careers have opened up which bring together research workers in the pursuit of truth outside the academy. This requires us to re-examine our mission, to see quite realistically where, if anywhere, the comparative advantage of a university might lie, when compared to government or industrial or consultative research organizations. I will not pursue that reappraisal here.

However, may I be so bold to suggest that the *Courant's* 200th anniversary affords an occasion not only for reflection on the past, but for reassessment of the present, so that the future may be faced with constructive realism.

For the first time in the history of journalism the newspaper—no matter how many editions it may print—is not the first announcer of events. Radio first, now television, bring the first word of a notorious event to most of the public.

I suggest that this fact urges an objective inquiry into what it is that a paper can do better than other news media. Or, to put it the other way 'round, what are the communication needs of society which other media are not well

equipped to meet. To do less is to remit the daily paper to the function of a "shopper's guide" or a retailer of syndicated news "analyses."

While the spoken word can travel faster, you can't take it home in your hand. You can't take it along easily in trains or planes; and it can't be picked up in a barber shop. It doesn't keep well for second thought, let alone reflection. Only the written word can be absorbed wholly at the convenience of the reader. The newspaper fits the reader's program, while the listener must fit the broadcaster's program.

The paper, then, unlike any other daily news medium, has the chance to absorb the reader, to create the mood with the power of the word, without distraction. This takes *writing*, not just the headlining of releases. It takes live reporting, not the rearrangement of words from a teletype.

Maybe the reason why so many of the best journalists came from sportswriting is because there is no known way of releasing the story of a game before it is played!

While a newscaster may relay news of the event before a paper can reach the streets; the feeling, the meaning of the event, will depend on the word of the live reporter.

Since few can cover the whole world live, the community, especially the local urban community, becomes the distinctive beat of the daily press. Yet our cities do not know themselves. No one will bring the humanity and the inhumanity of an increasingly urbanized society into the light of popular understanding if the daily press does not.

The battle against poverty, the struggle for equal opportunity need their war correspondents. We will be rid of the worst and enjoy more of the best of city life only if we are made deeply and continually conscious of both; not in fiction, not in social scientific, impersonal statistics, but by creative, perceptive, intensely human reporting. Reporting must be more than a flashy chronicle of notorious events. It must reveal the more subtle drama which is played out in the daily hopes and fears of city life.

Indulge the *creativity* of your young reporters. You may uncover a Breslin! It won't make for a quiet life, but it will make for an interesting paper; a paper vastly more significant because it is doing something only a daily paper can do.

Another power peculiar to live reporting suggests a second comparative advantage of the daily press. This is the function of disclosure. The probe beneath the surface, by patient digging at a level of personal intimacy, gives some hope that the live reality will be exposed. In an era where concentrated private and public power offers untold chance for favoritism and abuse, factual disclosure becomes a special mission of the press, however disturbing it may be to some of the so-called "best people."

If you would trumpet this privilege of the presses' freedom, reporting must be more than another coat of lacquer on

the surface of life, from the paint pots of the huckster, the press agent, and the propagandist.

Finally there is spokesmanship.

You know, it is so fortunate your advertisers are not "sponsors" of "educational programs" or "commentators." Suppose Walter Lippmann, or David Lawrence for that matter, had to please a sponsor! Or look at it the other way around. Suppose one of your major advertisers had to be directly identified with particular editorials!

And how fortunate you are that there is no politically appointed commission which has to be satisfied that you are operating according to their own view of a wholly ambiguous "public interest."

You are the only daily news medium substantially free of the restraints of dependence upon someone else's private or political power.

One obligation of such freedom is, of course, responsibility. Another is a bold willingness to speak out.

In our highly organized, increasingly centralized, if you will, dependentized society, there are few centers of independent spokesmanship; loud enough to be heard, high enough to be seen, yet not corrupted by dependence upon the favor of office or wealth; or made timid by the fear of boycott or of blackmail.

May I return to the parallel or analogy between educators and editors. Now that I feel the itch of the hair shirt of congratulations coming on, I will try to take credit by association.

You and I know that there is a correlation between the creative and the screwball. So we must suffer the screwball gladly. You and I know that the disclosure of sub-surface truth is our highest accomplishment, no matter how unpleasant it may be to many of our most respectable friends.

You forbear to correct those whom you report, we shrink from monitoring the teacher's word. We insist on a broad freedom even for those we invite to use our columns and our campuses as a forum.

Because we are eager to assure free play to conflicting ideas in our columns, in our classrooms, editors and educators alike may be tempted to assume a quasi judicial neutrality. "Go it husband! Go it bear."

But while we protect freedom of expression and inquiry and disclosure, we cannot shirk from exercising an obligation of spokesmanship. It is not the spokesmanship of representation, that is for the elected officer. It is the spokesmanship of our articulated convictions.

Our country does not have many pulpits and pinnacles of spokesmanship left; not many, that is, which are both listened to, and free.

Your institution and mine are clothed in the peculiar privileges and immunities of a great tradition. Even your owners, even my trustees; even your advertisers and my alumni; even your readers and my students know that

conscientious exercise of freedom of the press and of academic freedom are to be protected, even against the wrath of disapproval.

But this very privilege justifies the expectation that we will have the courage to speak our minds. Since our freedom to speak out lies deep in national tradition, conviction need not bend to hope for gain or favor.

We are no wiser, no less fallible, than those who have no audience. But our society's quest for wisdom, its effort

to arrange an ordered life for a fallible citizenry depends mightily upon the willingness of those who can be heard to affirm their faith and proclaim their opinions as long as they are enlightened by a concern for all mankind.

This address was given by **Kingman Brewster, Jr.**, president of Yale University, at the 200th Anniversary Dinner of the *Hartford Courant* at the Statler-Hilton Hotel, Hartford, Connecticut, Thursday, October 29, 1964.

Higher and Higher

(Editorial from the Raleigh, N.C., *News and Observer*)

It would be just a grumble from behind a roller top desk in an old-fashioned ink and paste smelling newspaper cubbyhole for any old-timer in the craft to complain because Wayne A. Danielson, new dean of journalism at Chapel Hill, has never had a regular job in journalism himself. After all at 34 he has a Ph.D. in mass communications research even if he has never been on a police beat.

Though schools of journalism are, of course, vocational schools, it is not necessary for any teachers in them to have ever worked at the vocation. For a long time we've been having agricultural experts who never farmed. And, of course, no business experience is necessary to teach in a school of business administration.

The situation gets confusing, however. David Brinkley, North Carolina's present best known figure in mass communication, was a high school "drop out." The State's best known historian, Carl Sandburg has no Ph.D., but came up from Chicago journalism in its rough and tumble days. Some of the best newspapermen now practicing graduated from the school of journalism at Chapel Hill when it was headed by "Oc" Coffin, who was more comfortable at a typewriter with his hat on than in an academic gown.

However, new Dean Danielson, A.B., M.A., Ph.D., wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on "Effects of Word Frequency, Word Length, and Grammatical Probability on Perception and Immediate Recall of Words." It has never been published but its basic subject, which ordinary readers might not quickly get, is: What makes easy or hard reading.

Anyhow higher education is getting higher and higher in journalism as in everything else.

The Mythical Magazines

By Alice M. Rychlik

The magazine in the twentieth century American novel tends to be a million-circulation monster replete with complex staff and staggering influence among its readers. It is most likely to be a news weekly or a women's service magazine.

This is one of the major conclusions of an analysis of ten novels about the magazine field in contemporary fiction which was undertaken to determine what picture the reading public is presented of magazines and their editors.

The study also considered these questions: What types of magazine and staff members are most often represented? Is magazine journalism treated romantically or realistically? Is the concern with journalism primary or incidental? What real magazines served as models for the fictional ones, and what actual experience have the authors had?

Further, why are there so few novels with magazine settings, and why is the quality of those extant so low? What types of magazines that have been neglected could be introduced into a work of fiction about journalism? Finally, what hope is there for publication of a major novel about the magazine?

The books, chosen on the basis of their availability, were John Brooks' *The Big Wheel* (1949); Elmer Davis' *Friends of Mr. Sweeney* (1925); Ralph Ingersoll's *The Great Ones* (1948); Harrison Kinney's *Has Anybody Seen My Father?* (1960); Herbert Lyons' *The Rest They Need* (1947); Merle Miller's *That Winter* (1949); Jane Kesner Morris' *Women, Inc.* (1946); Charles Wertenbaker's *The Death of Kings* (1954); Theodore H. White's *The View from the Fortieth Floor* (1960); and Marjorie Worthington's *Manhattan Solo* (1937).

The method of analysis was more descriptive, creative and critical than it was scientific. A precis was written of each novel as were thumbnail sketches of each fictional magazine and editor. The dramatic situations were summarized, and the novels were rated on a two-part scale according to their realism and concern with journalism.

The reasons offered for the scarcity and low quality

of the novels, the speculations about which real magazines were used as models, and the suggestions of types of magazines which could be used were based upon my reading of the novels, my background in journalism and pure conjecture.

Of 20 fictional magazines described in the novels, four were weekly news magazines, four women's service, three politico-literary, three professional, two general weekly, two scholarly, one pictorial and one literary. It should be noted that of the three politico-literary magazines, only one was treated as the major publication in a novel (*Friends of Mr. Sweeney*). The literary journal, two scholarly and three professional magazines were publications of the same firm in one novel (*Women, Inc.*).

Among the financial staff members the men outnumber the women 38 to 14. The recurring types seem to be the liberal editor gone conservative, the idealistic, young associate editor, and the female editor who is married to her job.

Using criteria of realistic or romantic treatment and degree of concern with journalism originally outlined by Wolseley,¹ eight of the ten novels were found to be realistic in their treatment of journalism, and seven of the ten were discovered to be primarily concerned with journalism. (In these cases the term "realistic" means the novel gives a fairly accurate picture of how a magazine and its editors operate. "Primary concern with journalism" means that in the novel the profession undergoes some scrutiny and is vital to the general theme of the story.)

In the matter of incidental treatment of journalism, it was noted that in the three novels in which this was done (*Manhattan Solo*, *The Great Ones*, *That Winter*), the characters could conceivably have been something other than magazine editors and the central story lines would have been disturbed not at all. The characters seem to be editors simply by the whims of their creators, and they

¹ Roland E. Wolseley, *The Journalist's Bookshelf*, 6th ed., Chicago, Quill and Scroll Foundation, 1955, pp. 11-12.

contribute little, if anything, to a popular conception of the magazine editor.

In the other seven novels, to change the occupations of the characters and to change the scene from the magazine office to any other executive suite is to undercut the plots; they just wouldn't say the same things.

The geographical settings of nine of the ten novels is New York City. In view of the fact that so many magazine editorial offices are located there, this is to be expected.

After the analyses of the novels composite sketches were written of a fictional magazine and some of its editors. The magazine was *Crucible*, a weekly magazine presenting an alloy of news and opinion, which issues from a cloud-tickling heap of steel, glass and stone somewhere in midtown Manhattan.

Of rightest persuasion, its editors like to think they take impurities out of the news for "the little man on the street." Editorial policy—a nebulous ideology streaked with neo-McCarthyism—is determined by one man, the publisher, and filters down to the staff through a rigid hierarchy of editors, associate editors and department heads.

When *Crucible* seethes, Madison Avenue trembles. Its circulation runs into the millions, and its name is a byword in the American home.

The new staff member is apt to find that his copy is doctored, but he either catches onto the style or is out on the street again. The other editors, he notes, don't necessarily (in fact, hardly ever) believe what they write, but they can gag their consciences with ample paychecks. (If someone is really bothered by the morality of this, that's when a renegade staff member pops out of a file drawer and writes a novel about it.)

In prefatory notes Theodore H. White (*The View from the Fortieth Floor*) and Charles Wertenbaker (*The Death of Kings*), while denying intended similarity of their fictional magazines to specific real magazines, admit their novels were suggested by experiences in journalism. Since they have owned up and since the other authors wrote no such disclaimers of suggestion, it seemed relevant to speculate on which real-life magazines might have been models for the fictional ones and what effect the authors' actual magazine experience had upon the sort of magazines they wrote about.

The mythical magazines appear to be imitative of *Time*, *Collier's*, *The Woman's Home Companion*, *American*, *New Republic*, *McCall's* and *Good Housekeeping*. Eight of the ten authors were known to have had editorial experience on such publications as *Time*, *New Republic*, *The Reporter*, *Collier's*, *Holiday* and the *New York Times Magazine*.

An interesting sidelight is that all four of the authors who had been staff members of *Time* wrote (and unfavorably) about news magazines. (Could this be a re-

action against *Time* group-think journalism?)

The major reason for the dearth of novels about the magazine seems to be that in order to write of the field convincingly, the author must have actual magazine experience. Even though he has the experience, there is no guarantee that he is capable of writing a novel, and even if he is capable, he may have no inclination to do so.

The *bete noire* of experience seems also to govern the quality of the novels. Only three (*The Death of Kings*, *The View from the Fortieth Floor* and *Has Anybody Seen My Father?*) have any real literary merit, and not one of them is a major work. Evidently the strictures of writing magazine copy, particularly if it is non-fiction, are not conducive to the novel form. Novels on journalistic subjects by journalists are likely to be journalism. This is not to say that journalism cannot be literature. It can, but by definition it cannot be fiction.

In adhering to national consumer magazines of a general nature for their models, the authors present only a minor segment of the magazine industry. Where are the trade magazines, the business papers, the house organs and the religious magazines? What about the quality magazines, the fashion magazines, the men's magazines? Why has no author considered the little magazines or the expose magazines?

One could even make a case for a historical novel about the muckraking magazines at the turn of the century. The novelists seem to have shown a singular lack of imagination.

The foremost conclusions of this study are:

1. While there is no really typical magazine novel, those extant seem to cling to the news weekly or the women's service magazine for background.
2. The novels give a picture which is hardly representative of the magazine industry as a whole.
3. The novels are, however, realistic in their treatment of the magazine and are concerned in large part with journalism.
4. The authors tend to write about the sort of magazines they once worked for.
5. There are few novels about the magazine because it takes both experience and the novelist's eye to do a good job of it.
6. The quality of the novels is low because the authors are magazinists first and novelists second.
7. The outlook for a major novel about the magazine is bad because of this seemingly impossible necessity for both experience and the novelist's viewpoint. It awaits the arrival of a writer with these dichotomous qualities.

Alice Rychlik has a journalism-liberal arts degree from Syracuse, with a magazine major, worked for a year as a reporter on a mid-western newspaper, and is now working for her master's in journalism at Syracuse.

Attacks on the Press

By Jack O. Baldwin

The assignment: determine what real evidence is there—if any—to indicate the recent rash of attacks against the press of the nation, and the State of California, may be being carried out on orders from any unified, disciplined, or militant organizations? Or are recent anti-press demonstrations and assaults merely the early harvest of fruits and nuts at the end of a long, hot summer?

The probe for the answers to these questions took investigators from Santa Barbara to Cape Cod, from the floor of the United States Senate to the Top of the Mark.

The evidence gathered shows the attacks against the "Bill of Rights"—the Four Freedoms, have ranged from vitriolic and obscene phone and letter-writing campaigns against the press to the bombing of the home of a Los Angeles minister who spoke out against "extremists".

Some observers regard the recent demonstration of delegates at the Republican National Convention as being an extemporaneous expression of "distaste" in which a large section of the public holds the nation's press in general.

Television film clips of the demonstration following former President Eisenhower's remarks regarding "sensation-seeking columnists and commentators" shows delegates leaping to their feet, shaking clenched fists, and shouting damnations in the direction of the entire press gallery.

Writing of the incident, Walter T. Ridder, chief of the Washington Bureau of Ridder Newspapers, said: "... the hall erupted with the loudest and wildest shouts since the convention opened. It was perfectly clear that the expression of distaste did not limit itself to 'sensation-seekers' but embraced the press as a whole."

That the nation's press is "under heavy attack" is observed by one of the the country's top newsmen—Wes Gallagher, general manager of the Associated Press.

In the weekly *AP Log* Gallagher directed these remarks to AP staffers:

"It has become increasingly apparent that the press is under heavy attack in many sections of the country for a variety of reasons. There is also considerable

latent hostility toward newspaper, radio, television and magazines on the part of the general public.

"The reasons for this are diverse and will vary from community to community. Perhaps the basic one is that the reader or the listener is confronted with a story which annoys him, or with which he finds himself in complete disagreement, or which is unpleasant and disturbs his day, is apt to blame the medium that carried it to him rather than the facts of the story itself. This is not new."

The official publication of the organized press, *The Guild Reporter*, published by the American Newspaper Guild, in an editorial (Aug. 14, 1964) had this comment regarding the demonstration which followed President Eisenhower's remarks:

"The jeering, fist-shaking demonstration against newsmen at the Republican convention was a spectacle without precedent at a national political gathering."

The editorial said the reason for the demonstration was because, "The press has held up a mirror before the contorted face of the ultra right, and the right does not like what it sees. Now it thinks to improve its image by smashing the mirror."

California appears to be a particularly hot-bed of activity and attacks from—but not limited to—members of the John Birch Society.

Publisher Emeritus Thomas M. Storke, Pulitzer prize-winning author of a series of editorials on Bircher activity in Santa Barbara, was five times hanged in effigy. Each "dummy" bore a sign reading, "Warrenism, Socialism, Communism, Storkeism."

The doors to the press room were defaced and painted with the hammer and sickle emblem.

Middle-of-the-night phone calls threatening the life of both Storke and Paul Veblen, executive editor, were received following the newspaper series of articles and editorials.

Dr. Ross Dog Food cancelled its schedule following the series.

A retired attorney, William Drake, launched a monthly publication—*Freedom Press*. Its editorial slant was anti-News-Press and pro-Bircher. The publication is now semi-monthly and distributed on a national basis. It is high on the list of "Recommended Reading" of the John Birch Society.

The Sacramento *Union*, California's oldest daily newspaper, was subjected to an "intense" campaign following its endorsement of the Rockefeller delegation prior to the June primaries.

Asked for a report on *Union*, Publisher Leonard V. Finder, wrote:

"... a campaign has been directed against the *Union* charging that it is 'anti-Republican,' women have used the telephone and even stopped other women on the parking lots of supermarkets to urge that the *Union* not be read; a 25,000 mailing of a broadside against the paper and me was circulated by extremist candidates (with doctors taking the lead in the writing and distribution of this piece, ignoring the *Union's* consistent stand against medicare); our directors and stockholders have been subjected to barrages of letters and phone calls; and the latest technique has been a number of registered letters as the step precedent to libel actions because we included a number of right wing extremists—who were candidates for the county central committee—in an article telling of how throughout the state such an element was trying to infiltrate—even though they clearly have no valid basis for suit."

Since the *Union's* pre-primary endorsements a new weekly offset newspaper was started in near-by Carmichael under what Finder terms as "ultra-extreme influence" and that the newspaper "has made a practice of attacking the *Union*."

Seven political office seekers have sent registered letters to the *Union* demanding retraction of statements made in an article published May 29, 1964, and under a kicker-line reading "March to the Right."

Says Finder: "The claims (for retraction) are so specious as to be clearly a form of harassment."

George Williams, publisher of the Coronado, California, *Journal* declined to publish an ad calling for the impeachment of Chief Justice Earl Warren and received 12 letters of condemnation.

Elsewhere in the nation newspapers, magazines and TV networks have been the prime target for verbal attacks and letter-writing campaigns from far-out extremist groups.

Dr. Billy James Hargis, himself a publisher (*The Weekly Crusader*), a strong booster of Birch Society Founder Robert Welch, had this to say about the Denver, Colorado, *Post* on July 23, 1964: "... it is so left wing

... so Socialist, I don't know why Khrushchev would object to the sale of this paper on the streets of Moscow."

He told a group of 150 persons at the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver that the *Post* was "the worst newspaper in America" and the "most evil influence in the world."

On the matter of Maj. Gen. Edwin Walker's suit against the Associated Press and 11 newspapers which carried an AP story which was the basis for Walker's suit, Hargis said, "I asked General Walker if he had led any charge of students against federal officers on the University of Mississippi campus. ... He told me no. ... I believe him. ... This libel suit proves he was telling the truth. ... Maybe now he can also collect \$5 million from the Denver *Post* and break them also."

Of the Rocky Mountain *News* Hargis said, "I can't make up my mind whether it is fish or fowl."

Hargis suggested the group start its own conservative newspaper in Denver.

The nation's television networks have felt the squeeze of pressure groups.

The Xerox Corporation of Rochester, New York has received more than 16,000 letters of protest after the company announced plans to spend \$4 million to sponsor a series of TV programs on the United Nations.

(Incidentally, John Guttenberg, assistant to the vice president for corporate communications at Xerox, stated that a breakdown by states of the "anti" letters indicated that of the 16,000 letters 25% were traced to California—either by post mark or return address. Next most active state was New York with 8%—one third less than from California. The remaining 67% was scattered among the remaining 48 states.)

The attack apparently stemmed from a plea for a "flood of letters" contained in the July issue of the John Birch Society (pp. 22 & 23).

"If they (the officers and directors of Xerox) are of the ideologically immovable variety, then 50,000 to 100,000 letters of protest ought to convince them, at least, of the unwisdom of their proposed action from a strictly business point of view," read message contained in the bulletin.

The bulletin cautioned members "not to threaten boycott, nor think boycott."

The United Press International on August 21, 1964, quoted a company spokesman as saying he believed the barrage of letters to have been written by approximately only 4,100 authors. The company has been receiving about one letter of praise and support for each five letters of protest, according to John Guttenberg.

Columnist, "By line" writers and TV commentators have become high priority targets for snipers from the right flank.

James Reston, of the New York *Times*, received so much mail he devoted a column to the matter on July 8, 1964.

Commenting on the letter-writing attacks Reston said,

"They are expressing violently their opinion not only that columnists are wrong but that they have no right to opinions opposed to their views."

Reston admitted Senator Barry Goldwater had a "legitimate complaint" in his charge that the AP dropped the key phrase, "... but one that will not be used" from a story regarding his comments on the use of a low yield nuclear device to defoliate (the trees). The columnist pointed out, however, that the inadvertent dropping of the phrase by the wire service was not the basis of complaint contained in the many letters he had received.

"According to many of these letters, the Senator's enemy is not Governor Scranton or even Lyndon Johnson, but a corrupt, conspiratorial left-wing Eastern press that is in sympathy with and probably in the pay of the Communists," he wrote.

Other columnists who have been singled out for attack include Marquis Childs, St. Louis *Post Dispatch*, who says (*Editor & Publisher*, July 25, 1964) he gets about three or four letters a day "... many of them containing the term 'nigger lover' which is something new."

In the same issue of the trade journal, Robert Novak, co-author of "Inside Report" told of a "one punch tussle" in San Francisco with a man who used "gutter language" in an attempt to insult the columnist for an article he had written about the California Young Republicans a year ago.

George Dixon, author of the humorous "Washington Scene" said many of the abusive letters he receives suggest that "he be lynched, horsewhipped, or physically mutilated."

"I have never seen anything like this. This is a frightening thing. Every letter suggests some sort of violence," Dixon said.

Tom O'Neil of the Baltimore *Sun*, commenting on a rash of "abusive mail" said, "Most of it is hysterical and it all takes a standard line, as if it has been set down in some manual somewhere."

O'Neil echoed a complaint of several other "opinion" writers. He complained that although he writes a signed column of opinion, letter writers complain about his "reporting."

"These people just don't understand what you're doing," he said.

In February of 1964 Life magazine and its advertisers

were the targets of Dr. Billy James Hargis. Objecting to Life's story on the "fearmongers" (February 7, 1964), he asked his followers to do two things: To write to the presidents of all companies which had advertised in that issue, and to call local representatives of these companies and protest. (*Weekly Crusader*, February 21, 1964).

"Frankly," wrote Hargis, "I feel that the protest that you will make locally to those distributors of these products advertised in Life magazine of February 7 will do as much good as letters to the heads of the companies themselves."

Hargis expressed his philosophy of the campaign of protest in these words, "Don't ever forget—a tiny protest from an average American to the right person may sound like a rockslide in the Alps."

The publication then listed the names and addresses of all the industries which had advertised in that issue of Life.

Evidence that publishers and editors may expect an increase in letters and personal visits from members of the John Birch Society is indicated in a New York *Times* article of July 23, 1964, quoting John Rousselot, former congressman and recently named national director of public relations for the society.

Recently added to the list of goals of the society is "Project Monitor," Rousselot told the *Times*. The project is aimed at countering the dissemination of "inaccuracies about the society in the public prints. Members have been urged to visit editors of "erring" publications and call their attention to such inaccuracies "politely but firmly," the *Times* article quoted Rousselot.

And from Christian Resistance with headquarters in San Gabriel, California, in a booklet titled "Pro-C-Prop" (Pro-Communist-Propaganda) and subtitled "The slanted, slippery, silent 'press,'" at page 10 this comment: "One of the deepest holes of the Communist Swamp is that of the perverted press—let us drain this foul cause of our national disease—lack of will to resist."

These remarks were made by Jack O. Baldwin, Long Beach, California, *Independent, Press-Telegram* staff writer before the Board of Directors of the California Newspaper Publishers Association, August 29, 1964, at the Lafayette Hotel, Long Beach, California.

Nieman Notes

1942

James Colvin, Director of Sales Promotion, Advertising and Public Relations of Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, has been elected a Vice-President of that firm.

1946

Robert J. Manning, formerly Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, has been appointed Executive Editor of the *Atlantic*.

1947

After years with the San Francisco *Chronicle*, **Jack Foisie** has joined the Los Angeles *Times* and will be their foreign correspondent in Saigon for the next two years.

Ernest H. Linford was on leave of absence from his duties as head of the editorial page of the Salt Lake *Tribune* during September and October, convalescing from spinal fusion surgery.

1948

Miss Rebecca F. Gross, editor of the Lock Haven *Express*, has been honored as the Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania by Governor William W. Scranton.

1949

Tillman Durdin began his New York *Times* assignment in Australia and New Zealand November 1. This is the first full-time foreign staff man the *Times* has had in the area since the end of World War II.

1951

Roy M. Fisher has recently been elected a Vice-President of Field Enterprises Educational Corporation. He is Executive Editor of the World Book Year Book.

1955

Peggy Aarup and **Henry Tanner** (New York *Times*) were married September 6 in Denmark.

1956

Edgar Seney is the author of the recently published book, "The Gregorian Invasion" (Wake-Brook House), a humorous and enlightening discussion of the current social customs and relationships in America.

1957

The New York *Times* London bureau will be headed by **Anthony Lewis** beginning in January. Lewis has been a member of the *Times'* Washington staff since 1955 and is the winner of two Pulitzer prizes.

In "The Red Chinese Negro American" (*Esquire*, October, 1964) **William Worthy** points out certain links he sees as existing between Communist China and the American Negro civil rights movement. Worthy's writings about Red China and his activities in that country and Cuba have received nationwide attention in recent years.

1958

Jean V. Saez has recently completed the Foreign Service course at the London School of Economics and Political Science and is currently studying international relations under a Dutch government scholarship at the Institute of Social Sciences, The Hague. He expects to return to London this spring to resume his assignment as press counsellor in the Philippine Embassy there.

1962

Gene S. Graham, Nashville *Tennessean* editorial writer, has been appointed a visiting lecturer in journalism at the University of Illinois for the 1964-65 academic year.

David Kraslow and **Robert S. Boyd** (of Knight Newspapers) are co-authors of "A Certain Evil," to be published by Little, Brown in February. The book explores the tangled relationships that have developed between the national government and the press in an era of clandestine operations, and it raises the ethical and practical dilemmas that confront both a free press and a democratic government under such conditions.

Gene Roberts has moved from labor reporter to city editor of the Detroit *Free Press*.

Murray Seeger has left KYW-TV and Radio in Cleveland to join the New York *Times*. He will be working with the Metropolitan Editor A. M. Rosenthal in the New York office.

Applications for Nieman Fellowships

Applications for Nieman Fellowships for the 1965-66 academic year are now being accepted. Application blanks may be obtained by writing to the

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Nieman Foundation
Harvard University
77 Dunster Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts**

and must be returned to that office by April 15, 1965, for consideration by the Selection Committee. Announcement of the recipients of next year's Fellowships will be made in June.

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